

GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL POLICY

(Chapter - XIII, University Policies & Guidelines)

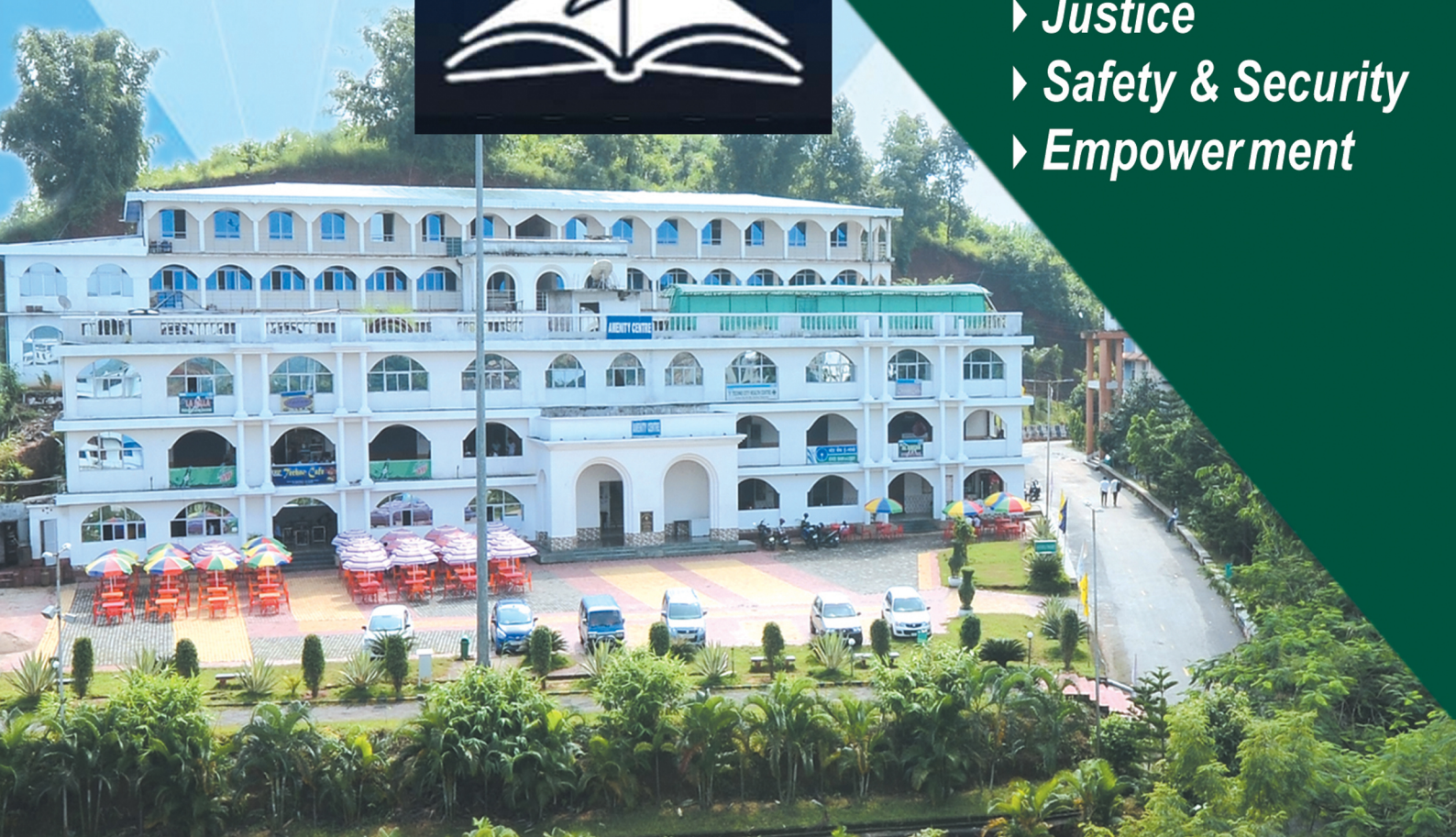
- *Anti Ragging*
- *Sexual Harassment*



Grievance Fast@USTM



- ▶ *Swift Contact*
- ▶ *Action Fast*
- ▶ *Resolution*
- ▶ *Justice*
- ▶ *Safety & Security*
- ▶ *Empowerment*



