



# VELS



INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ADVANCED STUDIES (VISTAS)  
(Deemed to be University Estd. u/s 3 of the UGC Act, 1956)  
PALLAVARAM, THALAMBUR, PERIYAPALAYAM, THIRUVANMIYUR - CHENNAI

## Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Policies

**Internal Complaints Committee**  
**VISTAS**  
**Revised -2025**

Registrar  
Vels Institute of Science, Technology  
& Advanced Studies (VISTAS)  
Pallavaram, Chennai - 600 117.

## **Polices on Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies**

Prevention of sexual harassment policy is intended for use by Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies (VISTAS) to help in governing prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment at VISTAS. The policy includes all the components which make a sexual harassment policy comprehensive. As such, it is not intended to be a collection of clauses from which students and management can pick and choose. This policy is bound to be effective as it carries all major aspects discussed by International Labor Organization (ILO) regarding Sexual Harassment. At VISTAS we believe in the phrase, 'Prevention is better than Cure' thereby it creates a congenial atmosphere by conducting lots of awareness programs by Professional counsellors and sensitivity training to understand the intensity of damage caused due to sexual harassment .

### **The Policy Statement**

In accordance with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 and the UGC (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of Sexual Harassment of Women Employees and Students in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2015, Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies (VISTAS) is committed to providing a safe, secure, and enabling environment free from sexual harassment for women employees and students.

VISTAS adopts a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment at the workplace. All complaints shall be addressed in a fair, confidential, and time-bound manner in accordance with the procedures prescribed under the Act and the UGC Regulations, ensuring adherence to the principles of natural justice. No woman shall be subjected to victimization or retaliation for filing a complaint or participating in an inquiry. The Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) is duly constituted to prevent, prohibit, and redress sexual harassment, and details of the ICC and redressal mechanism are displayed on the Institution's official website

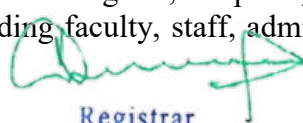
### **Definitions**

For the purpose of this Policy, unless the context otherwise requires:

**Aggrieved Woman** means any woman, irrespective of her age or employment status, who alleges to have been subjected to any act of sexual harassment by the respondent.

**Campus** includes all locations within the physical boundaries of VISTAS and all places visited by employees or students arising out of or during the course of employment or study, including transportation provided by the Institution, fieldwork locations, internships, study tours, sports events, cultural activities, hostels, and virtual/online platforms used for academic or official purposes.

**Employee** means a person employed at VISTAS for any work on regular, temporary, ad hoc, or daily wage basis, either directly or through an agent, including faculty, staff, administrative personnel, contractual workers, and interns.

  
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**Student** means a person duly admitted and pursuing any programme of study at VISTAS, including research scholars.

**Sexual Harassment** includes any one or more of the following unwelcome acts or behaviour (whether directly or by implication), namely: (i) physical contact and advances; (ii) a demand or request for sexual favours; (iii) making sexually coloured remarks; (iv) showing pornography; (v) any other unwelcome physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.

The following circumstances, among others, if occurring in relation to or connected with any act of sexual harassment, may amount to sexual harassment: implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment; implied or explicit threat of detrimental treatment; interference with work or study; creation of an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment; humiliating treatment likely to affect health or safety.

**Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)** means the committee constituted by VISTAS in accordance with Section 4 of the POSH Act, 2013 and Regulation 4 of the UGC Regulations, 2015

### **Scope of the Policy**


This Policy applies to all women employees and students of VISTAS and covers sexual harassment occurring at the workplace or campus, including academic, administrative, residential, recreational, and online spaces. The Policy extends to third parties such as visitors, service providers, and outsiders interacting with employees or students in connection with institutional activities. Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated. It includes situations where a person is asked to engage in sexual activity as a condition of that person as well as situations which create an environment which is hostile, intimidating or humiliating for the recipient. Sexual harassment can involve one or more incidents and actions constituting harassment may be physical, verbal and non-verbal. Examples of conduct or behavior which constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to :

#### **Physical conduct**

- Unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, stalking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or inappropriate touching
- Physical violence, including sexual assault
- Physical contact, e.g. touching, pinching
- The use of career-related threats or rewards to solicit sexual favors

#### **Verbal conduct**

- Comments on a student's appearance, age, private life, etc.
- Sexual comments, stories and jokes
- Sexual advances
- Repeated and unwanted social invitations for dates or physical intimacy
- Insults based on the sex of the student
- Condescending or paternalistic remarks
- Sending sexually explicit messages (by phone or by email)

  
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## **Non-verbal conduct**

- Display of sexually explicit or suggestive material
- Sexually-suggestive gestures
- Whistling
- Leering
- Following in Social Media and saving private data without consent

Anyone can be a victim of sexual harassment, regardless of their sex and of the sex of the harasser. Vels Institute of Science Technology & Advanced Studies recognizes that sexual harassment may also occur between people of the same sex. What matters is that the sexual conduct is unwanted and unwelcome by the student against whom the conduct is directed

VISTAS recognizes that sexual harassment is a manifestation of power relationships and often occurs within unequal relationships in the workplace, for example between students or between the faculty and student.

