



MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY



**Mahatma Gandhi University**  
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**Kottayam, Kerala - 686560**

(Re-accredited by NAAC with A Grade)

**Gender Policy document - MG University**

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## **Introduction**

Gender equality is achieved when all genders in a community enjoy the same rights and opportunities across all sectors of society, including economic participation and decision-making, and when the different behaviors, aspirations and needs of women and men transgenders and gender non-binary persons are equally valued and favored. It also denotes eliminate discrimination and provide equal status to individuals irrespective of their gender. Historically women and non -binary gender persons are facing different forms of discrimination and oppression in almost all society in the world. Gender mainstreaming programs and policies are aiming at ending gender-based discrimination. As an institution aims to construct an inclusive community, the University recognizes the choices of community members and their autonomy over their life. . This includes recognition of an individual's self-identified gender that they present to the University.

Gender policy of M G University is committed to ensuring that no students either full time or parttime in university departments as well as in all colleges under university jurisdiction and Administrative employees , faculty members , contract -staffs and those who are enter in to premises of university for any kind of transaction with university , prospective member of staff or students, will be treated unequally on the grounds of the gender in which they present themselves to the University.

It is insisted that everyone within the University community and extended members of the community will observe this policy and should behave according to the principles of the policy ,any act of violating the recommendations of the policy may result in disciplinary action. The policy will be available to every one in the community through appropriate channels .

This policy along with other policies enriches equality and diversity values of MG University and shall be also consist of directives for sexual Harassment policy and procedures for students ,faculty and administrative staff and other community members of MGU , Grievance procedures for staff ,students and faculty members ,Regulations governing student complaints and grievances , Academic appeals procedures , Learning and teaching strategy for gender equality and equity ,Strategy for widening participation and representation of women and other marginalized genders , gender inclusive Promotion review procedures and intersectional approach in building university moral and ethical values.

## **Rationale of the gender policy**

This Gender Policy is an ethical statement of MGU proclaiming its commitment to initiate steps to apply an intersectional gender lens to all aspects of its operations and academic programs on an everyday basis, by making it the touchstone for people of all genders within university community , to share resources and power on a fair and equitable basis and ensure redressing mechanism to address and resolve any previous imbalance(s). It will also stand as a valid directive for utilizing all resources to eliminate gender-based violence, discrimination and injustice on the basis of gender and other societal power relations .

As a gender responsive document this Policy declares the position of the MGU on gender issues as part of its vision, mission and core business. The policy prepares guidelines for adjudicating and

responding to gender issues as they arise in the institution, and influencing the surrounding community and society at large. The pursuit of gender equity is sturdily rooted within the framework of fundamental human rights and gender justice. India's National Gender Policy (NGP) which derives from international conventions and treaties to which India is a signatory affirms this. Also, Indian constitution prohibits discrimination on the grounds of gender is committed to ensuring the observance of the rights of all the members of the community irrespective of gender. To achieve goal, the MGU will adopt and institutionalize a Gender Policy in order to cherish the rights, responsibilities and privileges of being a member of this institution.

### **Policy Vision**

To be a world-class university where gender equity and equality is institutionalized in an intersectional way, and students, staffs, faculty members and workers would integrate gender friendly perspectives into personal and professional dealings in achieving the aims and goals of the University. University shall work towards gender equality and uphold the social justice principles of Indian constitution

### **Policy Mission**

To expand the boundaries of knowledge and academic ethics by cultivating a gender-sensitive space for learning and research and praxis. This policy aims at the transformation of society by actively promoting and advocating gender equity. It also looking forward to produce graduates equipped with attitudes and skills to facilitate intersectional gender perspectives for national and global development. Above all this policy envisages that MGU as a socially engaged institution with high profile impact on gender issues.

### **INSTITUTIONAL GENDER OBJECTIVES**

1. Ensure that the dignity and integrity of both Women, men and all other genders are equally respected and valued
2. Work in fundamental and innovative ways to guarantee that people of all genders have the same rights and the same opportunities to develop individually.
3. Ensure that gender equity and intersectionality is integrated into institutional strategic planning and implementing and that policy development, operational practices and procedures and academic practices and curriculums are all informed by equality of opportunity
4. Serve the interests of both sexes in studies, teaching, research and development activities without compromising to dominant ideologies.
5. Develop and sustain a governance, administrative, teaching and research culture that is gender inclusive and intersectional in all aspects of the university's operations, including admissions, employment and service delivery and inter-intra personal relations at MGU.
6. Ensure Intersectional approach, gender equity and equality in representation on students, administrative staffs, other workers and faculties in decision making bodies
7. Ensure that all workers, staff, faculty members and students are fully aware of, and accept their responsibilities to perform their roles in a way that promotes equality of opportunity and gender mainstreaming

