



UNIVERSITY OF KERALA

POLICY FOR TRANSGENDER STUDENTS

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Thiruvananthapuram

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“Seldom, our society realizes or cares to realize the trauma, agony and pain which the members of Transgender community undergo, nor appreciates the innate feelings of the members of the Transgender community, especially of those whose mind and body disown their biological sex. Our society often ridicules and abuses the Transgender community and in public places like railway stations, bus stands, schools, workplaces, malls, theatres, hospitals, they are sidelined and treated as untouchables, forgetting the fact that the moral failure lies in the society’s unwillingness to contain or embrace different gender identities and expressions, a mindset which we have to change.”

(Judgement of the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India on 15 April 2014)

This historic judgment of the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India on 15 April 2014 upheld the Constitutional rights of Transgenders (TGs) by emphasizing the fact that they ought to be treated as equal citizens in every sense of the term. The judgment has also directed the Central and State governments to extend all help to the Transgenders by considering them as OBCs for the purposes of education and employment in order to lead a life with dignity in society.

Who is a Transgender?

A person, who does not identify with the gender assigned to them at birth. Transgenders include trans-men & trans-women (whether or not they have undergone sex reassignment surgery or hormonal treatment or laser therapy, etc.), gender queers, and a number of socio cultural identities, such as kinnars, hijras, aravanis, jogtas, etc.

It is high time that society considers seriously the problems faced by Transgenders such as fear, shame, social discrimination, and social stigma. Almost all social institutions have a role to play in helping the Transgender community to be part of the mainstream through various measures. The education system has a seminal role not only in empowering them by providing a congenial atmosphere for continuing their education, but also in sensitizing the society that the persons belonging to the Transgender community need our care and consideration.

As a consequence, University of Kerala has formulated a policy to help students belonging to the Transgender community to pursue their education without any social discrimination.

Objectives of the Policy

1. Identify Transgender students in educational institutions under University of Kerala.
2. Protect the identity and self respect of Transgender students.
3. Provide Transgender students with proper educational ambience and thus help them to gain confidence, acceptance, and acknowledgement in society.

4. Provide them with support systems to bring them into the mainstream societal framework and to provide adequate platforms for their overall development.
5. Provide ample opportunities for their education and employment.
6. Sensitize the teaching, non-teaching staff and student community in all educational institutions so that there is no discrimination and that the TGs are treated as normal citizens with self-respect and dignity.
7. Ensure the removal of impediments existing in the society against Transgenders from pursuing higher education.
8. Ensure penal action against persons who discriminate, harass, deny or violate the special rights given to the TGs.
9. Establishment of proper mechanism and its effective implementation to address the issues of violence and harassment faced by Transgender students.

Steps to be implemented to address the problems of Transgender students:

I. Identification of Transgender Students:

- i. All educational institutions affiliated to the University of Kerala to take steps to identify TG students in their institution.
- ii. Transgender student should be asked to submit an affidavit that She / He/TG is a Transgender along with a Certificate duly issued by an authorized person entrusted by the State Government stating that she/he/TG is a transgender.

- iii. While dealing with the TG students, the institution should be extremely careful in managing their special needs and create an academic ambience congenial to them.
- iv. Appoint a Contact Person, who shall keep the details of the TG students with due confidentiality.

II. Equal Opportunities

- i. Include the Transgender category in the Application Forms and in all types of Certificates for courses in all the educational institutions under the University. It should be given as – He/She/Mx. Use the pronoun TG, instead of ‘He’ or ‘She’ in certificates issued to them.
- ii. Additional seats should be reserved for TG students in all courses offered by the University/Colleges.
- iii. All institutions affiliated to University of Kerala to publicise the special opportunities for TG students for all courses offered by the institutions.

III. Safety

- i. Implement anti-ragging laws for the protection of TG students.
- ii. Establish Counseling Centres to TG students in every institution.
- iii. A Special Transgender Safety Cell at the University level should coordinate and supervise the activities of the Equal Opportunity Cell and Counseling Centres at the College level which is entrusted with the safety and security of TG students.

IV. Syllabus

- i. Include contents on Transgender in the syllabi of the Degree/PG Programmes to help students to know the different dimensions – biological, sociological, psychological, political, and constitutional - of transgender issues.
- ii. Research Centres to include the issues of Transgenders in their studies and research projects and take initiatives to sensitize the community about the problems of Transgenders.

V. Scholarships/Entitlements

- i. Provide admissions to TG students by reserving seats to them in all courses with scholarships.
- ii. Provide hostel facilities for transgender students in Colleges/University at subsidized rates.

VI. TG Friendly Infrastructure

- i. Colleges to provide special washrooms and rest rooms to TG students. University should help Colleges to get the UGC fund for this purpose.
- ii. Special care should be given in health care of Transgender students.

VII. Awareness programmes

- i. University and all other institutions under it should take initiatives in organizing programmes to conscientise all the stakeholders on issues related with Transgenders.
- ii. University should take the initiative to give an orientation to the teaching and non-teaching community regarding the issues of transgenders.

Documents used for the preparation of the Policy

1. STATE POLICY FOR TRANSGENDERS IN KERALA, 2015 (DRAFT), published by Department of Social Justice, Government of Kerala. (Details are available in <http://www.sjd.kerala.gov.in/images/VIKASBHAVAN/tgpolciydraft.pdf>)
2. REPORT OF THE EXPERT COMMITTEE ON THE ISSUES RELATING TO TRANSGENDER PERSONS, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, New Delhi (Details are available in <http://socialjustice.nic.in/transgenderpersons.php>)
3. JUDGEMENT OF THE HON. SUPREME COURT OF INDIA ON TRANSGENDERS, on 14 April 2014. (Details are available in <http://supremecourtfindia.nic.in/outtoday/wc40012.pdf>)

Sd/-
Registrar