



ST. PAUL'S COLLEGE, KALAMASSERY

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**POLICY & GUIDELINES  
FOR INTERNAL COMPLAINTS  
COMMITTEE (ICC)**

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# **POLICY AND GUIDELINES**

## **1. PREAMBLE**

St. Paul's College, Kalamassery is committed to providing a safe, secure, inclusive, and gender-sensitive environment for all students, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, researchers, visitors, and stakeholders. The College upholds the dignity and equality of every individual and adopts a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment in any form.

This Policy and Procedure document is framed in accordance with:

- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.
- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Rules, 2013.
- UGC (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of Sexual Harassment of Women Employees and Students in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2016.
- Relevant UGC Guidelines and Regulations issued from time to time.

The Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) functions as the statutory body for prevention, prohibition, and redressal of complaints related to sexual harassment within the campus.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Internal Complaints Committee are:

1. To prevent incidents of sexual harassment within the institution.
2. To create awareness regarding gender equality and respectful conduct.
3. To provide a safe and secure academic and working environment.
4. To establish a transparent and fair grievance redressal mechanism.
5. To ensure prompt inquiry and redressal of complaints.
6. To recommend appropriate action against acts of sexual harassment.
7. To uphold the principles of natural justice and confidentiality.

## **3. SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

This policy applies to:

- Teaching staff
- Non-teaching staff
- Students
- Research scholars
- Contractual employees

- Visitors, interns, volunteers, and service providers

The policy covers all incidents occurring:

- Within the college campus
- During college-related activities
- In online/virtual spaces connected with academic or institutional activities
- During study tours, field visits, seminars, camps, competitions, and official programmes

#### **4. DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome act or behaviour, whether direct or implied, such as:

- Physical contact and advances
- Demand or request for sexual favours
- Sexually coloured remarks
- Showing pornography
- Unwelcome verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature
- Stalking, intimidation, or inappropriate messages through digital media
- Any conduct that creates a hostile, humiliating, or offensive environment

#### **5. CONSTITUTION OF THE INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE**

The Internal Complaints Committee shall be constituted by the College as per the provisions of the Act and UGC Regulations.

#### **COMPOSITION**

The ICC shall consist of:

1. A Presiding Officer who shall be a senior woman faculty member.
2. At least two faculty members committed to the cause of women or having experience in social work/legal knowledge.
3. Two non-teaching staff members.
4. One external member from an NGO or association committed to the cause of women or familiar with issues relating to sexual harassment.
5. Student representatives may be included where necessary, as per institutional norms.

At least one male staff to be part of the committee.

The tenure of the members shall ordinarily be three years.

## **COMPOSITION**

### **PRESIDING OFFICER: DR DEEPA GEORGE**

Associate Professor

Department of English

St. Paul's College, Kalamassery, Ernakulam.

deepa@stpauls.ac.in

Ph: 9947935099

### **FACULTY MEMBERS: MS. TERESA STEPHEN**

Associate Professor

Department of Commerce

St. Paul's College, Kalamassery, Ernakulam.

teresastephen@stpauls.ac.in

Ph: 9605675133

### **MS. REMYAMOL**

Department of Commerce SF(HoD)

St. Paul's College, Kalamassery, Ernakulam.

remymol@stpauls.ac.in

Ph: 9747677190

### **NON-TEACHING STAFF: MS RESHMA JOSEPH**

LDSK

St. Paul's College, Kalamassery, Ernakulam.

reshmajoseph@stpauls.ac.in

Ph: 9995880284

**Mr. Shalbin K Alex**

Clerk

St. Paul's College, Kalamassery, Ernakulam.

shalbin@stpauls.ac.in

Ph: 9633218685

**NGO: Ms K.N. Baby Rani**

Retired Engineer, BSNL, POSH Local Committee Member, Ernakulam

\*Aathira\*, PRA 18, Fathima Church Road, Elamkulam, Kochi- 682020

babyranibsnl@gmail.com

Ph: 9446404151

## **6. FUNCTIONS OF THE ICC**

The ICC shall:

1. Receive complaints relating to sexual harassment.
2. Conduct inquiries in a fair and impartial manner.
3. Recommend preventive and corrective measures.
4. Organise awareness programmes, orientation sessions, workshops, and campaigns.
5. Ensure confidentiality throughout the proceedings.
6. Submit annual reports to the College authorities.
7. Recommend action against offenders in accordance with rules and regulations.
8. Take suo motu notice of incidents of gender injustice or sexual harassment where necessary.

