

Women Cell at IITRAM:

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A special e-mail account womencell@iitram.ac.in was created to encourage women to complain to the cell.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

On 13th August 1997, the Supreme Court of India held that sexual harassment of women is a violation of the fundamental right of women to work in a 'safe environment. The Supreme Court guidelines define sexual harassment to include:

- Physical contact and advances
- Demand or request for sexual favours
- Sexually coloured remarks
- Display of pornography
- Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature

Often such behaviour goes unpunished mostly because of hesitation on the part of women to report such behaviour out of a sense of shame or fear or both. It is important for women to protest against any behaviour that they feel is unwanted and unacceptable. The Women's Cell at IITRAM has been set up with the aim of providing women a platform to complain about any unwelcome behaviour.

If you are being harassed, this is what you can do:

- Don't feel a sense of shame. Tell the harasser very clearly that you find his behaviour offensive.
- Don't ignore the harassment in the hope that it will stop on its own. Come forward and complain.
- Talk to somebody you trust about the harassment. It will not only give you strength but also help others in similar situations to come forward and complain.
- Keep a record of all incidents of sexual harassment in a notebook. If you feel the need to register a formal complaint later, this record will be helpful.

What action can be taken against the offender?

After it has been proven that the offender has indulged in sexual harassment in the work place, an appropriate punitive action would be taken against him irrespective of his status in the

Institute (staff, faculty or student). Where such conduct amounts to a specific offence under the Indian Penal Code or under any other law, a complaint will be made to the appropriate action in accordance with the law can be taken.

The Role of the Women's Cell

- To ensure that appropriate action is taken against the offender
- To ensure that victims and witnesses are not victimized or discriminated because of their complaint.

To take proactive measures towards sensitization of the IITRAM community on gender issues so that IITRAM is an excellent work place for all.