

St. Xavier's University, Kolkata

ANTI-RAGGING POLICY

The Anti-Ragging Policy for the stakeholders of St. Xavier's University, Kolkata, have been framed to comply with the regulations of the UGC, Ministry of Human Resources and Development of the Government of India (MHRD-Gol), West Bengal State Council for Higher Education (WBSCHE) and keeping in mind the Jesuit principle of 'forming men and women for others'.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 '*Merit*' and '*Ethics*' being the core driving values towards turning out professionals of high caliber with strong sense of ethical judgments, social integration of student's population coming from different parts of the country with most diverse cultural and social back grounds, becomes a matter of prime importance. 'Ragging' a social menace, as such has no place in academic environment of the University and concerted efforts are required to be in place to prevent its occurrence at any point of time. Hence the need for a balanced 'anti-ragging policy' to be adopted by the University.
- 1.2 Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, during December 2007 has expressed concern over the incidents of ragging occurring in higher educational institutions and the need to eliminate it altogether.
- 1.3 The Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India has taken a serious note of the incidents of ragging and is of the view that stern action should be taken against those indulging in 'ragging' so that these incidents are not repeated and exemplary punishment is meted out to those indulging in it. Strict implementation of the guidelines issued by Hon'ble Supreme Court on this issue has also been stressed by the Ministry.
- 1.4 Ragging is a criminal offence and lowers the standards of education. The 'anti-ragging policy' adopted by the University takes care of preventive, procedural and punitive aspects of ragging based on the guidelines provided by Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, recommendations of the Raghavan Committee, instructions/guidelines issued by the Ministry of HRD (Govt. of India).

2. ANTI-RAGGING POLICY

- 2.1 This policy encourages socialisation of students to the academic environment of the University, simultaneously discouraging and preventing any negative acts on parts of senior students, which goes against the basic purpose of socio-academic integration. The 'anti-ragging policy' adopted by the University therefore is aimed at:
 - (a) Creation, development and nurturing a conducive, socio-academic environment within the student population.
 - (b) Generating and maintaining a high level of confidence within new entrants and their parents/guardians to perceive that fresh entrants to the University are welcome and provided support, rather than being harassed and intimidated.
 - (c) Keeping in place an integrated system to discourage and prevent any negative acts like 'ragging' by the seniors, which disrupts socio-academic integration of new entrants.
 - (d) Prescribing deterrent measures for any violation of the 'Anti-Ragging Policy' by way of disciplinary measures.

3. **DEFINITIONS**

3.1 For the purpose of this policy the following are defined as under:-

'University' means the St. Xavier's University, Kolkata.

'Student' includes any person who is enrolled for any course, whether full time or part time with the University. This also includes research associates/scholars, visitors, and/or a repeaters.

'Hostel' includes the place/(s) where students are accommodated through institutional arrangement.

'Ragging' constitutes one or more of any of the following acts:

- (a) a conduct by any student or a group of students whether by words spoken or written or by an act which has the effect of teasing, treating or handling any other student with rudeness;
- (b) indulging in rowdy or undisciplined activities by a student or group of students which causes or is likely to cause annoyance, hardship, physical or psychological harm or to raise fear or apprehension thereof in any other student;
- (c) asking a student to do any act which the student shall not carry out in the ordinary course and which has the effect of causing or generating a sense of shame, or torment or embarrassment so as to adversely affect the physique or psyche of such student(s);
- (d) any act by a student that prevents, disrupts or disturbs the regular academic activity of any other student(s);
- (e) exploiting the services of any student for completing the academic tasks assigned to an individual or a group of students.
- (f) any act of financial extortion or forceful expenditure burden put on a student by any other student or a group of students;
- (g) any act of physical abuse including all variants of it: sexual abuse, homosexual assaults, stripping, forcing obscene and lewd acts, gestures, causing bodily harm or any other danger to health or person;
- (h) any act or abuse by spoken words, emails, posts, social networking posts, e-posts, public insults which would also include deriving perverted pleasure, vicarious or sadistic thrill from actively or passively participating in the discomfiture to a student(s);
- (i) any act that affects the mental health and self-confidence of a student with or without an intent to derive a sadistic pleasure or showing off power, authority or superiority by any student or a group of students over any other student(s).

'Anti-Ragging Committee' constitutes of a committee of teachers, students, and officials of the University, formed as per the guidelines of the UGC.

