

Equity and Safe Reporting Policy

1. Purpose

This policy establishes Woxsen University's institutional framework for reporting, investigating, and addressing any form of discrimination, harassment, misconduct, or unethical behaviour within the university community.

The purpose is to ensure that all individuals: students, faculty, and staff can safely raise concerns without fear of retaliation, educational or employment disadvantage.

All provisions in this policy are supervised and administered by the Human Resources (HR) Department, in collaboration with the Office of Legal and Compliance and respective grievance committees.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, including academic, research, administrative, and contractual staff.
- All students, including undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral candidates.
- Consultants, vendors, and external collaborators who interact with the university.

The policy covers all types of misconduct, including:

- Discrimination or bias (gender, caste, religion, disability, etc.)
- Harassment, bullying, or intimidation
- Sexual harassment or gender-based misconduct
- Retaliation against individuals reporting concerns in good faith
- Violations of institutional ethics or professional standards

3. Policy Statement

Woxsen University maintains a zero-tolerance policy toward discrimination, harassment, or any form of reprisal against individuals who report such concerns.

Every member of the Woxsen community has the right and responsibility to report inappropriate behaviour and to participate in investigations without fear of victimization or retaliation.

The University ensures that all complaints are treated seriously, confidentially, and impartially, with appropriate corrective or disciplinary action taken when warranted.

4. Guiding Principles

1. **Safety:** Reporters and witnesses shall be protected from retaliation, educational disadvantage, or professional harm.
2. **Confidentiality:** All reports are handled discreetly to protect the identity and privacy of involved parties.
3. **Fairness:** Investigations follow due process, ensuring impartiality for both reporter and respondent.
4. **Non-Retaliation:** Retaliation in any form — including demotion, denial of opportunity, academic penalty, or social intimidation — is strictly prohibited.
5. **Accountability:** All members of the Woxsen community are responsible for upholding integrity and respect in reporting and resolution processes.

5. Reporting Channels

The university provides multiple **safe and accessible channels** to report concerns:

Reporting Mechanism	Access Point	Oversight Department
Online Reporting Form	Internal HR Portal (secure submission)	HR Department
Email Reporting	complaints@woxsen.edu.in	HR / Legal Office
Written Complaint	Submitted to HR, Dean, or Registrar	HR
Anonymous Reporting Box	Located in administrative buildings	HR
Internal Complaint Committee (PoSH)	For sexual harassment cases	HR + PoSH Committee

All complaints must be acknowledged by HR within 7 working days of receipt.

6. Investigation Process

All cases reported under this policy are handled in a confidential, time-bound manner.

6.1 Preliminary Review:

- HR and Legal Office jointly determine whether the case falls under discrimination, harassment, or ethics violation.
- If necessary, it is referred to a specific committee (e.g., PoSH Committee, Student Grievance Committee, or Academic Council).

6.2 Formal Investigation:

- Conducted by a neutral committee comprising HR, Legal, and one independent external member (where applicable).
- Both complainant and respondent may present evidence or witnesses.
- Interim measures (temporary transfer, academic adjustments, etc.) may be taken to prevent disadvantage.

6.3 Resolution and Outcome:

- The final report and recommendations are submitted to the Vice President
- HR implements disciplinary or corrective action as appropriate.
- Both parties are notified of the outcome in writing.

6.4 Appeal:

- Either party may appeal within 30 days of decision issuance to the Vice Chancellor's Office.

7. Protection for Whistle-Blowers

Woxsen University ensures complete protection for individuals who, in good faith, report misconduct, discrimination, or harassment.

7.1 Non-Retaliation Guarantee

- No student or employee shall face demotion, academic penalty, denial of promotion, or exclusion due to submitting a report.
- This includes protection against subtle retaliation such as reduced research opportunities, workload manipulation, or social ostracism.

7.2 Confidential Handling

- The identity of reporters and witnesses shall remain confidential except when disclosure is legally mandated or necessary for fair resolution.

7.3 Educational and Employment Protection

- Any adverse action against a whistle-blower will be considered a serious misconduct and subject to disciplinary proceedings.
- HR will ensure that students' grades, scholarships, or academic progress are not affected due to reporting.
- For employees, no changes in pay, role, or employment status may occur as retaliation.

8. Support Services

The HR Department provides the following support mechanisms:

- Access to counselling and psychological support through the Wellness Centre.
- Legal guidance for understanding rights and responsibilities.
- Assistance with documentation and safe communication during investigations.
- Flexible academic or work arrangements for affected individuals when necessary.

9. Training and Awareness

To maintain a culture of openness and accountability:

- HR will conduct annual training on workplace ethics, safe reporting, and non-retaliation practices.
- All new employees and students will be oriented on the reporting framework during induction.
- Awareness posters and digital information will be displayed across campus and portals.

10. Governance and Oversight

Office / Committee	Responsibility
Human Resources (HR)	Policy ownership, investigation coordination, and grievance resolution.
Office of Legal and Compliance	Advises on legal due process, confidentiality, and appeals.
PoSH Committee	Handles cases of sexual harassment per statutory requirements.
Student Grievance Committee	Manages student-related complaints of discrimination or bias.
Vice President (Governance & Strategy)	Reviews annual reports and approves final policy updates.

11. Documentation and Records

- HR will maintain a confidential database of all complaints, actions taken, and outcomes.

- Annual anonymized data will be compiled for internal reporting and continuous improvement.
- Records are retained securely for a minimum of five years.

This policy was approved by the Management Team on 10th June 2021 and last reviewed on 15th October 2024.