



## **SNDT Women's University**

# **Zero Tolerance Policies on Sexual Harassment, Ragging, Plagiarism and Environmental Pollution**

(This policy has been approved by the Management Council)

### **I. Preamble**

India's first legislation specifically addressing the issue of workplace sexual harassment is the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (hereinafter referred to as "POSH Act") which was enacted by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, India in 2013. The said Act aims at providing protection against sexual harassment of women at workplace and for the prevention and redressal of complaints of sexual harassment and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

UGC Regulations on curbing the menace of ragging in Higher Educational Institutions, 2009 were passed by the University Grants Commission in the year 2009 to curb the menace of ragging in the Universities in India.

Keeping in mind the ethics in higher education, fair conduct of research and prevention of misconduct, as per UGC (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018, students, researchers and faculty members should not perform any academic misconduct by the theft of intellectual property in any manner. Therefore, the proper attribution, seeking permission of the author wherever necessary, acknowledgement of source compatible with the needs and specificities of disciplines is essentially required.

In accordance with India's National Environment Policy, the University is fully committed to adhere to the principles of protection of environment and Sustainability. The University also ensures that its functions and routine acts does affect environment positively. Since its inception the University has shown its commitment and liability towards the protection of the environment at the level best and that is why the campus is Green and Clean with beautiful landscapes and variety of trees.

## **II. Definitions (Key Terms)**

- a)** “Aggrieved woman” as under the POSH Act means— (i) in relation to workplace, a woman, of any age whether employed or not, who alleges to have been subjected to any act of sexual harassment; (ii) in relation to dwelling place or house, a woman of any age who is employed in such a dwelling place or house;
- b)** “Employer” as under the POSH Act means— (i) in relation to any department, organisation, undertaking, establishment, enterprise, institution, office, branch or unit of the appropriate Government or a local authority, the head of that department, organisation, undertaking, establishment, enterprise, institution, office, branch or unit or such other officer as the appropriate Government or the local authority, as the case may be, may by an order specify in this behalf; (ii) in any workplace not covered under sub-clause (i), any person responsible for the management, supervision and control of the workplace. Explanation. —For the purposes of this sub-clause “management” includes the person or board or committee responsible for formulation and administration of policies for such organisation; (iii) in relation to workplace covered under sub-clauses (i) and (ii), the person discharging contractual obligations with respect to his or her employees; (iv) in relation to a dwelling place or house, a person or a household who employs or benefits from the employment of domestic worker, irrespective of the number, time period or type of such worker employed, or the nature of the employment or activities performed by the domestic worker;
- c)** “Sexual harassment” as under the POSH Act includes any one or more of the following unwelcome acts or behaviour (whether directly or by implication) namely: — (i) physical contact and advances; or (ii) a demand or request for sexual favours; or (iii) making sexually coloured remarks; or (iv) showing pornography; or (v) any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature;
- d)** “Workplace” as under the POSH Act includes— (i) any department, organisation, undertaking, establishment, enterprise, institution, office, branch or unit which is established, owned, controlled or wholly or substantially financed by funds provided directly or indirectly by the appropriate Government or the local authority or a Government company or a corporation or a co-operative society; (ii) any private sector organisation or a private venture, undertaking, enterprise, institution, establishment, society, trust, non-governmental organisation, unit or service provider

carrying on commercial, professional, vocational, educational, entertainment, industrial, health services or financial activities including production, supply, sale, distribution or service; (iii) hospitals or nursing homes; (iv) any sports institute, stadium, sports complex or competition or games venue, whether residential or not used for training, sports or other activities relating thereto; (v) any place visited by the employee arising out of or during the course of employment including transportation by the employer for undertaking such journey; (vi) a dwelling place or a house;

- e) “Ragging” as under the UGC Regulations on curbing the menace of ragging in Higher Educational Institutions, 2009 means any conduct by any student or students whether by words spoken or written or by an act which has the effect of teasing, treating or handling with rudeness a fresher or any other student.
- f) “Plagiarism” as under Section 2 (k) of UGC Act 1956, means an act of academic dishonesty and a breach of ethics. It involves using someone else’s work as one’s own. It also includes data plagiarism and self-plagiarism.
- g) “Environmental pollution” as under the Environment Protection Act, 1986 means the presence in the environment of any environmental pollutant.

### **III. Scope:**

POSH Act was enacted by Parliament to give effect to the Convention for protection of women against sexual harassment at workplace. The POSH Act covers sexual harassment resulting in any violation of the women’s fundamental rights to equality under articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution of India and her right to life and live with dignity under article 21 of the constitution and right to practice any profession or to carry on any occupation, trade or business which includes a right to safe environment free from sexual harassment.