Anyone, including students of Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies, teaching and non-teaching staffs, clients, customers, casual workers, contractors or visitors who sexually harasses another will be reprimanded in accordance with this internal policy.

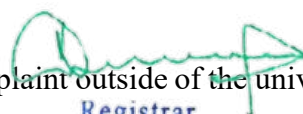
All sexual harassment is prohibited whether it takes place within Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies premises or outside, including at social events, field trips, training sessions or conference. The Do's and Don'ts stipulated make them to identify the righteousness of their own behavior.

## **Complaints procedures**

Anyone who is subject to sexual harassment should, if possible, inform the alleged harasser that the conduct is unwanted and unwelcome. Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies recognizes that sexual harassment may occur in unequal relationships (i.e. between a supervisor and his/her students) and that it may not be possible for the victim to inform the alleged harasser. If a victim cannot directly approach an alleged harasser, he/she can approach one of the designated staff members responsible for receiving complaints of sexual harassment. This person could be another supervisor, a member of the Internal Complaints Committee or Mentor, etc.

When a designated person receives a complaint of sexual harassment, he/she will:

- immediately record the dates, times and facts of the incident(s)
- ascertain the views of the victim as to what outcome he/she wants
- ensure that the victim understands the VISTAS's procedures for dealing with the complaint
- discuss and agree the next steps: either informal or formal complaint, on the understanding that choosing to resolve the matter informally does not preclude the victim from pursuing a formal complaint if he/she is not satisfied with the outcome
- keep a confidential record of all discussions
- respect the choice of the victim
- ensure that the victim knows that they can lodge the complaint outside of the university through the relevant Indian legal framework

  
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Throughout the complaints procedure, a victim is entitled to be helped by a counsellor within the campus. Vels Institute of Science Technology & Advanced Studies will nominate a number of counsellors and provide them with special training to enable them to assist victims of sexual harassment. Vels Institute of Science Technology & Advanced Studies recognizes that because sexual harassment often occurs in unequal relationships within the campus, victims often feel that they cannot come forward. Vels Institute of Science Technology & Advanced Studies understands the need to support victims in making complaints.

### **Informal complaints mechanism**

If the victim wishes to deal with the matter informally, the designated person will:

- give an opportunity to the alleged harasser to respond to the complaint
- ensure that the alleged harasser understands the complaints mechanism
- facilitate discussion between both parties to achieve an informal resolution which is acceptable to the complainant, or refer the matter to a designated mediator within the university to resolve the matter
- ensure that a confidential record is kept of what happens
- follow up after the outcome of the complaints mechanism to ensure that the behavior has stopped
- ensure that the above is done speedily and within 1 or 2 days of the complaint being made

### **Formal complaints mechanism**

If the victim wants to make a formal complaint or if the informal complaint mechanism has not led to a satisfactory outcome for the victim, the formal complaint mechanism should be used to resolve the matter.

In compliance with the instructions of National Commission for women and guidelines issued in implementation of the directives of Hon'ble Supreme Court Judgment dated 13th August, 1997 in the case of Visakha and others vs. State of Rajasthan and Others on the subject of sexual harassment of women in the workplace, VISTAS had duly constituted a Complaint Committee for considering complaints of sexual harassment of women working in the VISTAS. The composition of the Complaints Committee was revised subsequent to transfer etc. of the existing Chairperson / Member. The details with regard to the Act & rules, role, functions etc. of ICC are as given below:

Complaint regarding Sexual Harassment against women can be made either in paper form to the Chairperson or by sending e-mail to [icc@vistas.ac.in](mailto:icc@vistas.ac.in) The Act stipulates that aggrieved woman can make written complaint of sexual harassment at workplace to the ICC or to the LCC (in case a complaint is against the employer), within a period of three months from the date of incident and in case of a series of incidents, within a period of three months from the date of last incident. As per the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Rules, 2013, in case the aggrieved woman is unable to make a complaint on account of her physical incapacity, a complaint may be filed inter alia by her relative or friend or her co-worker or an officer of the National Commission for Woman or State Women's Commission or any person who has knowledge of the incident, with the written consent of the aggrieved woman.

The designated person who initially received the complaint will refer the matter to Dean Student Affairs to instigate a formal investigation. The Dean Student Affairs may deal with the matter him/herself, refer the matter to an internal or external investigator or refer it to a committee of three others in accordance with this policy.


