



POLICY ON PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN

PREAMBLE:

WHEREAS in view of the right to dignity and protection of women against sexual harassment, and its recognition as Universal Human Right under various international conventions, instruments and protocols like United Nation's Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) as ratified by the Government of India

AND

WHEREAS as per guidelines laid by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in *Vishakha V. State of Rajasthan* [1997 (7) SCC 323] & Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013

FLAME University Pune is committed to develop an environment free of violence, harassment, exploitation in which the students, faculty and non-teaching staff can work together with dignity in an environment free of all forms of sexual harassment. As such, FLAME University shall follow below guidelines for the prevention of sexual harassment of women at FLAME University and for establishment of grievance redressal mechanism in this regard.

OBJECTIVE:

In order to ensure that women on FLAME University campus are free, fearless, secure and empowered and students, teachers, researchers, and non-teaching staff can work together in an environment free of all forms of sexual harassment on FLAME University campus, this policy is laid down with following objectives:

1. To evolve a permanent mechanism for prevention and redressal of sexual harassment cases.
2. To develop an environment in the university that shall deter acts of sexual harassment and other acts of gender based violence.
3. To create awareness about the various forms of sexual harassment.
4. To ensure implementation of policy in letter and spirit through proper reporting of complaints and their follow up procedures.
5. To fulfill directive of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India enjoining that all employers develop and implement a policy against sexual harassment of women at workplace.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT' AT WORK PLACE SHALL MEAN:

No women on the campus of FLAME University shall be subjected to sexual harassment, including unwelcome sexually determined behavior, physical touch, advances, sexually loaded remarks, showing pornography, sexual demand, request for sexual favors or any other unwelcome conduct of sexual nature whether verbal, textual, physical, graphic or electronic, sexually colored language or any other action, which may include and is not limited to:

1. Implied or overt preferential treatment in education, examination or employment.
2. Implied or overt threat of detrimental treatment in education, examination or employment.
3. Implied or overt threat about the present or future educational, examination or employment status.

4. Conduct which interferes with work or creates an intimidating or offensive or hostile work environment.
5. Humiliating conduct constituting health and safety problems.

INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE:

An Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) has been constituted to provide redressal of complaints related to sexual harassment and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. ICC is headed by a senior female employee, and more than 50 percent of the members are female. Members of ICC also have experience in social work or have legal knowledge and are nominated by the Vice Chancellor in consultation with Registrar for a two year term.

Currently the FLAME University ICC comprises the following:

- **Chairperson:**

Prof. Neeta Sharma

- **Members:**

Ms. Shobhana Abhyankar - Member

Prof. Kanish Debnath - Member

Prof. Suniti Vadalkar - Member

Ms. Tejashree Thakkar - Member

Ms. Akshita Singh - Member

Student Council Representative - By Invitation

COMPLAINT MECHANISM

Reporting of complaint:

Any faculty, non teaching staff or student may submit a written complaint of sexual harassment to the Chairperson or a member of the Internal Complaints Committee or Dean/ Head/In-charge of the respective Faculty/Department/Centre/Section/Division or Registrar of the University. The complaint received shall be immediately forwarded to the Chairperson of the ICC to initiate the process of inquiry, who in turn shall call a meeting of the Committee.

Hearing of complaint:

ICC shall conduct a hearing of the complaint about sexual harassment. Quorum of the committee for hearing a complaint shall be one half of the total membership. ICC may constitute an inquiry committee if it deems fit. Strict confidentiality of the matter has to be maintained by all concerned during pendency as well as after conclusion of the case.

During an inquiry and/or till final disposal of the matter, some interim measures may also be adopted to ensure that complainant is not influenced or coerced to her disadvantage by the accused or any of his accomplices.

Disposal of complaint:

Chairperson of the ICC can cause to convene meeting or consultation amongst members of the committee ensuring the required quorum. After the Chairperson is satisfied that all the proceedings pertaining to particular complaint have been completed, she shall prepare a report on the matter along with recommendations of ICC, and submit the same to the Vice Chancellor within fifteen days of the receipt of a complaint.