## **7. PROCEDURE FOR FILING A COMPLAINT**

1. Any aggrieved woman may submit a written complaint to the ICC within 3 months of the incident.
2. In the event of a series of incidents, the complaint shall be filed within 3 months of the last incident.
3. The ICC may extend the time limit by another three months if sufficient cause is shown.
4. Where the complainant is unable to submit the complaint in writing, the ICC shall provide reasonable assistance.
5. The complaint shall preferably contain:
  - Name and details of the complainant
  - Name of the respondent
  - Description of the incident
  - Date, time, and place of occurrence
  - Supporting documents and list of witnesses, if any

## **8. RECEIPT AND PRELIMINARY ACTION**

1. Any complaint received by a member of the ICC shall immediately be forwarded to the Presiding Officer.
2. The ICC shall convene a meeting at the earliest to examine the complaint.
3. The Committee shall determine whether the complaint falls within its jurisdiction.
4. If the complaint is found maintainable, notice shall be issued to the respondent within seven working days.
5. The respondent shall submit a written reply, along with supporting documents and a witness list, within 10 working days.

## **9. CONCILIATION**

1. Before initiating a formal inquiry, the ICC may, at the complainant's request, attempt conciliation.
2. Monetary settlement shall not be made the basis of conciliation.
3. If a settlement is reached, the ICC shall record the settlement and forward it to the College authorities for implementation.
4. No further inquiry shall be conducted once a settlement has been reached.

## **10. INTERIM RELIEF**

During the pendency of the inquiry, the ICC may recommend:

- Transfer of either party
- Grant of leave to the complainant up to three months
- Restriction on the respondent from supervising or evaluating the complainant
- Provision of safety and protection measures
- Any other appropriate relief deemed necessary

## **11. INQUIRY PROCEDURE**

1. The ICC shall conduct the inquiry in accordance with the principles of natural justice.
2. Both parties shall be given an adequate opportunity to present their case.
3. Hearings shall be conducted in a respectful and confidential manner.
4. Witnesses may be summoned if required.
5. The Committee may call for documents or records relevant to the case.
6. The past sexual history of the complainant shall not be considered relevant.
7. Cross-examination shall be conducted only through written questions routed through the Committee.
8. Direct confrontation between the complainant and respondent may be avoided where necessary.
9. Proceedings shall be documented and authenticated.
10. Legal practitioners shall not be permitted to represent either party before the ICC.

## **12. CONFIDENTIALITY**

The identity of the complainant, respondent, witnesses, and all proceedings of the ICC shall be kept strictly confidential.

No information relating to the complaint shall be published, communicated, or made public except as required by law.

Any breach of confidentiality shall invite disciplinary action.

## **13. INQUIRY REPORT**

1. Upon completion of the inquiry, the ICC shall submit a reasoned report to the Principal.
2. The inquiry shall ordinarily be completed within ninety days.
3. The College shall act upon the recommendations within sixty days.
4. Copies of the findings shall be made available to both parties.

## **14. DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

If the allegations are proved, the ICC may recommend one or more of the following actions:

- Written apology
- Warning or reprimand
- Counseling
- Community service
- Withholding of promotion or increments
- Suspension from duties or academic activities
- Termination from service
- Any other action as per institutional rules and applicable law

In the case of students, disciplinary action may include:

- Written warning
- Suspension
- Debarment from participation in activities
- Expulsion from the institution
- Any other disciplinary measure deemed appropriate

## **15. FALSE OR MALICIOUS COMPLAINTS**

If the ICC concludes that a complaint was made maliciously or based on forged or misleading documents, it may recommend appropriate action against the complainant in accordance with applicable rules.

However, the inability to substantiate a complaint or provide adequate proof shall not automatically attract action against the complainant.

## **16. APPEAL**

Any person aggrieved by the recommendations of the ICC may prefer an appeal before the competent authority in accordance with the provisions of the Act and applicable rules.

## **17. POWERS OF THE ICC**

The ICC shall have powers similar to those of a civil court in respect of:

- Summoning and enforcing attendance

- Requiring the production of documents
- Examining witnesses
- Any other matter necessary for conducting a fair inquiry

## **18. AWARENESS AND PREVENTIVE MEASURES**

The College shall:

1. Conduct orientation and awareness programmes regularly.
2. Display the ICC policy and contact details prominently.
3. Promote gender sensitisation initiatives.
4. Encourage reporting of grievances without fear.
5. Include discussions on gender equality and respectful behaviour in institutional activities.

## **19. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COLLEGE**

The College shall:

- Provide necessary facilities for the functioning of the ICC.
- Ensure implementation of recommendations.
- Maintain records of complaints and actions taken.
- Submit annual compliance reports where required.
- Ensure compliance with UGC Regulations and statutory requirements.

## **20. NON-RETALIATION**

No person shall be subjected to victimisation, discrimination, intimidation, or retaliation for filing a complaint, participating in proceedings, or supporting an inquiry. Any retaliatory action shall be treated as misconduct.

## **21. AMENDMENT OF POLICY**

The College reserves the right to amend, modify, or revise this policy from time to time in accordance with changes in law, UGC regulations, or institutional requirements.

## **22. CONCLUSION**

St. Paul's College, Kalamassery, reaffirms its commitment to maintaining a campus culture based on dignity, equality, mutual respect, and safety. The institution encourages all members of the college community to contribute to building a healthy, harassment-free environment.

**St. Paul's College, Kalamassery**

**Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)**

