

The University Grants Commission (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of Sexual Harassment of Women Employees and Students in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2015 provides for the establishment of Internal Complaints Committees (ICC) in all Higher Education Institutions to deal with complaints relating to sexual harassment.

As quoted in the act, sexual harassment includes, “any unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature” and also includes “humiliating treatment likely to affect the health, safety, dignity or physical integrity of the person concerned.”

The ICC includes faculty members, members from amongst the administrative staff, elected student members as well as a member from a non-governmental organisation. At least half the total members of the ICC are women.

The ICC provides a mechanism for grievance and dispute redressal as well as dialogue while ensuring that the complainant is not victimized but protected while addressing the grievance.

A written complaint is to be filed by the victim within three months of the incident. Also “Friends, relatives, Colleagues, Co-students, Psychologist, or any other associate of the victim” may file a complaint on behalf of the victim if the aggrieved person is unable to do so. The ICC is bound to conduct an inquiry within 3 months of receipt of the complaint and determine punishment.

Identities of the aggrieved persons and the witnesses are not made public