CHAPTER XIII

GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL POLICY

As per the guidelines of UGC the USTM **Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC)** is in place. The purpose of the committee is to create awareness of availability for students to report grievances, to investigate the cause of grievances and to ensure effectual solution depending upon the gravity of the grievance. The grievance has to be redressed by the committee within the stipulated time period not exceeding more than 15 days depending on the nature of the grievance.

Help line No's: 9954708001/9864026097/0361-2895030

Grievance App : GRIEVANCE FAST @ USTM

The objectives of the Grievance Committee are:

- Develop a responsive and accountable attitude among the stakeholders in order to maintain a harmonious educational atmosphere in the Institute.
- Uphold the dignity of USTM by ensuring a strife free atmosphere in the campus through promoting cordial Student- Student relationship and Student – Teacher relationship etc.
- Encourage Students to express their grievances / problems freely and frankly without any fear of being victimized.
- Advice Students of USTM to respect the right and dignity of one another and show utmost restraint and patience whenever any occasion of rift arises.
- Advice all students to restrain from inciting students against other students, teachers and USTM administration.
- Advice all staffs to be affectionate to students and not behave in a vindictive manner towards any of them for any reason. Suggestion/Complaint Box will be installed in front of Grievances cell in the Administrative Block in which the Students, who want to remain anonymous, put in writing their suggestions for improving the Academic/Administration of USTM.

Procedure for lodging complaint and Redressal Mechanism:

- **Any registered student wants to lodge a complaint of any sexual harassment/abuse incident may directly submit her grievance through online Grievance Portal available on the USTM website/Grievance APP namely GRIEVANCE FAST @ USTM or in person to the office of the Director Students Affairs.**
- **The Students may feel free to put a grievance in writing and drop it in boxes.**

The Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) office shall acknowledge the receipt of each grievance complainant immediately.

- After the receiving the complaint, the Grievance Redressal Committee(GRC) office, shall categorise, analyze the merits of the grievance the complaint will be forwarded to the concern school/department, individual and request them to redress the complaint not exceeding 7 days from the receipt of grievance complaint.

- Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) office shall coordinate, monitor and ensure redressal within the stipulated time. Depending up on the seriousness of grievance the Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) will follow them up regularly till their final removal by way of notices.
- Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) will make a detailed review of the redressal process. In case the committee feels satisfied with the resolution provided by the respective school/department/ individual, then it will intimate the same to the grievant either via e-mail or phone call. Once the student indicates acceptance of the resolution at this level, then the matter is deemed closed;
- The office of the Chairperson of the GRC will maintain an updated record of all complaints, actions taken and closure status.
- In case the complaint has been made against a member of the GRC or a member of the Appeal Committee for GRC, the concerned member will be barred from participating in any proceedings till the case has been closed.

Re-appeal:

1. Aggrieved parties who are not satisfied with the decision of the committee, may appeal to the Appeal Committee for GRC for a reconsideration and review within 15 working days.
2. The members of the Appeal Committee are follows:
 - a. Chancellor (Chairperson)
 - b. Vice Chancellor
 - c. Director, Human Resource
3. The decision of the Appeal Committee, in such matters shall be final and there shall be no further appeal in the matter.

Note:

1. The committee will recommend appropriate action against complainant(s), if complaint made are found to be baseless or trivial.
2. Board of Management (BOM) of the University may revise the procedure from time to time.