The person carrying out the investigation will:

- interview the victim and the alleged harasser separately
- interview other relevant third parties separately
- decide whether or not the incident(s) of sexual harassment took place
- produce a report detailing the investigations, findings and any recommendations
- if the harassment took place, decide what the appropriate remedy for the victim is, in consultation with the victim (i.e.- an apology, a change to classroom arrangements, a recognition if the victim was demoted as a result of the harassment, training for the harasser, discipline, suspension, dismissal)
- follow up to ensure that the recommendations are implemented, that the behavior has stopped and that the victim is satisfied with the outcome
- if it cannot determine that the harassment took place, he/she may still make recommendations to ensure proper functioning of the university
- keep a record of all actions taken
- ensure that the all records concerning the matter are kept confidential
- ensure that the process is done as quickly as possible and in any event within 1 or 2 days of the complaint being made

### **Outside complaints mechanisms**

A person who has been subject to sexual harassment can also make a complaint outside of VISTAS. They can do so through Ministry of Women & Child Development has launched an online complaint management system titled **Sexual Harassment Electronic - Box (SHe-Box)** on 24th July, 2017 for registering complaints related to Sexual Harassment at workplace. The SHe-Box is an initiative to provide a platform to the women working or visiting any office of Central Government (Central Ministries, Departments, Public Sector Undertakings, Autonomous Bodies and Institutions etc.) to file complaints related to Sexual Harassment at workplace under the Sexual Harassment of Women at workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 which may be useful to any stakeholder who has a right to register complaint regarding their experience.

Once a complaint is submitted to SHe-Box, it will be directly sent to the Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) of the concerned Ministry / Department / PSU / Autonomous Body etc. having jurisdiction to inquire into the complaint. The SHe-Box also provides an opportunity to both the complainant and nodal administrative authority to monitor the progress of inquiry conducted by the ICCs.

  
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## **Sanctions and disciplinary measures**

Anyone who has been found to have sexually harassed another person under the terms of this policy is liable to any of the following sanctions:

- Verbal Or Written Warning
- Adverse Performance Evaluation
- Reduction In Grades
- Transfer
- Demotion
- Suspension
- Dismissal

The nature of the sanctions will depend on the gravity and extent of the harassment. Suitable deterrent sanctions will be applied to ensure that incidents of sexual harassment are not treated as trivial. Certain serious cases, including physical violence, will result in the immediate dismissal of the harasser.

## **Complaint and Redressal Procedure Timeline**

An aggrieved woman may make a written complaint of sexual harassment to the ICC within three months from the date of the incident, or in the case of a series of incidents, within three months from the date of the last incident. The ICC may extend the time limit for filing a complaint if it is satisfied that circumstances prevented the woman from filing the complaint within the said period.

Where the aggrieved woman is unable to make a written complaint, the Presiding Officer or any member of the ICC shall render all reasonable assistance to enable her to make the complaint in writing.

Before initiating an inquiry, the ICC may, at the request of the aggrieved woman, take steps to settle the matter between the parties through conciliation, provided that no monetary settlement shall be made as a basis of conciliation.

If conciliation is not opted for or fails, the ICC shall conduct a formal inquiry in accordance with the principles of natural justice and as per the procedure prescribed under the Act and the UGC Regulations.

The inquiry shall be completed within ninety days, and the ICC shall submit its report to the competent authority within ten days of completion of the inquiry.

The competent authority shall act on the recommendations of the ICC within sixty days of receipt of the report.

## **Confidentiality**

The contents of the complaint, identity and addresses of the aggrieved woman, respondent, witnesses, information relating to conciliation and inquiry proceedings, recommendations of the ICC, and action taken shall not be published, communicated, or made known to the public, press, or media, except as required under law.

## **Penalties and Corrective Action**

Where the ICC concludes that the allegation against the respondent has been proved, it shall recommend appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the service rules or academic regulations applicable, which may include written apology, warning, reprimand, withholding of promotion or increments, termination of employment, dismissal from the course, counseling, or any other action deemed appropriate.

Where the ICC concludes that the allegation is not proved, it shall recommend that no action is required against the respondent.

If the ICC concludes that the complaint was malicious or knowingly false, or that false evidence was produced, it may recommend action against the complainant in accordance with the Act, provided that inability to substantiate a complaint or provide adequate proof shall not attract action.

## **Awareness and Preventive Measures**

VISTAS shall organize regular awareness programmes, workshops, and training for employees and students to sensitize them on issues of sexual harassment and the provisions of this Policy. The Institution shall ensure prominent display of the policy and ICC details on the website and at conspicuous places on campus.

