

Anti-Harassment, Discrimination and Gender Relations Policy

Preamble

AMET promises to provide an equal opportunity atmosphere for learning and excellence based purely on merit and unhindered by personal background, beliefs, age, social status or gender.

Purpose

- This policy wishes to address issues relating to discrimination or harassment pertaining to caste, race, gender, colour, creed, religion, age, social status, national origin, ethnicity, disability and sex by outlining the procedures for Redressal of grievance and accompanying consequences.
- To comply with the law of the land, i.e. the POSH Act Of 2013, as amended from time to time.
- To provide appropriate work conditions in respect of work, leisure, health and hygiene to ensure there is no hostile environment for any student or employee.

Scope

- Applies to all individuals involved with the organization—employees, managers, contractors, customers, vendors—in all settings (workplace, online).
- All University-owned or operated properties, including academic buildings, halls/hostels, libraries and training sites.
- All college-sponsored events, activities, internships, and study tours, regardless of location.

Policy Provisions

- **Definition of Harassment:** Harassment, includes sexual harassment (unwanted advances, favours), verbal (threats, slurs, jokes), physical (touching, assault), and visual (offensive gestures, images) conduct, creating intimidating or offensive environments. Any verbal, visual or written reference or social media posts or trolling pertaining to the age, civil status, caste, creed, religion, gender, nationality, colour, ethnicity, or disability of any student or employee will be construed as harassment. Harassment will also include misusing any position of power to impede anyone's progress based on the above behaviours or discriminating basis above grounds in appointments to AMET.
- **Prohibited Conduct:** Includes unwelcome touching, sexual advances, discriminatory jokes, bullying, intimidation, trolling, and creating hostile work or career progression conditions.

- **Affected Party:** could be a student, employee, faculty or a visitor who has been or perceives to have been harassed or discriminated against by another individual and reports, in writing as per the Redressal mechanism.
- **Reporting Procedures:** Cadets and employees should report in writing to the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC), with options for conciliation and appeals.
- **Investigation & Action:** Promises thorough, impartial investigations with evidence collection, leading to corrective actions for violations, and addressing false accusations.
- **Anti-Retaliation:** Strictly forbids punishing anyone for reporting harassment or participating in an investigation, with severe penalties for retaliation.
- **Training & Prevention:** Often involves mandatory training to educate staff on identifying inappropriate behaviour and understanding their rights/responsibilities.

Grievance Redressal Mechanism & Escalation Matrix

1. The **affected party** should approach the Internal Complaints Committee and lodge the complaint in writing by email or in print asking for a date and time stamp as acknowledgement.
2. Subsequently, the affected party will be called for a statement, to be recorded on video camera, providing details of the accused, date, time, incident details etc.
3. The ICC will then call the accused for a statement in person and record the same on camera.
4. The ICC will then call any witnesses to record their statements in camera.
5. The ICC will then inform both the affected party and the accused of a timeline within which they hope to resolve the issue.
6. Post resolution, the affected party and the accused would be made aware of the decision of the ICC in writing with date and time stamp.
7. The affected party and the accused have a right to appeal the decision within a month of the decision being conveyed.
8. If, after the appeal and a revised decision, both parties are not convinced of the fairness of the decision, they can file a civil case of torts under the laws of the land.
9. In any case, the process from steps 1 to 7 will not take more than 89 calendar days.
10. All records of correspondence and video recordings of hearings will be maintained and not destroyed.
11. If accused is found guilty by the courts, he/she will be terminated from service.
12. AMET may decide, on its own, for some other due punishment pending the court's decision.

Support System:

A Psychological Counsellor is available to all cadets 24x7 for advice and discussion and the Cadet Complaint Resolution Cycle (CCRC) starting with registering an online compliant and ending with the resolution of the grievance ensures all complaints are addressed in a given time frame and seen to resolution.

An annual training regards the policy will be organised post each annual or other review to familiarise the students and staff of the changes and the attendance log for the same maintained for inspection.

Recordkeeping & Communication:

All instances of punishment and recommendations of the Committee are recorded and made available for inspection.

Students facing punishment are advised in writing of the reasons and the punishment with a copy to their parents or guardians.

Closure records for all cases and policy acknowledgment receipts from all stakeholders are maintained in a secure, central repository as part of the institutional audit trail.

Review of the Policy:

The Policy will be reviewed annually or after each major incident or change in the laws of the land.