'Nodal Officer' is a person appointed by the University, as per the guidelines of the UGC, who shall be the 'first point of contact' (FPC) for reporting any cases of occurrence or attempts at ragging.

4. **PREVENTIVE ASPECTS OF RAGGING**

4.1 **Systemised Efforts for Socio-Academic Integration of New Entrants.**

1. Every student shall submit, at the time of admission, the declaration pertaining to anti-ragging in the format prescribed by the UGC signed by self and a copy signed by parent in a bond paper.
2. A student shall not be admitted or re-registered unless and until the declaration mentioned above are submitted.

3. Every student, at the time of admission/re-registration shall be supplied with the Anti-Ragging Regulations of the University.
4. The University authorities shall take necessary steps to sensitize students, parents and other stakeholders about the gravity of the menace of ragging. This may be done with the help of audio-visuals, electronic and print media. Posters, banners and pamphlets highlighting the menace of ragging and its serious consequences shall be placed at conspicuous positions of the University.
5. In addition to the Regulations, the University shall also provide instructions on whom to contact to report any case of occurrence or attempts at ragging. This would include mobile numbers and email ids of the Nodal Officer for Anti-Ragging, Anti-Ragging Committee members, Anti-Ragging Squads, Anti-Ragging Helpline and relevant State, District and Police authorities.

(a) Address by the Competent Authorities of the University.

The Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, Deans and other concerned official(s) during their address / discussions to / with parents / guardians, admission aspirants / fresh entrants / students at the time of counselling meets, new batch induction on registration, batch inaugurals and other such occasions, should in variably assure the students and parents about full protection and support against any attempts of ragging by seniors while briefly introducing the '*Anti-Ragging Policy*' of the University. The efforts during such meets be directed towards achieving socio-academic integration of new entrants with the specific merit oriented environment of mutuality and trust of the University.

(b) New batch inaugurals

The Dean and faculty members, during new batch inaugurals, may provide the students with guidelines on expected behavioural norms pertaining to the Anti-Ragging Policies.

(c) Mentoring Cells

'Mentoring Cell' shall function under the guidance of a Senior Faculty and in direct supervision of the 'Dean/Professor-in-Charge of Student Affairs'. Such a cell would be manned by senior students. There should be one senior student mentor for a specified group of 10 junior students. Membership to the 'mentoring cell' by senior students would be on voluntary basis by inviting applications and nominating membership on year to year basis.

The senior student mentor shall also monitor 'Psychological Behaviour/behavioural aberration of new students. If any abnormal behaviour or environmental adjustment problem observed, the same shall be reported to the 'Dean / Professor-in-Charge of Student Affairs'.

(d) Social, Cultural and Sports Activities

The membership of all student clubs and committees shall be coordinated on the lines of this policy. The induction process to all students' clubs and committees shall also be guided by the anti-ragging policy.

(e) Watch and Ward arrangements

The University has identified following vulnerable locations

- (i) Hostel blocks and mess,
- (ii) Vacant classrooms,

- (iii) Auditorium,
- (iv) Canteen,
- (v) Playground/Gymnasium,
- (vi) Student activity centres,
- (vii) Favourite joints of students in the vicinity.

All concerned are to keep a constant vigil and watch at such locations including monitoring of the atmosphere and the environment at eating places (Canteens, Mess etc.), hostel / accommodations, where students are accommodated.

These areas are needed to be carefully guarded if required by posting security personnel.

4.2 Wide dissemination of Anti-Ragging Policy Prospectus and Admission forms

- (i) All prospectus should contain a specific caution that 'ragging is banned in the University, and anyone found indulging in ragging, is likely to be punished appropriately which may even include expulsion from the University.'
- (ii) All students of the University will be required to submit a signed anti-ragging declaration forms at the time of admission to the University and / or any other form as prescribed UGC.

Posters

Academic programme office may put up posters in prominent places within the campus to exhort students to prevent, or not to indulge in ragging, also mentioning the names of the officials and their contact numbers, to be contacted in case of 'ragging'. The same needs to be displayed on the website of the University.

5. MONITORING ASPECTS OF RAGGING

5.1 Anti-Ragging Surveys

Anonymous random surveys, across first year students be carried out every fortnight, during the first three months, at all the constituents of the University, to verify and check, whether the campus is indeed free from 'ragging'.