8. Reflect gender sensitivity in the use of language in the University and official communications
9. Identify and redress any perceived barriers to providing and promoting inclusive and intersectional practices for all staff and students and develop action plans to eliminate inequalities in the specific areas of concern
10. Build a University environment which is gender friendly and supportive people of all genders and their specific needs, priorities and roles.
11. Constant auditing and monitoring with a range of specially developed methods, the effectiveness of the actions taken to promote equality of opportunity and publish report annually
12. Ensure that any breach of the policy is reported and dealt with in an appropriate way in accordance with university rules and Indian legal system .
13. To ensure a gender-friendly and non -discriminatory University environment that is respectful of the academic freedom and human rights of each and every gender
14. Provide physical facilities, personnel and financial resources to support the implementation of the MGU gender policy
15. A fair and timely intervention on sexual harassment reported and full support for the functioning of ICC.

### **Sexual harassment and redressal**

In recognition of the Institute's belief that its employees and students have a right to be treated with dignity and respect, MGU has constituted an ICC or gender cell to address sexual harassment at the jurisdiction of MGU. Apart from addressing sexual harassment cases within MGU Jurisdiction , the Cell shall be concerned with issues of gender amity and shall work proactively towards developing a safe and secure environment for employees, and to ensure that all students may gain their education without fear of prejudice, gender bias, hostility or sexual harassment.

As an educational and research institution established on a 750-acre campus, there are several types of relations . employer-employee, student and faculty, research scholar-supervisor, vendor-customer, workers and supervisors ,hostel mates and visitors, daily wages and contract staffs etc. Understanding this multiple work relations , to prevent the commission of acts of sexual harassment and to provide a procedure for the solution, settlement or prosecution of acts of sexual harassment take place at MGU jurisdiction , the ICC is being put in place by the Institute and shall follow the POSH act guidelines.

#### **Constitution of Committees**

- a) Complaints of sexual harassments will enquire through Internal Complaints Committee (GC-ICC) of MGU.
- b) GC-ICC will endeavor to uphold the highest standards of ethics, fairness and accountability in their functioning and will work towards an egalitarian environment where men and women are afforded equitable treatment and equality of opportunity conducive to their professional growth
- c) The Vice chancellor , being the employer for the purpose of constituting the GC-ICC, shall do so by an order in writing.

- d) The GC shall consist of 8 to 16 members, of which at least 50 per cent shall be women. senior woman faculty as Convener, at least three other women faculty one of whom will be Co-Convener, one senior male faculty, one senior woman staff representative as member, the SC/ST-OBC Liaison officer or activist as member, one external member who shall either be from an NGO or association committed to the cause of women or a person familiar with the issues relating to sexual harassment, temporary/contract employee, student members are the suggested members of the committee.

### **Aims of GC-ICC**

- a. To work towards creating an environment towards promoting equality, non -discrimination and gender justice.
- b. Promote gender comradery amongst the university's employees, faculties and students and all who live and work in the campus, spread gender awareness and sensitize all about these issues.
- c. Provide guidelines for protection from sexual harassment and uphold the basic right to work and live with dignity.
- d. Make recommendations to the MGU regarding measures that should be taken to prevent sexual harassment and acts that affect the dignity of women, ensure that the rules and regulations are gender just, and also make 3 recommendations regarding procedures for the prevention, prohibition, resolution, settlement and prosecution of acts of sexual harassment by and of anyone who has working relations with the university
- e. Deal with cases of sexual harassment through the GC-ICC in accordance with this policy and within a fixed time frame, while ensuring that support services are available to the complainant as well as the termination of the harassment, and recommend appropriate punitive action
- f. All complaints of sexual harassment made by a woman employee or woman student, against a male belonging to any of category of university employ or student ,when the sexual harassment is alleged to have taken place within the campus or the workplace shall be accepted by the ICC.