## **Implementation of this policy**

Vels Institute of Science Technology & Advanced Studies will ensure that this policy is widely disseminated to all relevant persons. It will be included in the student's handbook. All new students must be trained on the content of this policy as part of their induction and orientation into the campus. Every year, Vels Institute of Science Technology & Advanced Studies will facilitate it's Stakeholders to attend a refresher training course on the content of this policy. It is the responsibility of every faculty to ensure that all his/her students are aware of the policy.

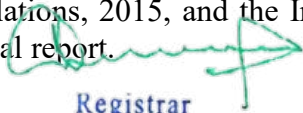
## **Monitoring and evaluation**

Vels Institute of Science Technology & Advanced Studies recognizes the importance of monitoring this sexual harassment policy and will ensure that it anonymously collects statistics and data as to how it is used and whether or not it is effective.

Supervisors, teaching and non-teaching staffs' members and those responsible for dealing with sexual harassment cases will report on compliance with this policy, including the number of incidents, how they were dealt with, and any recommendations made. This will be done on a yearly basis. As a result of this report, the university will evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and make any changes needed.

## **Annual Reporting**

The ICC shall prepare and submit an annual report to the competent authority in accordance with the provisions of the POSH Act, 2013 and the UGC Regulations, 2015, and the Institution shall include the number of cases filed and disposed of in its annual report.

  
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## INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE – VISTAS

### Know Your Rights: Combating Criminal Force and Assault Against Women

[Section 74 to 79 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023]

### What Law Says ?

Section	Description	Penalty
74	Assault or use of Criminal Force to Woman with intent to outrage her Modesty	Imprisonment of not less than one year to five years and fine.
75	Sexual Harassment	Rigorous Imprisonment up-to three years or/and with fine.
76	Assault or use of Criminal Force to woman with intent to Disrobe	Imprisonment of not less than three years, extend up to seven years, and fine.
77	Voyeurism (Watches or Captures the image of a Woman engaging in Private act)	Imprisonment not less than one year and extend to three years on first conviction and imprisonment not less than three years and extend to seven years with fine in second or subsequent convictions.
78	Stalking(Persistent following or contact)	Imprisonment which may extend to three years and fine on first conviction and imprisonment which may extend to five years with fine in second or subsequent convictions.
79	Word, Gesture or Act intended to insult modesty of a woman	Simple Imprisonment which may extend to three years with fine

### Need Help or Support ?

Women Helpline Number : **181**

Emergency Response Support System Number -**112**

PAN India Number : **1091**

VISTAS Campus Support : [icc@vistas.ac.in](mailto:icc@vistas.ac.in) , 9443377437 , 8825911653 , 9962713815

  
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### Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) Members : 2025 – 2026

	Name	Designation
<b>Chairperson</b>		
1	Dr G Rajini Ph : 9443377437 Email : <a href="mailto:rajini.sms@vistas.ac.in">rajini.sms@vistas.ac.in</a>	Professor & Director -MoUs Department of MBA
<b>Members</b>		
2	Dr. Jothilakshmi.G.R Ph: 9840507971 Email: <a href="mailto:jothi.se@vistas.ac.in">jothi.se@vistas.ac.in</a>	Professor Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering
3	Dr Brindha Devi.P Ph : 9488012440 Email : <a href="mailto:brindha.se@vistas.ac.in">brindha.se@vistas.ac.in</a>	Associate Professor & Head, Department of Bio-Engineering
4	Dr.A.Suganthini Ph:9962713815 E.Mail: <a href="mailto:suganthini.law@vistas.ac.in">suganthini.law@vistas.ac.in</a>	<b>(NODAL OFFICER)</b> Assistant Professor School of Law
5	Mr. Jayakumar V Ph: 9840484675 Email: <a href="mailto:ar.academic@vistas.ac.in">ar.academic@vistas.ac.in</a>	Assistant Registrar -Academics
6	Ms.S. Jeseiursula Ph: 8608498740 Email: <a href="mailto:accounts@vistas.ac.in">accounts@vistas.ac.in</a>	Section Officer Accounts & Finance.
7	<b>NGO</b> Mr.Nagarajan Jayachandra Ph:9884050810 E.Mail: <a href="mailto:nagarajan.jobsdb@gmail.com">nagarajan.jobsdb@gmail.com</a>	Head PR Ooruni Foundation Level 2 , Setraa Towers, No. 304, GST Road, Chrompet, Chennai, India 600044.
8	Ms.Akhansa Saha Ph: 7825879042	Research Scholar (Women) Biochemistry
9	Mr.Badhrinaath M K Ph: 8870245025	IV Year ECE
10	Mr. Deep Shanth J.R Ph : 9489918725	III Year – BA LLB (HONS)
11	Mr. Hariharan R.V Ph: 9952915279	II year – MBA “B” Sec



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