The UGC Regulations on curbing the menace of ragging in Higher Educational Institutions, 2009 were passed by the University Grants Commission in the year 2009 to curb the menace of ragging in the Universities in India. The best part of these regulations is that they shall apply to all the institutions including:

- (i) Universities under the Central/provincial/state act
- (ii) Deemed university under the UGC Act, 1956
- (iii) All other educational institutions

The guidelines extend to all the premises, whether located in the campus or outside and also in means of transportation whether public or private. The objective of these guidelines is to ensure completely wiping and prohibiting the activities of ragging

As per the UGC (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018, the core work carried out by the author shall be based on original ideas and shall be covered by Zero Tolerance Policy on Plagiarism. The research work carried out by the student, faculty, researcher and staff shall be based on original ideas, which shall include abstract, summary, hypothesis, observations, results, conclusions and recommendations only, and shall not have any similarities.

The environment protection may be ensured by considering the life cycle of the products and services and designing them to be as sustainable as possible, buying materials and resources that come from renewable sources, modifying the processes to reduce the amount of waste generated, reusing or recycling waste, or passing it on to other businesses to use as a resource, involving employees and other stakeholders in sustainable development.

#### **IV. Need of the policy:**

The zero-tolerance policy on sexual harassment at workplace provides protection against sexual harassment of women at workplace and the prevention and redressal of complaints of sexual harassment and matters related to it.

The need for a zero-tolerance policy on ragging is to ensure that the campus and accommodations facilities are free of the menace of ragging.

The aims of the Anti-Plagiarism Policy is to delineate various forms in which plagiarism may manifest itself; to present the anti plagiarism software as a plagiarism detection tool; to explain procedures in place for handling cases of plagiarism; and to outline punitive action proportional to the extent of the act of plagiarism.

The Green Campus, Energy and Environment Policies will develop exciting new co-curricular and extracurricular practices that encourage students to take the lead in creating positive change. These initiatives call for a thorough review of all infrastructural, administrative functions from the standpoints of energy efficiency, sustainability, and the environment.

## **V. Objectives of the Policy:**

The POSH Policy is meant to promote a healthy work environment that is free from harassment of all kinds for all those covered. To provide a safe and respectful work environment / establish an atmosphere for employees that is free from Harassment or discrimination against employees on the basis of race, colour, creed, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation or gender identity, or physical or mental disability and outline the company's policy to protect all categories of employees (Direct and indirect) against sexual harassment in particular.

The main objectives of the anti-ragging policy shall be to generate awareness amongst the students of dehumanizing effect of ragging inherent in its perversity, to keep a continuous watch and vigil over ragging so as to prevent its occurrence and recurrence, to promptly and stringently deal with the incidents of ragging brought to the notice and to generate an atmosphere of discipline by sending a clear message that no act of ragging shall be tolerated and any act of ragging shall not go unnoticed and unpunished.

The objectives of the anti-plagiarism policy shall be to create awareness about responsible conduct for academic research and writing and promote academic integrity, to prevent plagiarism in academic writing, to establish systems through education and training to facilitate this responsible conduct and to establish systems to detect plagiarism and set a prevention mechanism and punishment for those who breach the responsible conduct.

The objective of zero tolerance policy relating to environmental pollution shall be to apply the principles of good governance (transparency, rationality, accountability, reduction in time and costs, participation, and regulatory independence) to the management and regulation of use of environmental resources.

## **VI. Policy: Guidelines for implementation of the policy**

With respect to the zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment, all organisations with more than 10 employees need to conduct an awareness programme for the employees of the organisation. The organisation has to constitute an internal committee to address the issues and complaints related to sexual harassment within the organisation. The internal committee will also include external members from NGOs working for the welfare of women. Organisations with fewer than 10 employees can approach the Local Committee set up at District Level by the State Government.

With respect to the zero-tolerance policy towards ragging, the institutions are required to publish that the ragging is totally banned in the institution and anyone found doing/abetting ragging would be suitably punished.

The college brochures are required to mention these guidelines in full. The prospectus would include all directions of Supreme Court/Central and State Government as applicable. The application/enrolment form for admission will have an undertaking in English and Hindi and preferably one in regional language to be signed by parent/guardian.

Every institution shall constitute a committee to be known as the Anti-Ragging Committee. To be nominated and headed by the Head of the institution, and consisting of representatives of civil and police administration, local media, Non-Government Organizations involved in youth activities, representatives of faculty members, representatives of parents, representatives of students belonging to the fresher's category as well as senior students, non-teaching staff; and shall have a diverse mix of membership in terms of levels as well as gender.

With respect to the zero-tolerance policy towards plagiarism, all students, faculty members, researchers and staff must get plagiarism check through university authorized software available before uploading/ submitting for any academic purpose in the public domain.