### **Sexual Harassment\***

Sexual harassment as per the Supreme Court Judgment and SHWW Act of 2013 includes any one or more of the following unwelcome acts or behavior (whether directly or by implication) namely:

1. Physical contact and advances
2. A demand or request for sexual favors
3. Making sexually colored remarks; iv. Sending, displaying or showing of pornographic material in physical form or through any electronic media
4. Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature,
5. Any other acts or omissions that are of like nature to the instances above
6. implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in employment as quid pro quo for sexual favors
7. Implied or explicit threat of detrimental treatment in employment
8. Implied or explicit threat about a complainant's present or future employment status
9. Interference with the work of the complainant and creating an intimidating or offensive or hostile work environment for the complainant

10. Meting out of humiliating treatment which is likely to affect the complainant's health or safety
11. Indecent exposure
12. Coerced sexual intercourse, including date rape
13. Physically blocking passages or walk ways; ix. sexual assault or physical assault with sexual intent; x. unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or inappropriate touching or unnecessary close proximity
14. Physical contact or attempt thereof when the victim is under the influence of any intoxicating substance, drugs or alcohol and thereby is not fit to withhold consent or refuse to participate in any activity of sexual nature
15. Physical contact or attempt or preparation thereof by rendering a person directly or abetting in so rendering a person under the influence of any intoxicating substance, drugs or alcohol and thereby prevent the person from withholding consent or refusing to participate in any activity of sexual nature
16. Physical violence, including sexual assault; xiv. sharing sexist jokes, letters, messages either by electronic mail, mobiles or otherwise that may cause humiliation or offense to the complainant and despite requests by the complainant or others to desist from sharing the same, are still carried out by the offender or even without such advice, when they are, by their nature, humiliating, offensive or vulgar
17. any unwelcome messages, images, video clips sent via mobiles, emails, or any links to webpages/sites, and which cause or are likely to cause either awkwardness, offense, embarrassment or harassment will also amount to sexual harassment. xvi. display of sexually offensive pictures, materials or graffiti
18. Unwelcome inquiries or comments about a person's sex life
19. Comments on personal appearance, comments on physical features, age, sexual orientation, etc. and spreading rumors about an individual's sexual behavior; xix. unwelcome sexual flirtation, advances, propositions including continued expressions of sexual interest after the recipient has made it clear that such invitations are not welcome
20. Making offensive gesticulations, at the complainant or verbal abuse with sexual overtones;
21. Persistent unwanted attention with sexual overtones or watching, stalking or contacting a person physically or virtually or unwanted touching or brushing against a complainant's body
22. Implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in employment by grant of promotion, local or foreign travel, favorable working conditions/ assignments, or in education by giving a passing grade, granting of honors or scholarship, participation or engagement of the complainant in any of the Institute's activities or the grant of benefits or payment of a stipend or allowance etc.
23. Derogatory or degrading remarks or innuendoes directed toward the members of one sex, or one's sexual orientation or used to describe a person

**\*The above instances of sexual harassment are illustrative**

**Note that -**

Sexual harassment is a manifestation of power relationships and often occurs within unequal relationships in the workplace. Sexual harassment may be part of a pattern of behavior or occur only once. It may be directed at an individual or at a group of people. It may take place during face-to-face contacts, but can also be inflicted by means of telephone calls, letters or e-mails. There is a wide range of ambiguous behavior that might offend some people but not necessarily others: comments on dress, compliments about appearance, unintentionally offensive jokes that many others would find acceptable. Individuals will have different views about what is offensive. However, the Institute does not allow any cultural value or practice to legitimize behavior that harasses, intimidates, threatens or humiliates others.

**Duties of the Employer**

The employer shall: ( Here MGU Head )

1. Provide a safe working environment at the workplace which shall include safety from the persons coming into contact at the workplace.
2. Display at conspicuous places in the workplace and also include in its prospectus, the penal consequences of sexual harassment and penalties prescribed in this policy, give information about the redress mechanism and constitution of the GC-ICC that has been put in place, to encourage people to file their grievances
3. Organize workshops, awareness and training programmed at regular intervals to sensitize the employees and students of the Institute with issues of sexual harassment in the workplace including the law and the provisions of POSH act , and mandate that all employees and students have received adequate training in this regard.
4. Organize orientation programmed for the members of the GC-ICC to deal with sexual harassment complaints.
5. Assist in securing the attendance of the respondent and witnesses before the ICC.
6. Provide assistance to the complainant if the complainant chooses to file a complaint to the police in relation to an offence under the Indian Penal Code or any other law for the time being in force.
7. Treat sexual harassment as a misconduct under the service rules and initiate action for such misconduct.
8. Monitor the timely submission of reports by the ICC.
9. Ensure that filing of a sexual harassment complaint shall not adversely affect the complainant's status, job, remuneration, promotion, education, research or grades as case may be
10. Publish and update these names and contact numbers on University website.