Grievance Redressal Committee:

1. Dr Alpana Choudhury	Chairperson
2. Mr Shamim Goney	Member
3. Dr Nazir Hussain	In – charge SSB Hostel
4. Ms Girimallika Sarma	Member
5. Mr Gautam Gogoi	Member
6. Dr Deboja Sharma	Member
7. Ms Poly Borgohain	Member
8. Mr Aftab Khan	Legal Expert
9. Dr Nurujjaman Laskar	Nodal Officer
10. Alexandrio W Kharkrang	Student Member
11. Ananya Borah	Student Member

ANTI-RAGGING POLICY

As per the direction of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, the University of Science and Technology, Meghalaya, hereafter called USTM, will strictly follow the "UGC regulation on curbing the menace in Higher Educational Institutions 2009". In accordance with these regulations the admitted student as well the parents concerned must have to submit two individual affidavits as per format.

EMERGENCY HELPLINE NO'S:

Help line No's: 7002943146/9954708001/0361-2895030

Grievance App : GRIEVANCE FAST @ USTM

HOW TO REPORT THE RAGGING CASES:

Any registered student wants to lodge a complaint of ragging case may directly submit his/her grievance through online **Grievance Portal** available on the **USTM website/Grievance APP** namely **GRIEVANCE FAST @ USTM** or in person to the **office of the Chairman, University Grievance Redressal Committee(GRC)**.

A Ragging Free Campus

USTM is totally committed to enforce the guidelines issued by the Hon' ble Supreme Court of India and other statutory bodies.

1. Education, especially higher education, should open new vistas of learning and knowledge. Equality of opportunities and highest regard for human rights are two fundamental pillars of effective learning and practical knowledge. We, at USTM, are committed towards having a society that is just, equal and free from any prejudice towards anybody.
2. We jealously guard the privileges of students and enthusiastically shield the basic human right and liberties of all of them, specially the new-comers to the Institution. We all welcome the new-comers with an open and warm heart and endeavor to make their entry into this seat of learning as charming as possible.
 - 2.1 Towards this end we are pledged to have a Ragging Free Institution at all spheres.
3. Ragging as defined by Honorable Supreme Court of India in its landmark judgement in 2001, is "Any disorderly conduct whether by words, spoken or written or by an act which has the effect of teasing, treating or handling with rudeness any other student, indulging in rowdy or undisciplined activities which causes or is likely to cause annoyance, hardship or psychological harm or to raise fear or apprehension thereof in a fresher or a junior student or asking the students to do any act or perform something which such student will not do in the ordinary course and which has the effect of causing or generating a sense of shame or embarrassment so as to adversely affect the physique or psyche of a fresher or a junior student."
 - 3.1 Ragging, which is also known as hazing or fagging in the western world is a punishable offence.
 - 3.2 The Committee constituted by the Honourable Supreme Court of India in SLP no.24295 of 2006, popularly known also as Raghavan Committee, recommended certain measures to curb

ragging. We at USTM in strict compliance of the recommendations have adopted, Guidelines issued by the Supreme Court of India for compliance by all students.

MECHANISM TO PREVENT & HANDLE THE RAGGING CASES:

3.2.1 Anti Ragging Committee (ARC): Anti Ragging Committee under the Chairmanship of the Academic Registrar of the university has been appointed to oversee all anti ragging initiatives with members from outside and inside the Institution.

3.2.2 Anti Ragging Squad (ARS): The Anti-Ragging Squad of the University under the Chairmanship of the Director Students Affairs and the committee members take up the following measures to prevent ragging.

- a. Vigilance at all hours including at odd hours all around the Campus, particularly in the hostels.
- b. Arrangement and conduct of joint sensitization programmes for counseling new –comers and the old students.
- c. Arrangement of and presence in “ice breaking” sessions among the old and new students in the hostels.
- d. Occasional dining with the borders in the hostels to instill confidence among the new-comers.
- e. Monitor and direct the working of Hostel Level Anti Ragging Cells comprising of student volunteers from all categories within the particular hostel.
- f. Conduct anonymous random surveys among fresher to check whether the Campus is indeed free from ragging.
- g. Any other activity the Anti-Ragging Committee might delegate to the Squad.

3.2.3 Hostel Level Anti Ragging Cell (HLARC): These Cell are already in place in all Hostels of the University with the Warden as the Chairperson and student volunteers as its members. The names and telephone numbers of all the members are notified prominently in different places of the hostel premises.