If any member of the University suspects with appropriate proof that a case of plagiarism has happened in any document which has been submitted or uploaded for any academic purpose, concerned department shall report it to the Faculty Dean. Upon receipt of such a complaint or allegation, the Faculty Dean shall investigate the matter and submit his/her recommendations to the University.

The authorities of the University can also take suo motu notice of an act of plagiarism and initiate proceedings as per the UGC (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018.

With respect to the zero-tolerance policy towards environmental pollution, students shall be encouraged to keep their surroundings clean. Waste management shall be done in a systematic manner keeping in mind the recycling and composting processes. Use of plastic in any form shall be discouraged in the campus. Failure to adhere to these shall result in imposition of reasonable penalty.

## **VII. Procedure-**

(Setting up of committees, working of committees, Responsibilities of the committee members, consequences of non- adherence to the guidelines)

- 1) With respect to the zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment, there shall be constitution of an Internal Complaints Committee-
- 2) Every employer of a workplace shall, by an order in writing, constitute a Committee to be known as the “Internal Complaints Committee”: Provided that where the offices or administrative units of the workplace are located at different places or divisional or sub-divisional level, the Internal Committee shall be constituted at all administrative units or offices.
- 3) The Internal Committees shall consist of the following members to be nominated by the employer, namely: — (a) a Presiding Officer who shall be a woman employed at a senior level at workplace from amongst the employees: Provided that in case a senior level woman employee is not available, the Presiding Officer shall be nominated from other offices or administrative units of the workplace referred to in sub-section(1): Provided further that in case the other offices or administrative units of the workplace do not have a senior level woman employee, the Presiding Officer shall be nominated from any other workplace of the same employer or other department or organization; (b) not less than two Members from amongst employees preferably committed to the cause of women or who have had experience in social work or have legal knowledge; (c) one member from amongst non-governmental organizations or associations committed to the cause of women or a person familiar with the issues relating to sexual harassment: Provided that at least one-half of the total Members so nominated shall be women.
- 4) The Presiding Officer and every Member of the Internal Committee shall hold office for such period, not exceeding three years, from the date of their nomination as may be specified by the employer.
- 5) The Member appointed from amongst the non-governmental organizations or associations shall be paid such fees or allowances for holding the proceedings of the Internal Committee, by the employer, as may be prescribed.
- 6) Where the Presiding Officer or any Member of the Internal Committee, — (a) contravenes the provisions of section 16; or (b) has been convicted for an offence or an inquiry into an offence under any law for the time being in force is pending against him; or (c) he has been found guilty in any disciplinary proceedings or a disciplinary proceeding is pending against him; or (d) has so abused his position as to render his

continuance in office prejudicial to the public interest, such Presiding Officer or Member, as the case may be, shall be removed from the Committee and the vacancy so created or any casual vacancy shall be filled by fresh nomination in accordance with the provisions of this section.

As per S. 26 of the Act, Non-compliance with POSH can cost an employer a monetary penalty of Rs. 50,000. An employer can be subjected to a penalty of up to INR 50,000 for:

- Failure to constitute Internal Complaints Committee
- Failure to act upon recommendations of the Complaints Committee; or
- Failure to file an annual report with the District Officer where required; or
- Contravening or attempting to contravene or abetting contravention of the Act or Rules.

With respect to the zero-tolerance policy towards ragging, every institution shall constitute a Committee to be known as the Anti-Ragging Committee to be nominated and headed by the Head of the institution, and consisting of representatives of civil and police administration, local media, Non-Government Organizations involved in youth activities, representatives of faculty members, representatives of parents, representatives of students belonging to the fresher's category as well as senior students, non-teaching staff; and shall have a diverse mix of membership in terms of levels as well as gender. b) It shall be the duty of the Anti-Ragging Committee to ensure compliance with the provisions of these Regulations as well as the provisions of any law for the time being in force concerning ragging; and also, to monitor and oversee the performance of the Anti-Ragging Squad in prevention of ragging in the institution. c) Every institution shall also constitute a smaller body to be known as the Anti-Ragging Squad to be nominated by the Head of the Institution with such representation as may be considered necessary for maintaining vigil, oversight and patrolling functions and shall remain mobile, alert and active at all times.

Depending upon the nature and gravity of the offence as established by the Anti-Ragging Committee of the institution, the possible punishments for those found guilty of ragging at the institution level shall be any one or any combination of the following- Suspension from attending classes and academic privileges, withholding/Withdrawing scholarship/fellowship and other benefits, debarring from appearing in any test/examination or other evaluation process, withholding results, debarring from representing the institution in any regional, National or International meet, tournament, Youth festival, etc, suspension/ Expulsion from the hostel, cancellation of admission, expulsion from the Institution and consequent debarring



from admission to any other institution for specified period, fine ranging between Rs. 25,000/- and Rs. 1 lakh.

