

# Grievances Redressal Policies Including Zero Tolerance

The University Grants Commission (UGC) in India has issued detailed guidelines to address grievances in higher education institutions, incorporating a zero-tolerance policy towards discrimination, harassment, and other forms of misconduct. These guidelines aim to establish a fair, transparent, and efficient grievance redressal mechanism. Here are the key aspects of these guidelines:

## 1. Grievance Redressal Cell (GRC) Establishment

- **Mandatory GRC:** Every higher education institution must set up a Grievance Redressal Cell to handle complaints from students, faculty, and staff.
- **Composition:** The GRC should include senior faculty members, administrative staff, and possibly student representatives.

## 2. Zero Tolerance Policy

- **Scope:** The zero-tolerance policy covers discrimination, harassment, ragging, and any form of physical or mental abuse.
- **Immediate Action:** Institutions are required to take immediate and stringent action against any reported incidents falling under this policy.
- **Awareness:** Regular awareness programs must be conducted to inform students and staff about the zero-tolerance policy.

## 3. Appointment of Ombudsperson

- **Independent Authority:** An Ombudsperson must be appointed at the university level to ensure impartial handling of grievances.
- **Qualifications:** The Ombudsperson should have extensive experience in administration and grievance redressal.

## 4. Grievance Filing Procedures

- **Accessible Channels:** Institutions must provide multiple channels, including online portals, for filing grievances.
- **Acknowledgment:** Complaints should be acknowledged promptly, and the complainant should be kept informed about the status of their complaint.



  
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## 5. Time-bound Resolution

- **30-day Resolution:** Grievances should generally be resolved within 30 days.
- **Extended Timeline:** In complex cases requiring detailed investigation, the resolution period can be extended to 60 days, but this must be communicated to the complainant.

## 6. Transparency and Accountability

- **Public Reporting:** Institutions must maintain transparency in the grievance redressal process and publish periodic reports on grievances received and resolved.
- **UGC Monitoring:** Regular reports must be submitted to the UGC for monitoring compliance.

## 7. Training and Capacity Building

- **Training Programs:** Regular training sessions should be conducted for GRC members and other relevant staff.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Awareness campaigns about the grievance redressal mechanisms and zero-tolerance policy must be regularly conducted.

## 8. Confidentiality and Protection

- **Confidential Handling:** The confidentiality of the complainant must be maintained to protect them from any form of retaliation.
- **Secure Documentation:** Detailed records of grievances and resolutions must be securely documented.

## 9. Feedback and Continuous Improvement

- **Collecting Feedback:** Institutions should collect feedback from complainants about the grievance redressal process.
- **Process Review:** Regular reviews and updates of the grievance redressal mechanisms should be conducted to improve effectiveness.

## 10. Appeal Mechanism

- **Right to Appeal:** Complainants have the right to appeal if they are dissatisfied with the resolution provided by the GRC.
- **Appeal Authority:** Appeals should be directed to higher authorities within the institution or the Ombudsperson.



  
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## 11. Zero Tolerance towards Ragging

- **Anti-Ragging Measures:** Strict measures must be in place to prevent and address ragging incidents.
- **Immediate Disciplinary Action:** Any incidents of ragging must be dealt with immediately and harshly, in line with the zero-tolerance policy.

## 12. Sexual Harassment Redressal

- **Internal Complaints Committee (ICC):** Institutions must have an ICC as per the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013.
- **Support and Protection:** Provide support to victims and ensure a safe environment for all students and staff.
- These guidelines are designed to create a supportive and responsive environment in higher education institutions, ensuring that grievances are addressed promptly, fairly, and transparently, with a strong stance against any form of misconduct.



  
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