5.2 Anti-Ragging Committee (ARC) at the University Level

1. As per the guidelines of the UGC, an Anti-Ragging Committee(ARC) shall be constituted in the University under the chairmanship of the Vice-Chancellor at the beginning of every academic year. The members of this committee shall be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor.
2. It shall comprise faculty members, students from the fresher's category as well as seniors and selected non -teaching staff as nominated by Vice Chancellor.
3. This committee shall be fully responsible to ensure that no incidents of ragging takes place and shall also monitor and ensure that the instructions of these regulations are followed fully at all points of time.
4. The committee shall also remain alert at all times and ensure that the mechanisms adapted for smooth functioning of the committee like ensuring that the Anti-Ragging Squads or the helplines of the University carry out their functions properly and efficiently.

The Anti-Ragging Committee shall be responsible and function under the overall direction of the Vice-Chancellor.

6. PROCEDURAL AND PUNITIVE ASPECTS OF 'RAGGING'

6.1 First Information Person(FIP)

- (a) 'First Information Person(FIP)' would be the Nodal Officer, appointed by the University as per UGC's guidelines. The Nodal Officer would provide first instance intervention in case of any complaint of 'ragging'.
- (b) Nodal Officer shall also need to co-ordinate the preventive aspects of ragging, under guidance of the **Chairperson ARC** aiming to create a 'ragging free environment'
- (c) Nodal Officer shall be responsible for taking steps to ensure that cases of 'ragging' within the University are brought to the notice of the **Chairperson ARC** as soon as possible.
- (d) Nodal Officer is empowered to deal with informal complaints of 'ragging' and/or take *suo moto* cognisance of any such incident.

6.2 Ragging Reporting Procedure

- (a) If any individual believes that he or she has been subjected to 'ragging' or has knowledge of any such incident, such person (or NODAL OFFICER, who may have assisted the complainants or those, who have otherwise observed / known about 'ragging') shall have the option to file a written complaint with the **Chairperson of the ARC** through the Nodal Officer in a sealed envelope, marked 'CONFIDENTIAL'.
- (b) The NODAL OFFICER or member/s of the **ARC** shall also be available to discuss any concerns exhibited by any student or a group of students, about ragging.

6.3 ARC as Enquiry Committee

ARC shall investigate all reported cases of ragging, in such a way, so as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. The investigations should start immediately after reporting the incident and reports finalised by the ARC, pinpointing the involvement of the accused along with recommendations relating to the punishment shall be submitted to the Vice-Chancellor within a fortnight. Under exceptional circumstances, the Chairperson ARC may grant a maximum extension of one month (30 days) under information to the complainant and the accused.

6.4 Process of Enquiry

The process of enquiry should be such to ensure that principles of natural justice are adhered to. Details of the process would be identical as in the case of sexual harassment policy (Internal Complaints Committee on Sexual Harassment or ICC) adopted by the University. If the ragging also includes an element of sexual harassment then in that case both committees, i.e., ARC and sexual harassment committee (ICC) shall look into the matter independently and within the ambits of their respective regulations.

6.5 Punishment / Penalties for 'ragging'

Based on the report of enquiry submitted by the ARC, the Chairperson ARC shall recommend to the competent authority any or all of the kinds of punishment/(s) listed below or any other kind of punishment, which she/he may consider to be appropriate.

- (a) Withholding scholarships or other benefits.
- (b) Debarment from representation in events.

- (c) Withholding results.
- (d) Expulsion from University.
- (e) Debarment from examination/s.
- (f) Suspension from the University or class for a limited period.
- (g) Fine with public apology.
- (h) Prosecution for criminal offence.
- (i) Cancellation of admission.

In case of proven false and frivolous complaint, the Anti-Ragging Committee shall recommend the Disciplinary Committee to take appropriate action against the complainant.

6.6 Appeal

Appeal with regards to any action taken against the accused at any level and/or against the punishment awarded under this policy, shall lie with the Vice-Chancellor of the University, which should be filed with in a period of two weeks from such an action or award of punishment.

7. SAVING AND REPEAL CLAUSE

The Vice-Chancellor of the University shall possess the sole authority for any interpretation, modification, or amendment to the policy depending upon the necessity from time to time. He shall also possess powers to exercise her/his discretion with respect to any or all of the clauses of this policy.