REDRESSAL

(i) Action Taken pertaining to FLAME University employees:

In case the complaint is proved against the accused, who is a research associate/faculty/other employee of the university, ICC shall have following options to suggest an action according to gravity of conduct of the offender pertaining to sexual harassment in question:

- Warning, reprimand, or censure
- Written apology
- Bond of good behavior
- Adverse remarks in confidential report
- Removal or debarring from supervisory duties
- Denial of membership of statutory bodies
- Stopping increments/ promotions
- Demotion/reduction in rank
- Suspension for specific period
- Dismissal

(ii). Action Taken Report pertaining to FLAME University students/research scholars:

In case the complaint is proved against the accused, who is a student/research scholar of the university, ICC shall have following options to suggest an action according to gravity of conduct of the offender pertaining to sexual harassment in question:

- Warning, reprimand, or censure
- Written apology
- Bond of good behavior
- Debarring entry into hostel
- Debarring entry into university
- Suspension for a specific period
- Withholding examination results
- Debarring from Examination
- Denial of admission for further studies in university
- Stopping of any scholarship/fellowship or an intended award/prize
- Withdrawal of any award/prize/title/position won
- Expulsion from University
- Any other relevant mechanism under University rules

(iii). Action Taken Report pertaining to persons not covered above (e.g. contract workers, service providers, suppliers, or other persons not in direct/indirect employment of University):

In case the complaint is proved against the accused, who is a person not falling under clause (i) or (ii) above e.g. contract workers, service providers, suppliers, or other persons not in direct/indirect employment of University, ICC shall have following options to suggest an action according to gravity of conduct of the offender pertaining to sexual harassment in question:

- Warning, reprimand, or censure
- Written apology
- Bond of good behavior
- Information to actual employer communicating the misconduct
- Barring entry to the University campus
- Barring to run/manage/work in any commercial enterprise or to provide services on the University campus
- Any other mechanism prescribed under relevant government laws

The Vice Chancellor shall be the sole arbiter to take action on the basis of recommendations of ICC in all of the above cases.

FALSE COMPLAINT

If ICC does not find merit in a complaint or finds the complaint to be false, it shall cause a special meeting to discuss the findings and to decide whether a show-cause notice is to be issued to the complainant to explain, within seven days (in writing), as to why disciplinary action should not be taken against the complainant for wrongly setting in motion the ICC machinery. Within one week of receipt of any explanation from the complainant to this notice, or after the expiry of the time specified for such explanation, ICC shall again convene a special meeting to consider the explanation or a lack thereof. In event of no, insufficient, or unconvincing explanation, ICC shall forward its findings to Vice Chancellor for his/her action which may include warning/suspension/imposition of fine/ termination of service/admission.

ESTABLISHMENT OF WOMEN CELL

Constitution:

FLAME university has constituted a **Women Cell** to discuss and deliberate upon issues related to dignity, safety, prevention of sexual harassment of women at work place and overall development of female employees. It is a broad based body headed by a female Faculty of the university and has more than fifty percent female members.

The current composition of the Cell is as follows:

- **Chairperson:**

Prof. Juhi Siddharth

- **Members:**

Prof. Divya Balan – Member

Prof. Garima Rajan - Member

Prof. Kasturi Chatterjee - Member

Prof. Shalaka Shah - Member

Prof. Smita Chaudhry - Member

Student Council Representative Member

Ms. Kavitha Jayraman- Member

Ms. Tejashree Thakkar – Member

Members of Cell are nominated by Vice Chancellor for a two year tenure.

Objectives:

- To increase awareness about problems faced by women in general and working women in particular due to gender issues.
- To sensetise the students about the issues related to youth, particularly female students.
- To disseminate knowledge of rights and laws related to women and gender justice.
- To create a sense of healthy work culture in University.

- To enhance self-esteem and self-confidence of girl students, female faculty and staff in University.

Functions:

Women Cell shall conduct sensitization programs through seminars, conferences, workshops, posters, film shows, debates, skits and all other such activities that are required to promote and enhance the development and empowerment of women at FLAME University in particular and the society in general. The Cell shall also function to ensure safe and congenial atmosphere for women to work in university campus. This body shall be only advisory in nature and can make recommendations to Vice Chancellor.

Gender Sensetisation: Gender Sensitisation involves creating awareness about gender issues and working towards and creating an enabling environment of gender justice where men and women can work and learn together with a sense of personal security and dignity.

APPEAL:

All appeals under provisions of this policy shall lie before the Governing Body of FLAME University. The decision of Governing Body shall be final and binding on all and no further appeal shall be admissible against such a decision.

REMOVAL OF DIFFICULTIES:

Vice Chancellor of the FLAME University shall have all the powers to remove difficulties in implementation or interpretation of this policy to protect the womens' interest on FLAME University campus in consultation with Chairperson of the Women Cell.