

**CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK
FOR
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION
ON
BASIC FACILITIES & AMENITIES FOR SAFE SECURE
ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN
&
WOMEN CELL (FOR SENSITIZATION, POLICY
IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND GRIEVANCE
REDRESSAL) IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

The recommendations of the UGC Committee on women safety and security:

The UGC is committed to the goal of developing a safe, secure and violence free environment in all the educational institutions across the country. It has been reviewing the safety of the campus communities especially women from time to time and issuing guidelines for the same. In this regard, the UGC again setup a committee in 2022 and tasked it with reviewing and updating the safety guidelines for implementation.

On a general note, the committee observed that there is a strong need to challenge the culture of silence that perpetuate the acts of violence against women, be it within the campus or outside. The committee, however, was cognizant of the prevailing norms and practices of masculinities in the functioning of educational institutions that posed a real hurdle in the effective implementation of policies meant to combat sexual harassment and gender based violence in higher educational institutions (HEIs). It was therefore, imperative that HEIs emerged out of the denial mode and acknowledged the prevalence of sexual harassment on campuses and thereafter, implemented the UGC guidelines as a multi-dimensional redressal mechanism. Gender sensitisation of each and every individual on the campus including the vice chancellor, registrar, the principal, the administrative officers, all the teaching and non- teaching staff, students, research scholars, all service providers and workers (permanent, temporary and contractual) will pave the way for making our campuses safe and secure for women.

The committee also observed that UGC's earlier report titled, "*Saksham: Measures for ensuring the Safety of Women and Programmes for Gender Sensitisation on Campuses*" was quite comprehensive and suitable for the task.

Hence it recommends that Saksham should act as a handbook for developing gender sensitisation programmes in HEIs. A soft copy of the 'Saksham' must be freshly circulated in all HEISs across the country to implement the policy guidelines for women's safety and security.

The committee suggests the following fresh guidelines to create safe, secure and gender equitable environment in all HEISs.

The guidelines are broadly classified into the following two interlinked domains:

- I. Infrastructural facilities and amenities for a safe and secure environment:**
- II. Women Cells (for sensitization, policy implementation, monitoring and grievance Redressal)**

Guidelines for basic facilities & amenities for secure environment for women on campuses and Women Cell (for sensitization, policy implementation, monitoring and grievance redressal) in higher educational institutions

1. Students should be provided with a handbook at the time of admission that would contain detailed information about rules and regulations regarding proper conduct and behaviour expected of them. It should list the helpline numbers of ICC members, student counsellors, anti-ragging cell, proctor office, medical emergencies, health centre, canteen, and other university authorities to be approached in case of need.
2. Professional counseling services should be available on the campus to address the psychological and emotional concerns of the students.
3. Safety of women is a paramount concern for all. The higher education choices are, quite often, limited by perceptions of risk involved in going 'outside' the home for higher education. Therefore, efforts by the college/university administration to make their campuses better equipped and safer for women would strengthen women's participation in institutions of higher learning. Infrastructural improvement measures, therefore, would act as a strong component in creating a women friendly campus.
4. The HEIs should ensure easy access to basic sanitation and hygiene facilities for women such as clean, well maintained and fully functioning separate restrooms equipped with 24 hours tap water supply, soap, covered dustbins, sanitary pad disposal bins and vending machines in all

its buildings. There should be proper sanitary staff deployed to keep the facilities clean and usable at all times.

5. The campus and the adjoining areas should be well lit. The sports and other play grounds and public parks should have flood lights. All the roads and streets on the campus, and the areas around the main/central library, the hostels, and parking lots must have adequate street lighting. There should be no dark stretches anywhere on the campus.
6. The HEIs should provide reliable and consistent transport facilities and feeder buses for all students, especially for women students and female staff, for a safe transit within the campus. The services should be provided till late hours as laboratories and libraries are open till late.
7. All the buildings, the open public spaces and other infrastructural amenities including transport, restrooms, footpaths, entry and exits should be friendly for specially abled Students.
8. A sufficient number of female security guards should be hired from credible security firms.
9. Each campus should have adequately equipped with primary health care center along with an ambulance facility to ensure women's safety by availing the primary and emergency health care services on a 24 hours basis within the campus.
10. Boundary wall provisions are essential for ensuring the safety of students especially where campuses are located in rural or out of town, secluded

areas. In this regard the university/college premises must have a boundary wall to curtail unauthorized access of outsiders to the campus.