Hostel level cells are responsible for carrying out the directions from the Anti-Ragging Committee or Anti Ragging Squad. The cells will ordinarily plan and organize “ice breaking” sessions and explore the talents among the new –comers, and guide each of the fresher in understanding the rules and traditions of the hostel and that of the Institution. They are responsible at the grassroots level for prevention and reporting of any incident of ragging.

Full publicity to be given to the provisions of punishment to be inflicted on the students found guilty of ragging through open circular suitable posters in Academic Buildings, HOSTELS, Canteen and other such places where maximum exposure could be generated.

Irrespective of these formal groups, all members of the community will remain vigilant and any incident of ragging would immediately be notified to the Anti-Ragging Committee or to the Anti –ragging Squad.

The Vice Chancellor will address the students on the first day of the session which will be followed by address of all the heads of concerned Departments to instill confidence among the fresher’s against ragging. Concerned course teachers are also to address the students in class rooms regarding the need for complying with the directives.

Right and Duties of New –comers and their Guardians:

A fresher should consider the university community as his/her family and should maintain cordial relationship with other members of the community particularly with the senior students. He/she like any other student, enjoy all rights and privileges that are available to any free citizen of this country.

It is the duty of the students, therefore not to obey any orders or request from anyone in the hostel (apart from the administrator) or within the Campus if he/she feels embarrassed or humiliated by complying with such requests. It is the responsibility of the fresher or any other person (s) who is/are aware about such request or order to bring it to the immediate notice of the Dean of students' Welfare or any member of the ARC, ARS or Cell mentioned above. It should be noted that failing to do so is an offence as per University rules and thus liable to be punished. The confidentiality of such student(s)/guardian(s) will be strictly maintained. The guardian should co-operate with the university authorities to seek redressal of grievances of the fresher, if any.

Rights and Duties of the old (senior) students:

As the new-comers are, in most of the case, first timer in USTM, it is the duty of the seniors to guide the fresher properly so that they feel 'at home'. The senior should remember the days when they left their parents or the homely environment and set foot in this his/her to unknown campus. It is the modesty, helpfulness, love and co-operation of the seniors that will contribute towards making the new comers good and responsible members of the university community. It is also responsibility of the old student to explore the talents in the fresher in the "ice-breaking" sessions" in hostels. However, they should note that this can be done only in the presence of the members of the ARC, or ARS or their representatives.

5.1 **Seniors should take** active and wholehearted part in making sure that no ragging is taking place anywhere in the Campus and should report any such incidents immediately. It is the commitment of the Institution authority to keep the identity of such students in strict confidence. It is noteworthy that persons involved directly or indirectly in ragging including the onlookers are liable to be punished under the Institution rules.

ACTION:

"If authority has reasonable grounds to suspect that the student is involved in ragging as per UGC Regulations on Curbing the Menace of Ragging in Higher Educational Institutions, 2009 or any regulation amendments made thereafter, the authority may-

- (a) The University Anti-Ragging Committee (ARC) convener as per compliant details will arrange for preliminary investigation and recording of statements of students involved;
- (b) The ARC meeting will be convened and committee has to conduct and complete the proceedings within a maximum of 48 hours.

6. Punishment:

6.1 A student found guilty of ragging under the provision of Regulations on Maintenance of Students' Discipline of USTM is Punishable by suspension/rustication from Institution depending on the gravity of the offence.

6.2. Under the provision of Act, Educational Institutions are also liable for disciplinary proceedings if they fail to or neglect in taking action against the erring students.

6.2. Students found to be indulging in ragging will be expelled from the Institution for a period not less than one academic session, while the authority concerned shall have to put out advertisements in local newspapers making the announcement public. The advertisement shall also carry name of the father as well as the permanent address of the student expelled and punished for indulging in ragging.

