

## Gender Sensitivity

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### Internal Complaints Committee

An Internal Complaints Committee has been constituted under the Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013. The following persons are members of the Internal Complaints Committee at IIM Visakhapatnam: Prof. (Ms) Rupa Chanda (Presiding Officer), Dr. (Ms) Deepa Mohan, Mr. Biswanath Behera, Ms. G Janaki Ramachandram (Member Convener), Ms. N S Rama (External Member) and Ms Sayanti Mukherjee (Student Representative).

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### Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace

#### Guidelines

#### General Information

##### Preamble

Sexual harassment of women at workplace or in the classroom violates human rights and other laws. It is imperative that one is able to identify sexual harassment conduct and knows how to respond to it. This is critical both for the individual as well as for IIM Visakhapatnam as an institution.

##### IIM Visakhapatnam's Position

IIM Visakhapatnam is committed to upholding the Constitutional mandate to combat sexual harassment of women and ensure that human rights of all those who fall within its jurisdiction are safeguarded. The Internal Complaints Committee was formed in 2014 to act as a vehicle to address the issue of sexual harassment of women at workplace.

##### Role of Internal Complaints Committee

The role of the said Committee is as follows:

- To take cognizance of complaints about sexual harassment and conduct enquiries
- Provide assistance and redressal to the victims and recommend action to be taken against the harasser, if necessary
- To recommend arrangements for appropriate psychological, emotional and physical support (in the form of counselling, security and other assistance) to the victim if s/he so desires

- To play a preventive role by making efforts to provide a congenial atmosphere at the institute by arranging periodic programmes and lectures, if required, on prevention of sexual harassment of women at the workplace

### **Why you should care?**

- You as a student/staff member can be a potential victim. You need to understand how to recognize and deal with sexual harassment.
- You can also be seen as the harasser. It is your responsibility to ensure that your behaviour is appropriate.
- Potential consequence for a student seen as a harasser - disciplinary action could be in the form of warning, written apology, debarring entry into a hostel/campus, suspension for a specific period of time, debarring from examinations, debarring from holding posts such as member of committees or even expulsion.
- Potential consequence for a staff member seen as a harasser - disciplinary action could be in the form of warning, written apology, stoppage of increment, withholding of promotion, debarring entry into campus, suspension for a specific period of time, debarring from holding posts such as member of committees or even dismissal.

### **Objectives**

- To increase knowledge about prevention of sexual harassment of women at workplace
- To sensitize all stakeholders to recognize that sexual harassment can cause mental and physical harm to the victim
- To promote dialogue about sexual harassment in the academic community
- To provide guidelines for addressing sexual harassment

### **What is sexual harassment?**

- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature such as loaded comments, remarks or jokes, letters, phone calls or emails, gestures, exhibition of pornography, lurid stares, physical contact, stalking, sounds or display of a derogatory nature
- When a person(s) uses, with a sexual purpose, the body or any part of it or any object as an extension of the body in relation to another person without the latter's consent or against that person's will, such conduct will amount to sexual assault
- When deprecatory comments, conduct or any such behaviour is based on the gender identity/sexual orientation of the person and/or when the classroom or other public forum of IIMV is used to denigrate/discriminate against person(s), or create a hostile environment on the basis of a person's gender identity/sexual orientation

## **When?**

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of teaching/guidance, employment, participation or evaluation of a person's engagement in any activity of IIM Visakhapatnam
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment

## **Sexual harassment**

VERBAL: Unwelcome comments/sexual epithets

VISUAL: Offensive pictures/photos/cartoons

PHYSICAL: Unwelcome physical contact/standing too close/ogling/suggestive gestures

WRITTEN: Unwelcome personal letters/emails

## **Applicability of IIM Visakhapatnam's policy**

### **Complaints made:**

- By a member of IIM Visakhapatnam against any other member of IIM Visakhapatnam
- By an outsider against a member of IIM Visakhapatnam or by a member of IIM Visakhapatnam against an outsider
- Irrespective of whether sexual harassment is alleged to have taken place within or outside the campus
- Members of IIM Visakhapatnam
- Students
- Faculty
- Non-teaching staff
- Residents: Temporary or permanent resident of any premises allotted to a member of IIM Visakhapatnam
- Outsider: Any person who is not a member or a resident
- Irrespective of whether made in a one-to-one or in a multiple person context e.g. classroom

## **Examples**

- Repeated and unnecessary derogatory remarks about any gender in the classroom
- Repeated unwelcome sexual attention (comments, questions about a individual's sexuality or sex life)
- Repeated and unnecessary comments by a professor, supervisor, colleague or fellow-student about the person's own sex life and desires
- Repeated undesired physical contact, such as brushing up against someone
- Direct or indirect threats/bribes for unwanted sexual activity
- Sexual innuendos
- Intrusive sexually explicit questions
- Sexually suggestive sounds or gestures
- Repeated requests for unwelcome dates
- Jokes about sex or those demeaning to persons which are based on their gender
- Spreading rumours about a person's sexuality
- Displays of sexually graphic material
- Inappropriate touching

## **Seven Things You Should Know about Sexual Harassment**

- Behaviour that may qualify as sexual harassment can range from lewd remarks or gestures to persistent, unwanted sexual attention, to jokes of a sexual nature to stalking and sexual assault.
- Harassers may be respected, talented, and well-liked. They are often in a position of power, influence or authority over the victim.
- The victim may be a man or a woman. The victim could be of the same sex. Sexual harassment can occur between people of the same sex even though neither is sexually attracted to persons of the same sex.
- The victim doesn't have to be the person harassed but could be anyone affected by the offensive behaviour.

- Certain behaviour would be harassment to some but not to others. One question the courts ask in determining if there is harassment is "How would it look to a reasonable person"?
- To be considered as harassment, the behaviour must be unwanted or unwelcome.
- Many who engage in offensive conduct stop when asked to stop.

### **How to respond?**

- Harassment is unlikely to stop until confronted
- IIM Visakhapatnam supports and encourages all members of the community who believe they are being sexually harassed to take steps to end the harassment. Steps you can take
  - Communicate to the harasser that his conduct is offensive and unwelcome
  - Keep records of any verbal or written communication you have with the harasser
  - It is not necessary that you personally confront the harasser. If you are uncomfortable, seek help

### **When you need help...**

- Talk to or email any member of the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)
- Complain in writing to any member of the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) at [ic@iimv.ac.in](mailto:ic@iimv.ac.in)
- Remember... filing of a complaint WILL NOT adversely affect your career/grades/academic status

### **What happens to a complaint?**

- If the aggrieved person wishes to, the IC may take steps to settle the matter between the complainant and the respondent through conciliation. If settled, the IC will record the settlement and recommend no further action.
- Where the aggrieved person does not request conciliation, IC initiates an enquiry.
- IC will complete the enquiry and submit a report to the Director/Head of the Institute within a month.
- The Director/Head of the Institute will initiate action within 10 days of receipt of report.

**During the enquiry**

- All proceedings will be kept confidential
- All efforts will be made to ensure that the complainant and witnesses are not discriminated against or penalized by the respondent

**What IIM Visakhapatnam expects from you**

- Behave appropriately
- Speak up if you come across sexual harassment
- Help IIM Visakhapatnam provide a safe and respectful environment for all

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