

Name of the Policy/Guidelines	Policy on gender equity and of prevention of gender based discrimination
Short Description	Policy and Guidelines on prevention and prohibition of gender based discrimination and promotion of gender equity
Scope	This Policy applies to all employees, students, visitors, volunteers, applicants and program participants in various departments, sections and constituent units of Nitte (Deemed to be University)
Policy Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Original <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised
Date of Approval of Original Policy	11th Sep 2014
Revision No.	1 (First Revision)
Brief description of the last revision	Addition of guidelines for preventing delay in reporting of incidents by Officers.
Date of approval of the current revision	5 th Dec 2018
Effective date	6 th Dec 2018
Approval Authority	Vice Chancellor
Responsible Officer	Dr. Shailaja Moodithaya, Coordinator – Women's Cell

Introduction:

The Indian Constitution provides for gender equality, non-discrimination and gender justice through Articles 14, 15, 16 39 and 42. Several acts and schedules of the Government address various specific issues concerning women. This also includes legislation to empower transgender community, which is particularly marginalized and vulnerable in India.

A change in attitude and transformation of behaviour with respect to gender issues from a young age is crucial for societal changes that are envisioned and supported by legislature. In order to promote gender justice, we need to change the mode of interaction in all settings like home, college and workplace. Schools and colleges play a major role in this regard because young people spend a large time with peers in educational institutions.

Nitte (Deemed to be University) is committed to providing an environment that is free from discrimination based on gender; providing protection against sexual harassment and actively encouraging women in all spheres of its functioning.

Need for the Policy:

SAKSHAM report of UGC, 2013, has provided detailed documentation of various issues concerning women and has suggested measures for ensuring the safety of women and programs for gender sensitization on campuses of Higher Education Institutions (HEI). There are reports in HEIs of different forms of gender-based harassment, humiliation, exploitation and violence, especially against women. In this context, the transgender community in particular face high levels of stigma in almost every sphere of life such as health, education, employment, access to

social schemes and entitlement. Insensitivities of teachers, peers and administrators in HEIs results in high drop-out rates and makes education inaccessible to them. Often, instances of discrimination and harassment of women and transgenders are under-reported because of hierarchies, power-dynamics, and stigma.

Therefore, there is a necessity to frame a policy and provide guidelines with regard to zero tolerance pertaining to discrimination based on gender, prevention of harassment, affirmative action to encourage women participation and protection of those who seek redressal.

Objectives:

1. To create an enabling environment for persons of all genders.
2. To promote gender equality, gender equity and gender justice.
3. To ensure compliance with respect to the provisions in acts, rules and other regulations enacted from time to time by the State, Centre and other regulatory bodies related to gender equality and gender justice.
4. To provide redressal mechanisms ensuring safety of victims of gender injustice.

This Policy applies to all employees, students, visitors and other delegates and program participants in all the departments and constituent units of the university.

Definitions:

‘Discrimination’ means any distinction, exclusion limitation or preference which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing equality of treatment in education or nature of working or responsibilities based on caste, creed, religion, language, ethnicity, gender disability or imposing any restrictions to women employees or students alone which are incompatible with the dignity of human.

‘Equity’ means a level playing field for all employees and students in respect of their entitlement and opportunity for enjoyment of all legitimate rights.

‘Transgender’ refers to a person with a gender identity or gender expression that differs from the sex that they were assigned at birth.

‘Harassment’ means unwanted conduct which is persistent and demeans, humiliates, or creates a hostile and intimidating environment or is calculated to induce submission by actual or threatened adverse consequences. This includes third party harassment as a result of act or omission by visitors or outsiders who are associated with university.

‘Workplace’ means the campus of the university which includes constituent colleges, departments, offices, sections, centres, service areas including hospitals, hostels, on-campus residences, sports and leisure facilities, transport buses or vehicles of the university, any place visited by the student or employee on duty of the university or any study place recognized by university.

‘Officer’ means any employee with an administrative responsibility.

Policy Guidelines:

Non-discrimination against women

1. Nitte DU commits to zero tolerance on gender-based discrimination and will put in place all appropriate measures to safeguard the interests of their women and employees and students and would eliminate any form of discrimination or harassment against them.
2. Nitte DU will initiate measures for prevention and prohibition of discrimination against women and would facilitate the eradication of such practices if any is noticed or brought to its notice.
3. Nitte DU will promote equality among employees and students irrespective of their gender.
4. Nitte DU will provide an online reporting mechanism that ensures confidentiality such that reporters can remain anonymous.
5. Any employee indulging in any offence of discrimination or harassment against a woman will be subjected to actions under conduct and service rules of the university or disciplinary rules pertaining to students.
6. All administrative officers of the university will ensure no delay in reporting of an allegation of discrimination or harassment by any women employee/student and initiate further necessary actions as per university rules and regulations.
7. Any officer found to be delaying the reporting of gender-discrimination / harassment related complaints received in her official capacity or retaliating against an employee / student for complaining / reporting / standing as witness or participating in the enquiry or obstructing enquiry / redressal in any manner will be subjected to actions under conduct and service rules of the university or disciplinary rules pertaining to students.
8. Nitte DU will establish a Women’s Cell and Cell Against Sexual Harassment inside the University as well as in constituent colleges and support it to carry out a wide range of activities which include:
 - a) Advising University in ensuring gender justice
 - b) Organizing gender sensitization programs for students, teachers, administrators and other employees.
 - c) Creating awareness about gender equity issues, reporting mechanisms, penalty and consequences of discrimination
 - d) Conducting sensitization / training programs for women students and employees about rights, acts, rules, guidelines and opportunities for empowerment.
 - e) Preparing annual status reports with details on reported cases, penalties imposed, to be submitted to Board of Management of the University.
9. Nitte DU will extend full support to see that all the provisions/directions issued by UGC, State and Central Governments will be implemented in a timely manner.

Non-discrimination against transgenders

1. Nitte DU is committed to provide inclusive education for transgender community and provide employment and equal access to other mainstream activities without any discrimination.

2. Nitte DU is committed to provide holistic education to this community by giving attention to the following four core issues:
 - a) Access, b) Equity, c) Enabling Environment and d) Employment
3. Nitte DU will initiate measures to sensitize their employees and students and provide knowledge regarding transgender community.
4. NitteDU will facilitate availing of scholarships and incentives to motivate transgender students.
5. Nitte DU will work towards developing advocacy, social mobilization and communication strategies at various levels (Society, Community and Government) to address the barriers to education for transgender community.
6. Nitte DU will assist the economic empowerment of transgender community, which would include awareness generation, skill and capacity building, employment and entrepreneurship training.