7. Epilogue:

The Honorable Supreme Court suggested (on the recommendation of Raghavan Committee) that the every single incident of ragging where the victim or his/her parent/guardians or the Head of the Institute is not satisfied with the Institute's arrangement for action, an FIR must be filed by the institutional authority with the local police. As soon as FIR is logged, the offence will be treated as per provisions of the law of the Land (i.e., Assam Prohibition of Ragging Act, 1999).

As mentioned in the Raghavan Committee report, the aim of this document is to disseminate the idea of prevention of ragging through educational campaign. We sincerely hope that the provisions highlighted here will restrain any misadventure from any part of the senior students, who are indeed the path breaker for their juniors.

8. Pledge of Students:

All students of USTM is to sign an undertaking stating that they will strive for a Ragging Free USTM.

Anti-Ragging Committee (ARC):

- 1. Dr Azmol Hussain Barbhuiya-Chairman**
- 2. Mr Shamim Goney – Convener**
- 3. Dr. Alpana Choudhury-Member**
- 4. Mr Rizaul Karim Ahmed- Member**
- 5. Ms Fahmida Sahin Bora-Member**
- 6. Dr. Nazir Hussain-Warden**
- 7. Mr.Aftab Khan-Legal Advisor**
- 8. Mr.Nurujjaman Laskar-Nodal officer.**

Policy Against Sexual Harassment

Preamble:

According to the Constitution of India, Right to equality is a Fundamental Right that includes the Right to Equality is a prohibition of discrimination and equality of opportunities in matter of public employment. Equality between men and women, right to work, to education and to public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement and provision of just and humane conditions for work and maternity relief, are important Directive Principles of State Policy.

The Supreme Court of India in its August 13, 1997 judgment in Vishakha and Other vs. State of Rajasthan and others makes it obligatory for every employer and other responsible persons to follow the guidelines laid down by the Court and to evolve a specific policy to combat sexual harassment in the work place. Educational institutions are bound by the same directive.

In compliance with the mandate of the Supreme Court judgment made effective from 9th December 2013, USTM adopted this policy to prevent, prohibit and punish sexual harassment for girl students and women staff at the university and constituted a cell namely the **Women's Cell** in the year 2014.

In the year 2017, as per the Ref. to the letter *D.O.No.F.91 -3/201 4(GS) 6th June, 2017* issued by UGC the Internal Complain Committee has been constituted with effect from 10.06.2017 and the Women's Cell is renamed as Internal Complaint Committee (ICC).

Purpose:

The main aim of the committee is to sensitize all staff, students and every member of the university regarding the guidelines issued by the Supreme Court prohibiting gender discrimination and sexual harassment at workplace/institute, prevent any sexual harassment incident, monitor the safety arrangements for the girl students and women staff members, organize self-defense programs, etc. to ensure and sustain the friendly and safe environment for the women.

EMERGENCY HELPLINE CONTACTS

Help line No's: 7002943146/9954708001/0361-2895030

Grievance App : GRIEVANCE FAST @ USTM

Objective & Functions:

- To fulfill the directive of the Supreme Court of India enjoying all staff and students to develop and implement a policy against Sexual harassment of women at work place.
- To prevent gender discrimination and sexual harassment by promoting gender equality amongst all members of the University community.
- To promote a social, physical and psychological environment that will raise awareness about and deter acts of sexual harassment of women.
- To ensure implement of laid down procedures including the constitution of appropriate committees for purpose of gender sensitization and to conduct enquiries into complaints of sexual harassment.

- To take immediate action against the guilty (after prior investigation) within 24 hours of the complaint received.

Definition of Sexual Harassment:

On December 9, 2013, Supreme Court of India held that sexual harassment of women is a violation of the fundamental rights of women to work in a safe environment. According to the Supreme Court guidelines sexual harassment includes such unwelcome sexually determined behavior (whether directly or by implication) such as the following:

- Physical contact and advances.
- A demand or request for sexual favor
- Showing pornography
- Any other unwelcome, physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.