## **Procedure**

The GC-ICC shall receive and take cognizance of complaints made about sexual harassment at the workplace. . Upon receiving a complaint, the Chairperson/Presiding Officer shall convene an inquiry committee from amongst the members of the ICC. The quorum for hearing a complaint shall be a minimum of three members, including the external member and the Chairperson or Presiding Officer as appointed by the Chairperson in her absence. If complainant or respondent belong to any of the marginalized sections, the committee conducting the inquiry shall include the member who is the SC/ST-OBC Liaison officer. Where the complainant, respondent or witness is a student, one student member shall be part of the inquiry committee. At least half of the members of the inquiry committee shall be women. Hereinafter, the term GC-ICC shall refer to the “inquiry committee” with reference to acts done while conducting an inquiry under this policy. The ICC shall conduct inquiries into these complaints, place findings before the concerned employer and recommend penalties against the respondent in accordance with the rules and procedures laid down. It shall take necessary steps during the pendency of an inquiry as outlined in this policy. It shall make arrangements for appropriate legal, psychological/emotional and physical support for the complainant if so desired. In the case of third party/outsider harassment, with the consent of the complainant, the Institute shall initiate action by making a complaint with the appropriate authority having jurisdiction over the offence. Further, the Institute and the GC-ICC will actively assist the complainant in pursuing the complaint. It shall treat all the information received and the details of both the complainant and the respondent confidentially and maintain strict confidentiality throughout the process. The inquiry should be conducted in an atmosphere of respect, solidarity and trust even as the ICC sets about the task of eliciting, verifying and corroborating. It shall maintain all records viz. the written complaint, the notes of the meetings, the evidence and action-taken report, etc. for future reference. It shall maintain communication with the complainant and respondent to keep them informed of the various stages of the inquiry proceedings. It shall submit annual reports in the format prescribed under the Act to the appropriate authority stating the number of sensitization programs conducted, the number of complaints received, number of cases disposed of, number of cases pending and the nature of action taken by the employer on the findings of the GC-ICC.. It shall inform the complainant of the availability of criminal provisions for redress in addition to the internal compliant mechanism and assist the complainant in filing a police case where assistance is requested. Where the respondent is an employee to whom the CCS (CCA) Rules are applicable, a “charge sheet” shall be provided to the employer for information and for further necessary action. During the period of inquiry, if the respondent harasses or threatens the complainant, witnesses or members of the GC-ICC, a separate charge shall be framed and the intimation of the same shall be given to the employer. Further police/ criminal action shall be initiated simultaneously. Procedure for registering complaints:

- i. A complainant may make a complaint of sexual harassment within three months from the date of the incident, and in case of a series of incidents, within a period of three months from the date of the last incident. However, the GC-ICC may extend the period beyond three months, but not exceeding three months thereafter, for the reasons to be recorded in writing, if it is satisfied that circumstances were such which prevented the complainant from making the complaint within the said period.
- ii. All complaints must be in writing. Where the complaint has been made orally the GC-ICC shall direct the complainant to file a written complaint. The Presiding Officer or any other



member of the ICC may also render reasonable assistance to the complainant, for making any such complaint in writing, if the complainant is unable to make the complaint in writing themselves, and it shall be authenticated by the complainant under dated signature or thumb impression as the case may be

In order to ensure a safe, secure and tension-free atmosphere at workplace and campus, the ICC may make certain proposals to the employer. For the procedure ,ICC shall follow the posh act guidelines without failure.

### **Ending Victimization and Discrimination of sexual harassment survivor**

If a complainant or witness feels the experience of retaliation, victimization or discrimination in the nature of intimidation, pressure to withdraw the complaint or threats for reporting, testifying or otherwise participating in the proceedings, the complainant or witness should immediately report the matter by sending an email to the chairperson of the GC-ICC. The MGU strictly prohibits retaliation/ victimization/discrimination against any complainant for filing a complaint or against anyone helping to address the complaint. Any retaliation or reprisals shall be subject to immediate corrective action by the employer, up to and including suspension and termination in case of any physical assault.

### **Right for appeal**

The complainant and the respondent shall have the right to appeal if they are dissatisfied with the decision of the Disciplinary Authority as per the provisions contained in CCS (CCA) rules or other relevant rules of the Institute.