With respect to the zero-tolerance policy towards plagiarism, the policy calls for the creation of a Departmental Academic Integrity Panel (DAIP) consisting of the head of the department as Chairman and two other members, one a senior academician from outside the department, to be nominated by the head of the institution; second, a person well versed with anti-plagiarism tools, to be nominated by the head of the department. Plagiarism cases are to be reported to the DAIP, which will also have the power “to assess the level of plagiarism and recommend penalty (or penalties) accordingly.”

The UGC regulations also call for the creation of an Institutional Academic Integrity Panel (IAIP) consisting of the pro-VC/dean/senior academician of the institution as chairman, and three other members, all of them nominated by the vice-chancellor/principal/director of the institution: a senior academic from the home institution; one member from outside the home institution; and the third, a person well versed-with anti-plagiarism tools.

If any member of the academic community suspects with appropriate proof that a case of plagiarism has happened in any document, he or she shall report it to the DAIP. Upon receipt of such a complaint or allegation, the DAIP shall investigate the matter and submit its recommendations to the Institutional Academic Integrity Panel (IAIP) of the HEI.

In case of found guilty of plagiarizing, one shall be considered under following classes/levels of severity-

**Level 1:** Similarities above 10% to 40% - Shall be asked to withdraw manuscript submitted for publication and shall not be allowed to publish any work for a minimum period of one year.

**Level 2:** Similarities above 40% to 60% - shall be asked to withdraw manuscript submitted for publication and shall not be allowed to publish any work for a minimum period of 2 years and shall be denied a right to one annual increment in case of academician. They also shall not be allowed to be a supervisor to any UG, PG, Master's, M.Phil., Ph.D. student/scholar for a period of two years.

**Level 3:** Similarities above 60% - shall be asked to withdraw manuscript submitted for publication and shall not be allowed to publish any work for a minimum period of three years and in case of faculty, shall be denied a right to two successive annual increments and shall not be allowed to be a supervisor to any UG, PG, Master's, M.Phil., Ph.D. student/scholar for a period of three years. → Based on the severity and above penalty levels, in case of below 10

percent of the plagiarism is found, authors can/shall be immediately asked to correct the paper and revert.

With respect to the zero-tolerance policy towards pollution of environment, awareness programmes such as slide-show presentations, street-plays can be organized on a greater scale in colleges, by adopting new instruments, mechanisms and procedures like environmental impact assessment and environmental audit and incorporate environmental objectives in manufacturing processes, minimum usage of hazardous materials and toxic chemicals and plastic.

Imposition of a reasonable amount of fine shall be provided for in case of repeated use of plastic and any other environmentally hazardous substances.

### **VIII. Beneficiaries**

Women employees of any age, students, departments, organisations, undertakings, establishments, enterprises, institutions, offices.

### **IX. UGC Guidelines pertaining to that policy in appendix**

UGC Regulations emphasized the responsibility of Higher Educational Institutes to act decisively against all gender-based violence against employees and students of all sexes, including the third gender. The regulation states that sexual harassment is gender-neutral, and educational institutes should act upon complaints of both male and female employees and all students, male, female, and third gender.

These regulations of the UGC have taken a revolutionary initiative by adopting a gender-neutral approach which means that irrespective of the gender, the victim can lodge a complaint, and the UGC POSH regulations shall protect the rights of students enrolled at the institute and ensure that they are all safe from sexual abuse regardless of the gender.

UGC regulations on curbing the menace of ragging in Higher Educational Institutions, 2009 intends to prohibit any conduct by any student or students whether by words spoken or written or by an act which has the effect of teasing, treating or handling with rudeness a fresher or any other student, or indulging in rowdy or indiscipline activities by any student or students which causes or is likely to cause annoyance, hardship or psychological harm or to raise fear or apprehension thereof in any fresher or any other student or asking any student to do any act which such student will not in the ordinary course do and which has the effect of causing or generating a sense of shame, or torment or embarrassment so as to adversely affect

the physique or psyche of such fresher or any other student, with or without an intent to derive a sadistic pleasure or showing off power, authority or superiority by a student over any fresher or any other student; and thereby, to eliminate ragging in all its forms from universities, deemed universities and other higher educational institutions in the country by prohibiting it.

The new UGC regulations of 2018, titled the "University Grants Commission (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018", brings about a special emphasis on the need for a more aware and integrity driven conduct of academicians indulging in any research or academic writing.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has recently instructed its affiliated universities and colleges to introduce a compulsory six-module course on Environmental Studies at all branches of undergraduate degree.