According to the Code of Conduct at work Place Prepared by the National Commission for Women in 1998, sexual harassment includes such unwelcome sexually determined behavior by any person either individually or in association with other persons or by any person in authority, whether directly or by implications, such as the following:

- Eve Teasing
- Unsavory remarks
- Jokes causing or likely to cause awkwardness or embarrassment
- Gender based insults or sexist remarks
- Unwelcome sexual overtone in any manner such as over telephone (obnoxious telephone calls) and the like
- Touching or brushing against any part of the body and the like
- Displaying pornographic or other offensive or derogatory pictures, cartoons, pamphlets or saying
- Forcible physical touch or molestation and
- Physical confinement against one's will and any other act likely to violate one's privacy.

Supportive Measures:

(1) The rules, regulations or any such other instrument by which ICC shall function have to be updated and revised from time-to-time, as court judgments and other laws and rules will continue to revise the legal framework within which the Act is to be implemented.

(2) The Executive Authority of the USTM must mandatorily extend full support to see that the recommendations of the ICC are implemented in a timely manner. All possible institutional resources must be given to the functioning of the ICC, including office and building infrastructure (computers, photocopiers, audio-video, equipment, etc.), staff (typists, counseling and legal services) as, well as a sufficient allocation of financial resources.

(3) Vulnerable groups are particularly prone to harassment and also find it more difficult to complain. Vulnerability can be socially compounded by region, race, class, caste, sexual orientation, minority identity and by being differently abled. Enabling committees must be sensitive to such vulnerabilities and special needs.

(4) USTM will conduct a regular and half yearly review of the efficacy and implementation of their anti-sexual harassment policy.

(5) All schools under USTM, will incorporate sessions on gender in their orientation and refresher courses. This will be across disciplines, and preferably mainstreamed using the UGC SAKSHAM Report which provides indicative modules in this regard.

(6) Gender Sensitization programs, Orientation courses for administrators conducted at USTM will have a module on gender sensitization and sexual harassment issues. Regular workshops are to be conducted for all sections of the USTM community.

(7) Counseling services will be institutionalized at USTM through trained counselors.

(8) Adequate lighting will be provided as a necessary component of infrastructure and maintenance.

(9) Adequate and well trained security staff will be engaged. Security staff will receive gender sensitization training as a part of conditions of appointment. Efforts will be made to engage women security officers.

(10) USTM will ensure reliable public transport, especially within large campuses between different sections of the HEI, hostels, libraries, laboratories and main buildings, and especially those that do not have good access for day scholars. Lack of safety as well as harassment is exacerbated when employees and students cannot depend on safe public transport. Reliable transport will be arranged by USTM to enable employees and students to work late in libraries, laboratories and to attend programmes in the evenings.

(11) USTM, being a residential University, providing the women's hostels. Considering that the growing population of young women wishing to access higher education, hostel accommodation is desirable in both urban and rural areas and at all levels of higher education which provides a modicum of protection from harassment of all kinds.

(12) Concern for the safety of women students will not be cited as a justification to impose discriminatory rules for women in the hostels as compared to male students. Campus safety policies will not result in securitization, such as over monitoring or policing or curtailing the freedom of movement, especially for women employees and students.

(13) USTM undertakes to provide adequate health facilities. In the case of women this must include gender sensitive doctors and nurses and should have collaboration with healthcare institutions for emergency services.

(14) ICC will ensure the proper functioning of the surveillance equipment's like CCTV, etc and a review will be done twice in a year.

Meetings of the Committee:

The members of the Committee shall meet at least twice in a year. The Chairperson shall preside over the meeting. In the absence of the Chairperson, the second senior female Faculty member shall preside over the meeting.

1. The quorum of the meeting of the Committee shall be five of its members. If the quorum is not complete in any meeting, it shall be adjourned for half an hour and thereafter, the meeting shall precede with those members who are present in the meeting.

2. All decision in the meeting will be taken through mutual consent from the members of the Committee

present in the meeting. In the case of any disagreement among the members regarding any decision, Chairperson of the Committee shall hold the authority to take the final decision and her decision would be considered as final.

