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INSTITUTIONAL GENDER SENSITIZATION, EQUALITY AND PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

A comprehensive institutional framework for dignity, equality, gender sensitization, prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment.

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to establish a safe, respectful, inclusive and gender-sensitive educational and working environment at ANIDS. It provides a structured framework for promoting gender equality, preventing gender-based discrimination and harassment, sensitizing the institutional community, and addressing complaints of sexual harassment through the legally prescribed mechanism.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- Promote dignity, equality, respect and equal opportunity for all members of the ANIDS community.
- Create awareness of gender stereotypes, unconscious bias, discrimination, harassment and appropriate professional conduct.
- Prevent sexual harassment and gender-based harassment in academic, clinical, administrative and work-related settings.
- Ensure accessible, confidential and fair complaint and redressal mechanisms.
- Ensure that the statutory Internal Committee is constituted and functions in accordance with applicable law.
- Integrate gender-sensitive principles into teaching, clinical training, research, administration and student activities.
- Prevent retaliation, victimization and intimidation connected with a complaint or participation in an inquiry.
- Promote a culture in which concerns can be raised safely and respectfully.

3. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all persons associated with ANIDS, including students, interns, postgraduate students, faculty, residents, teaching and non-teaching staff, administrative personnel, contract workers, trainees, visiting faculty, patients and attendants where relevant to institutional activities, vendors, service providers, security personnel, volunteers and participants in institutional events.

The Policy covers conduct occurring on campus, in clinics, laboratories, classrooms, hostels or institutional facilities; during academic or clinical postings; at conferences, field visits, official travel, social or cultural events connected with ANIDS; and through institutional electronic communication or other digital platforms when the conduct is connected with the institution.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

ANIDS is committed to an environment free from discrimination, intimidation and sexual harassment. Every person covered by this Policy shall be treated with dignity and fairness. Gender shall not be a basis for unequal access to education, assessment, employment, professional development, leadership opportunities, clinical learning, facilities or institutional participation, subject to lawful requirements.

Sexual harassment of women at the workplace is prohibited under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. ANIDS shall maintain the statutory complaint

mechanism and shall also undertake broader gender sensitization and equality initiatives for the entire institutional community.

5. LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This Policy shall be interpreted and implemented in conjunction with the legal and regulatory framework applicable to ANIDS, including amendments and successor provisions where applicable.

- The Constitution of India, including principles of equality, non-discrimination and dignity.
- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act).
- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Rules, 2013, as applicable.
- University Grants Commission (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of Sexual Harassment of Women Employees and Students in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2015, as applicable to the institution.
- UGC regulations/guidelines concerning student grievances, equity, gender sensitization and safe institutional environments, as applicable and as amended from time to time.
- Applicable university, affiliating authority, statutory dental education/regulatory authority, employment and institutional disciplinary rules.
- Relevant directions, judgments and binding instructions issued by competent courts and authorities.

The UGC currently lists the 2015 Regulations on prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment of women employees and students in higher educational institutions and also publishes gender-sensitization and safe-campus guidance. cite turn0search0 turn0search3 turn0search6

The POSH Act provides the statutory framework for prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment of women at the workplace, including provisions on constitution of the Internal Committee, complaints, inquiry, interim measures, confidentiality and appeals. cite turn0search25 turn0search26

6. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
Gender sensitization	Developing awareness and understanding of gender roles, stereotypes, power relationships, equality, dignity and respectful conduct, with the aim of reducing bias and discriminatory behaviour.
Gender equality	Equal dignity, opportunity, participation and access to institutional resources and processes, without unlawful discrimination on the basis of gender.
Gender discrimination	Unfair or unequal treatment on the basis of sex or gender, including exclusion, disadvantage or differential treatment in institutional processes.
Sexual harassment	Conduct falling within the definition of sexual harassment under applicable law, including unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct

	of a sexual nature and other legally recognized circumstances.
Aggrieved woman	A woman of any age, whether employed or not, who alleges that she has been subjected to sexual harassment at a workplace, as defined by the POSH Act.
Respondent	A person against whom a complaint has been made under the applicable complaint mechanism.
Internal Committee (IC)	The committee constituted by the employer under the POSH Act; it may be referred to as the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) in institutional documents.
Workplace	The institutional workplace and other locations/activities covered by applicable law, including work-related travel and activities connected with the institution.
Retaliation	Any adverse action, intimidation, threat, discrimination, victimization or disadvantage directed at a person for making a complaint, participating in an inquiry or supporting a complaint.

7. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

ANIDS shall maintain an appropriate institutional structure for prevention and redressal. The statutory Internal Committee shall function independently within its legal mandate. A Gender Sensitization Committee/Cell may coordinate awareness and preventive activities and shall refer matters requiring statutory inquiry to the Internal Committee or other competent institutional mechanism.

