

## **Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)**

The Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) at Sacred Heart College (SHC) is established to ensure a safe, secure, and equitable environment for all female students and employees, in accordance with the UGC Regulations 2015 and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2013.

The following is a detailed overview of the ICC's structure, objectives and operational procedures:

### **1. Core Mandate and Objectives**

The ICC is founded on the constitutional rights of women to gender equality (Article 14) and the right to life with dignity (Article 21). Its primary objectives include:

- **Zero Tolerance Policy:** Maintaining an environment free from all forms of gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, and abuse.
- **Policy Implementation:** Developing and enforcing institutional policies against harassment and recommending punitive actions against guilty parties to the management.
- **Awareness and Prevention:** Promoting gender amity through sensitisation programmes, awareness campaigns for new students, and legal workshops in collaboration with police or legal experts.
- **Psychological Support:** Providing a supportive environment and counselling services to help victims recover from trauma.

### **2. Committee Composition**

The committee at SHC consists of the following members:

- Coordinator: Dr Pawan Kumar Jaiswal.
- Faculty Members: Mrs Durga Jagtap and Mr Hukumsingh Baghel.
- Non-teaching Representative: Mr Kapil Patidar.

### **3. Complaint Procedure**

Any student or employee of the college has the right to lodge a complaint regarding sexual harassment.

- **Timeline:** Complaints must be submitted in writing within three months of the incident (or within three months of the last incident in a series).
- **Submission Methods:**
  - A written and signed letter addressed to the Coordinator or any committee member.
  - Electronic communication via email for those unable to communicate in person.

- A physical complaint box located on campus; notes dropped here must include the complainant's name, roll number/department, and signature.
- **Oral Complaints:** If a complaint is made orally, a committee member will document it in writing. However, it will not be acted upon until the complainant signs the document.

#### **4. Investigation and Redressal Process**

The ICC follows a strict protocol to ensure fairness and confidentiality:

- **Immediate Action:** The committee meets at least twice a year, but will convene immediately upon receiving a complaint.
- **Confidentiality:** Strict confidentiality is maintained throughout the enquiry process.
- **Investigation Framework:** To ensure an atmosphere free of intimidation, the complainant and the accused are interviewed separately.
- **Reporting Timelines:**
  - A preliminary report is prepared within seven days of receiving the complaint.
  - The entire enquiry must be completed within 90 days.
  - Findings are submitted to the Principal within 10 days of completing the enquiry.

#### **5. Disciplinary Mechanism**

Based on the findings, the ICC may recommend various punitive measures:

- **For Students:** Penalties include a written apology, warning, suspension, restriction from campus facilities (library, hostels, etc.), or rustication (removal from the institution's rolls).
- **For Staff:** Penalties include a formal reprimand, withholding of increments or promotions, suspension, or termination of service.

#### **6. Safeguards against Misuse**

To prevent the misuse of these legal protections, the ICC has provisions regarding frivolous complaints. If an enquiry concludes that an allegation was malicious, false, or based on forged information, the complainant will be liable for punishment. However, an inability to provide sufficient proof to substantiate a complaint does not automatically qualify it as a false allegation.