11. All the public spaces on the campus such as streets, libraries, corridors, playgrounds, parks, sports stadia, laboratories, libraries, parking lots should be under CCTV coverage with a centralized surveillance system to monitor the behavior and activities of students, staff, and visitors. A system of issuing passes to all visitors at the campus entry should be in place.
12. Childcare centers and crèches with trained personnel should be available at subsidized charges.
13. The HEIs should build more hostels for women and all women students who need hostel rooms should be given this facility. Hostels should be designed to offer contemporary amenities such as the mess, canteen, clean restrooms, self-service laundry rooms fitted with washing machines, Wi-Fi, lounge, entertainment facilities for indoor games, and reading rooms etc.
14. Healthy and nutritious food should be available at all the canteens and the mess premises of the college/university and its quality should be regularly checked by the food safety officials.
15. The administration should organize self-defense classes/ training camps for female students and employees on a regular basis.
16. Every college/university/educational institution must have an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) constituted as per the legal requirements in

the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. The ICC will work towards prevention and grievance redressal and look into all complaints of sexual harassment filed by the women students and women staff members and adhere to all the rules and regulations stipulated in this Act.

17. Information about the ICC, its members, their contact details via phone and email, and details about the role and responsibilities of ICC should be prominently uploaded on the website of the institution. The same should also be disseminated widely through posters or brochures put up at prominent places, on notice boards of all departments, offices, hostels, auditoriums and sports stadia. A copy of the act should also be uploaded on the website of the institution. Complaint /grievance boxes should be put up at discreet locations in all buildings of the institution. An anonymous complaint should also be addressed.

18. Universities must advocate a zero tolerance policy with respect to sexual harassment and gender based discrimination on the campus. In this regard, all the necessary actions should be taken and norms should be followed as per the official gazette of India, University Grant Commission (Prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment of women employees and students in higher educational institutions) Regulation, 2015.

19. Gender sensitization seminars, contests/exhibitions/debates/ and film screenings should be organized regularly to sensitize the students, teachers and other staff about the existing gender stereotypes that reinforce gender based discrimination and violence. In this regard, an Annual Fest can also be instituted around the Women's Day to create

awareness on gender equality through interactive sessions, performative arts, film discussions, essay and poetry writing, poster making, photography and critical debates. The selected pieces may be published in the campus magazine. A gender equality wall may be maintained in the campus and students should be encouraged to express their views on a daily basis to orient fellow students and staff members towards the need to build gender inclusive societies.

20. HEIs should instill self confidence in young women to become achievers, leaders and entrepreneurs in order to empower them socially and economically. There should be a strong focus on developing and promoting gender inclusive curriculum in order to provide equal career opportunities, irrespective of gender.

21. The HEIs must take strong steps to counter the practices of stigmatization and secondary victimization of the complainant/victim. This could be done through legal awareness lectures, workshops, seminars and conferences that would instill confidence in women to report any instance of sexual harassment or gender based violence that they observe, come to know about or experience. In this regard, the HEIs may invite the services of the legal counselors from State Legal Service Authority (SLSA), District Legal Service Authorities (DLSA), or the law department, legal advocacy groups and in-house legal counselors etc.

22. Similarly, the campus community should regularly invite eminent members of society such as professionals, and functionaries from the state, corporate and civil society who are known to promote gender equality in their respective fields.

23. The HEIs should regularly organise health awareness and health check-up camps to spread awareness about issues such as breast cancer, menstrual hygiene, use of contraceptive pills, unwanted pregnancy, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, stress induced disorders, hormonal imbalance, Polycystic Ovarian Disease (PCOD) etc.
24. The revised curriculum as per NEP 2022 should create ample space for vocational skill development and entrepreneurship for women to enable them to become economically independent.
25. The HEIs should try to motivate Women in general and more specifically women from socially disadvantaged groups, or women who are disabled to continue their education by offering scholarships and funding opportunities.
26. The administration machinery of the HEIs should ensure the use of gender-inclusive language for all official communications.
27. Annual reports of the HEIs should include the data about the number of complaints of sexual harassment received, successfully disposed of and pending, without revealing the identities of complainants.
28. The HEIs are supposed to submit a periodic report to UGC in regards to the measures taken for safety and security of women employees and students in the premises.