

Sexual Harassment Policy

1. Preamble

Woxsen University is committed to ensuring a workplace and academic environment free from sexual harassment, exploitation, intimidation, and all forms of gender-based violence. This policy is updated in alignment with the University Grants Commission (UGC) regulations and relevant legal frameworks to ensure dignity, equality, and respect for all members of the Woxsen community.

2. Objectives

- To prevent sexual harassment and establish a mechanism for redressal.
- To create a secure and inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff.
- To foster awareness and sensitivity about gender equity and respect.
- To comply with legal and regulatory mandates concerning gender-based violence.

3. Scope and Jurisdiction

This policy applies to:

- All students, faculty, staff, and visitors on Woxsen University premises.
- Off-campus interactions, activities, or events linked to the university.

- Digital platforms, online interactions, and virtual classrooms.

4. Definitions

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, comments, or physical contact.
- Offensive gestures, remarks, or conduct based on gender or sexual orientation.
- Online harassment, including inappropriate messages or stalking.

5. Governance Structure

5.1 Internal Complaints Committee (ICC):

- Composed of at least 50% women members.
- Includes senior female faculty as Presiding Officer, faculty/staff representatives, student representatives, and an external expert on gender issues.
- Autonomous and impartial to ensure unbiased inquiry and decision-making.

5.2 Apex Complaints Committee (APC):

- Handles escalated cases and ensures policy adherence.
- Composed of senior administrative officials, including the Vice-Chancellor, Head HR, and a female staff representative.

6. Duties of the Committees

- Publicize the policy through workshops, notices, and online channels.
- Handle complaints with confidentiality, fairness, and prompt resolution.
- Provide counseling, legal assistance, and protection to complainants.
- Conduct awareness programs on gender equity and sexual harassment prevention.

7. Complaint Filing and Redressal Procedure

- Complaints can be submitted in writing to the ICC within three months of the incident.
- The ICC will investigate complaints, ensuring impartiality and confidentiality.
- Interim measures, such as granting leave to the complainant or restricting the respondent's access, may be implemented.
- Disciplinary actions range from warnings to dismissal, depending on the severity of the violation.

8. Disciplinary Actions

Actions may include:

- Written warnings and official apologies.
- Suspension, demotion, or dismissal from the university.
- Legal reporting to appropriate authorities.

9. Awareness and Training

- Annual gender sensitization workshops for students, faculty, and staff.
- Distribution of educational materials on sexual harassment prevention.
- Regular review meetings to assess policy effectiveness.

10. Monitoring and Review

- The ICC will submit annual reports to the APC, detailing complaints and outcomes.
- The APC will compile and review these reports for university leadership.
- A biennial review of the policy to ensure alignment with best practices and legal requirements.

This policy was approved by the Management Team on 12th March 2021 and last reviewed on 30th July 2024.