7.1 Internal Committee - Statutory Composition

- A Presiding Officer who is a woman employed at a senior level, subject to the statutory requirements.
- At least two employee members preferably committed to the cause of women or having experience in social work or legal knowledge.
- One external member from an NGO/association committed to the cause of women or a person familiar with issues relating to sexual harassment, as required by law.
- At least one-half of the total members shall be women.
- Members shall be nominated by the competent authority for a term not exceeding three years, subject to the Act and applicable regulations.

The statutory composition and tenure requirements above are based on Section 4 of the POSH Act.

7.2 Gender Sensitization Committee/Cell

- Coordinate annual gender-sensitization activities.
- Support orientation programmes for students, interns, faculty and staff.
- Promote gender-sensitive communication and professional conduct.

- Identify institutional barriers affecting safety, participation and equality and recommend improvements.
- Maintain non-confidential activity records and annual reports.
- Refer complaints that fall within the POSH Act to the Internal Committee and other matters to the appropriate institutional mechanism.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Key responsibilities
Principal / Head of Institution	Overall implementation; constitute committees; provide resources; ensure lawful action and institutional oversight.
Internal Committee	Receive and inquire into POSH complaints; recommend interim and final measures; maintain confidentiality; conduct awareness activities as required.
Gender Sensitization Committee/Cell	Coordinate prevention and awareness programmes; promote gender-sensitive practices; identify systemic concerns; refer complaints appropriately.
Heads of Departments	Promote professional conduct; ensure awareness; promptly route complaints; prevent retaliation.
Faculty / Supervisors	Maintain professional boundaries; model respectful conduct; support safe reporting; avoid victim-blaming.
Students / Interns / Trainees	Follow professional conduct standards; participate in sensitization programmes; report concerns responsibly; maintain confidentiality.
HR / Administration	Support committee functioning, records, communication, facilities and implementation of lawful recommendations.
Security / Support Staff	Follow safety procedures, protect privacy and escalate safety concerns through designated channels.
All members of ANIDS	Treat others with dignity; comply with this Policy and cooperate with lawful institutional processes.

7.3 Independence and Conflict of Interest

Committee members shall disclose actual or potential conflicts of interest. A member with a conflict shall not participate in the relevant decision or inquiry where recusal is required.

8. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Dignity and respect
- Equality and non-discrimination
- Confidentiality

- Natural justice and fair hearing
- Impartiality and conflict-of-interest management
- Non-retaliation
- Accessibility and reasonable assistance
- Timely action in accordance with applicable law
- Protection from victimization
- Proportional and lawful institutional response

9. PREVENTION AND GENDER SENSITIZATION PROGRAMME

9.1 Mandatory Awareness Activities

- Orientation for newly admitted students and interns.
- Orientation/induction for newly appointed faculty and staff.
- Periodic awareness programmes on gender equality, professional boundaries, sexual harassment and reporting mechanisms.
- Annual training for Internal Committee members.
- Display of the Internal Committee composition and complaint contact information at conspicuous locations and on institutional digital platforms.
- Awareness material covering respectful communication, digital conduct, consent, confidentiality and non-retaliation.
- Where appropriate, workshops involving clinical faculty and staff on gender-sensitive patient interaction and professional boundaries.

9.2 Gender-Sensitive Institutional Environment

- Adequate, safe and appropriately maintained sanitation facilities.
- Reasonable attention to lighting, access control and safety in campus and clinical areas.
- Mechanisms for reporting safety concerns.
- Access to menstrual hygiene facilities where feasible and appropriate.
- Facilities and arrangements for students or employees requiring privacy for health, caregiving or related needs, subject to institutional resources.
- Accessible facilities and non-discriminatory participation for persons with disabilities.
- Gender-sensitive language in notices, teaching materials and institutional communications.
- Periodic review of student and staff feedback concerning safety and inclusion.

9.3 Gender Champions and Student Participation

ANIDS may nominate or encourage student Gender Champions or equivalent peer leaders to support awareness, respectful campus culture and referral to institutional mechanisms. Such students shall not investigate complaints or replace the statutory Internal Committee.

UGC describes Gender Champions as student leaders who can help create positive social norms and promote gender sensitivity in educational institutions. ?cite?turn0search6?

10. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

The following conduct is prohibited where it amounts to unlawful discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, retaliation or violation of institutional rules:

- Unwelcome sexual comments, propositions, jokes, gestures or messages.
- Unwanted physical contact or advances.
- Displaying or circulating sexually explicit or inappropriate material in an institutional context.
- Repeated unwelcome personal communications of a sexual nature.
- Conditioning academic, clinical or employment benefits on sexual cooperation.
- Threatening or disadvantaging a person for rejecting unwelcome conduct.
- Creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment through prohibited conduct.
- Gender-based insults, humiliation, exclusion or stereotyping that violate institutional rules.
- Retaliation against a complainant, witness, committee member or person assisting an inquiry.
- Knowingly interfering with a complaint or inquiry, including intimidation of participants.