Procedure for Registering Complaint and Immediate Action:

1. Any registered student wants to lodge a complaint of any sexual harassment/abuse incident may directly submit her grievance through online Grievance Portal available on the USTM website/Grievance APP namely GRIEVANCE FAST @ USTM or in person to the office of the Chairperson, Womens' Cell (WC) or to the Internal Complaint Committee.

2. The ICC as per the compliant details will arrange for preliminary investigation and recording of statement of student involved;

3. The ICC meeting will be convened and committee has to conduct and complete the proceedings according to the level of the offence maximum within 24 hours.

4. The ICC will submit its report and punitive action to be taken against the concerned students in writing and send all relevant documentation in proper format to the Registrar office for record purpose. The same will be provided to the students in writing along with a copy to be handed over to the parents, mentor and case file for In-disciplinary issues.

The Enquiry Committee will consist of:

- One member from the institute from where the complaint is reported
- All the members of the ICC.
- There can be representation of one male member in the committee. The enquiry committee will be headed by a woman and will have a women healthcare staff of the university preferably the residential doctor or nurse.

Procedure of the Enquiry:

- The inquiry committee shall investigate into the incident by laying down its own procedure, to find out if the accused is prima facie guilty and the nature and extent of the guilt.
- To determine what constitutes sexual harassment will depend upon the fact and circumstances of each case.
- The Enquiry Committee shall submit its report to the Chairperson within 12 hours.

Procedure of Redressal:

- If there is a prima facie case against the accused, the Womens Cell may recommend immediate suspension till the person is proved innocent or the issue is settled.
- Effort must be made to resolve the dispute through counseling.

- In case the accused is found guilty, the USTM-WC may recommend appropriate punitive action to be undertaken by the Vice Chancellor.
- If required, the ICC will refer the complaint to a lawyer to lodge a complaint with the concerned police station. The complaint shall then keep the ICC informed about progress with the complaint.
- The complaint shall have the right to appeal to the Chancellor if he/she is not satisfied by the action taken by the Vice Chancellor.

Punitive Action:

An employee guilty of sexual harassment shall be liable to give a written apology to the victim and any of the following punitive actions may be taken:

- Suitable censure/warning
- Withholding of increments
- Reduction to lower service, grade or post
- Compulsory retirement
- Removal from service
- Dismissal from service

A student found guilty of sexual harassment shall be liable to give a written apology to victim and any of the following punitive actions may be taken:

- Suitable censure/warning
- Withholding/withdrawing scholarship/fellowship and other benefits
- Suspension /expulsion from the hostel
- Rustication from the Institute for a specified period
- Expulsion from the Institute
- Expulsion from the Institute

ICC shall do its best to provide justice as per its good intentions and ability for the complainant.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES INTERNAL COMPLAIN COMMITTEE:

Sl No	Name Of The Activity	Organized By	Tentative Schedule
01	Sensitization program on gender issues and sex related crimes and abuse	Office of the Director Students Affairs	During the beginning of the new academic session.
02	Wide publicity on the existence of Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) at the university and the procedure of approach in case of any sexual harassment.	Internal Complaint Committee (ICC)	During the beginning of the new academic session.
03	Celebration of International Women's Day/Girls Child Day etc. to create the awareness on issues related to women's safety and rights.	Event Management Forum	On the scheduled dates
04	Workshops on Sexual Harassment/Gender Equity, etc	Event Management Forum	Dates as per the convenience of the university management.
05	Self Defense Training Workshops	Internal Complaint Committee (ICC)	Minimum twice in a year.

Members Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)

Name	Designation	Contact Details
	Chairperson	
	Faculty Member	
	Faculty Member	
	Non-teaching Member	
	Non-teaching Member	
	Student Member from each Department	

CONTACT:

For any clarification and Details, Registrar/Director Welfare, USTM may be contacted.

Campus

Techno City, Khanapara, Kling Road, Baridua, 9th Mile, Ri-Bhoi, Meghalaya-793101

Ph. 0361-2895030/ 07002303751/ 098540-23060

E-mail : ustm2011@gmail.com, Web : www.ustm.ac.in

