EQUALITY & NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

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Last Reviewed	05 April 2025	**Next Review Due**	August 2028
Version	1.0	**Owner**	Office of the Registrar / IQAC

1. Preamble

P. P. Savani University is committed to fostering an inclusive academic and working environment in which every student, faculty member and staff member is treated with dignity and fairness, irrespective of gender, caste, religion, disability, region, language or economic background. This policy sets out the University's zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and harassment and establishes the mechanisms available to anyone who experiences or witnesses such conduct.

2. Objectives

- To prohibit discrimination on any protected ground in admissions, employment, and campus life.
- To provide accessible and impartial mechanisms for reporting and resolving discrimination complaints.
- To promote equitable representation and opportunity across gender, caste and disability lines.
- To comply with applicable constitutional and statutory equality provisions, including UGC regulations on equity cells.
- To build sustained awareness of equality and inclusion across the campus community.

3. Scope & Applicability

This policy applies to all students, faculty, non-teaching staff, contract employees, and applicants for admission or employment at the University, and covers conduct on campus, at University-sponsored events, and in University-provided digital spaces.

4. Definitions

- **Discrimination:** Any act, omission or practice that disadvantages a person on the basis of gender, caste, religion, disability, region, language, marital status, or economic background, without lawful justification.
- **Protected Ground:** Any characteristic including gender, caste, religion, disability, and region on the basis of which differential and unfavourable treatment is prohibited under this policy.

- **Equal Opportunity Cell:** The body constituted under this policy to receive complaints, monitor equity indicators, and advise the administration on inclusive practice.
- **Reasonable Accommodation:** Necessary and appropriate modification, not imposing a disproportionate burden, to enable a person with disability to enjoy equal access to University facilities and processes.

5. Policy Statement

5.1 Non-Discrimination in Admissions and Employment

Admission to any programme and recruitment or promotion to any position shall be based solely on merit, eligibility and applicable reservation norms as prescribed by statute, without regard to gender, caste, religion, region, language or disability, except as required by affirmative-action provisions of law.

5.2 Equal Opportunity Cell

The University shall constitute and maintain an Equal Opportunity Cell, chaired by a senior faculty member and including representation of SC/ST, OBC, minority, and differently-abled constituencies, to advise on and monitor implementation of this policy, in line with applicable UGC equity-cell guidance.

5.3 Prohibition of Harassment

Harassment on any protected ground including derogatory remarks, exclusion from academic or social activity, or differential treatment in evaluation is prohibited and shall be treated as misconduct under the relevant student or employee disciplinary framework.

5.4 Disability Access

The University shall provide reasonable accommodation for students and employees with disabilities, including physical access to buildings, extra time in examinations where certified necessary, and accessible digital learning materials, coordinated through the Equal Opportunity Cell and the Dean of Academic Affairs.

5.5 Reporting Mechanism

Any student or employee who experiences or witnesses discrimination may file a complaint with the Equal Opportunity Cell, either in person or through the online grievance portal. Complaints shall be acknowledged within 48 hours and, subject to natural justice, resolved within 30 days.

5.6 Confidentiality and Protection from Retaliation

The identity of a complainant shall be kept confidential to the extent possible, and retaliation against a person who has, in good faith, filed or supported a complaint under this policy shall itself constitute a separate act of misconduct.

5.7 Reservation Compliance

Admission and recruitment processes shall follow applicable central and Gujarat state reservation norms for SC, ST, OBC, EWS and persons with disabilities, and the Equal Opportunity Cell shall periodically review compliance data.

5.8 Training and Sensitisation

All faculty, staff and student representatives shall undergo periodic sensitisation on equality, unconscious bias and inclusive practice, coordinated by Human Resources and the Equal Opportunity Cell.

5.9 Relationship to Related Policies

This policy operates alongside the University's Gender Pay Equity Policy, Women's Access & Participation Policy, and Fair Labour Policy, and shall be read consistently with them.

6. Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Equal Opportunity Cell	Complaint handling, equity monitoring, and policy advisory role.
Human Resources	Non-discriminatory recruitment practice and sensitisation training.
Dean of Academic Affairs	Disability accommodation in academic processes.
Registrar's Office	Institutional compliance reporting to UGC/statutory bodies.

7. Implementation Measures

- Publication of this policy on the University website and in the student and employee handbooks.
- Annual equity data review (admissions, staffing, complaints) presented to the Board of Management.
- Mandatory inclusion-awareness module during student and employee induction.
- Accessibility audit of campus infrastructure conducted periodically by the Estate Office.

8. Monitoring & Review

The Equal Opportunity Cell shall submit an annual report to the Board of Management covering complaints received and resolved, equity indicators, and accommodation requests fulfilled. This policy shall be reviewed every three years or immediately upon a material change in applicable law.

9. Grievance Redressal

Complaints may be filed with the Equal Opportunity Cell or through the online grievance portal; complainants dissatisfied with the outcome may appeal to the Registrar within 15 days of the decision.

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