



INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE (ICC)- POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Date: 26-09-2024

Al-Azhar Dental College, Thodupuzha is committed to ensuring a safe, respectful, and inclusive academic and professional environment for students, faculty, and non-teaching staff. The institution follows a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment and promotes dignity and equality for all individuals.

In accordance with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act) and the directives of the Honourable Supreme Court of India, the college has constituted an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) to prevent and address incidents of sexual harassment within the institution.

The ICC functions to ensure that complaints are addressed fairly, promptly, and confidentially, while maintaining the rights and dignity of all parties involved.

Objectives of the Internal Complaints Committee

The objectives of the ICC at Al-Azhar Dental College include:

1. To prevent and prohibit sexual harassment within the workplace and campus.
2. To create a safe and respectful environment for students and employees.
3. To receive and address complaints related to sexual harassment.
4. To conduct fair and impartial inquiries into complaints.
5. To collect evidence and record witness statements during investigations.
6. To recommend corrective and preventive actions to the institutional authorities.
7. To promote awareness and sensitization regarding gender equality and workplace dignity.
8. To prepare and submit annual reports on the functioning of the committee as required by the POSH Act.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- Students
- Teaching faculty
- Non-teaching staff
- Interns and trainees



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- Contract employees
- Visitors within the institutional premises

The policy covers incidents occurring:

- Within the college campus
- In clinical areas, laboratories, hostels, and hospital premises
- During academic programs, conferences, field visits, or institutional events
- Through online or digital communication related to institutional activities.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome act or behaviour of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal, or physical, such as:

- Unwelcome physical contact or advances
- Request or demand for sexual favours
- Sexually coloured remarks or inappropriate jokes
- Display or sharing of pornographic material
- Unwanted messages or online harassment
- Any conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment

Constitution of the Internal Complaints Committee

The Internal Complaints Committee shall be constituted as per the POSH Act, 2013, and shall consist of:

- Presiding Officer – A senior female faculty member
- Two faculty members committed to women's welfare or gender equality
- One non-teaching staff member
- One external member from an NGO or association committed to women's welfare or with expertise in legal or social issues

At least 50% of the committee members shall be women.

Complaint Procedure

1. The aggrieved person must submit a written complaint to the ICC within three months from the date of the incident or the last occurrence in a series of incidents.
2. The Presiding Officer or any ICC member may assist the complainant in preparing the written complaint if required.



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3. The ICC may extend the time limit for filing a complaint if circumstances prevented the complainant from filing it earlier.
4. Complaints may be submitted:
 - Directly to any ICC member
 - Through written representation
 - Through official email communication
5. If the complainant is unable to file the complaint personally, it may be filed by:
 - Spouse
 - Parents
 - Legal heirs
 - Authorized representative.

Inquiry Process

1. Upon receiving the complaint, the ICC shall forward a copy of the complaint to the respondent within seven working days.
2. The respondent must submit a written response within ten working days, along with supporting documents and witness details.
3. The ICC will conduct hearings with both the complainant and the respondent, ensuring adherence to the principles of natural justice.
4. Both parties may present evidence, documents, and witnesses during the inquiry.
5. The ICC shall complete the inquiry within 90 days from the date of receipt of the complaint.
6. After completion of the inquiry, the ICC shall submit its report and recommendations to the Head of the Institution.

Interim Relief

During the inquiry process, the ICC may recommend interim measures such as:


- Transfer of either the complainant or respondent
- Grant of leave to the complainant for up to three months
- Restricting the respondent from supervising or evaluating the complainant's work
- Any other measure necessary for the safety and well-being of the complainant

Disciplinary Action

If the respondent is found guilty of sexual harassment, disciplinary action may include:

- Written warning or reprimand
- Suspension from institutional activities
- Restriction from campus facilities
- Mandatory counseling or community service
- Termination or other disciplinary measures as per institutional rules.




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Protection Against Victimization

The institution ensures that no complainant or witness shall face victimization, retaliation, or discrimination for filing a complaint or participating in an inquiry.

If the complainant is a student and the accused is a teacher, the accused shall not act as an examiner or evaluator for that student during the investigation.

Confidentiality

All proceedings related to complaints of sexual harassment shall be kept strictly confidential. The identity of the complainant, respondent, and witnesses will not be disclosed except as required by law.

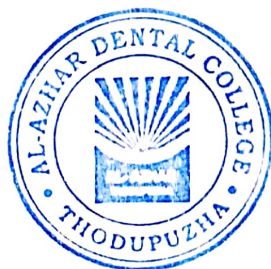
Annual Reporting

The ICC shall submit an annual report to the institutional authority containing:

- Number of complaints received
- Number of complaints resolved
- Number of cases pending beyond 90 days
- Preventive actions and awareness programs conducted during the year

Institutional Commitment

Al-Azhar Dental College, Thodupuzha reaffirms its commitment to maintaining a safe, dignified, and harassment-free environment for all members of the institution. The ICC plays a crucial role in promoting gender equality, mutual respect, and professional conduct within the campus.



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