



**BGU**  
BIRLA GLOBAL  
UNIVERSITY

## **Birla Global University**

**Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) Cell**

## **PREAMBLE**

Birla Global University forbids discrimination based on any protected characteristic listed by applicable laws and regulations. The University believes in the accessibility of quality education to all. "Our people are the foundation of our success." We want everyone to foster a sense of personal responsibility and treat one another with dignity and respect.

## **POLICY OUTLINES WITH DETAILED PROCEDURE**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The University sincerely believes in creating an inclusive atmosphere that celebrates and respects each person's individuality regardless of a person's race, colour, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, or any other protected characteristics. Our dedication to advancing justice, combating prejudice, and guaranteeing equal access to opportunities for every Birla Global University community member is outlined in our Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) Cell Policy.

### **2. OBJECTIVES OF THE SEDGs CELL <sup>1</sup>**

1. To protect all the constitutional rights of the SEDGs students.
2. To ensure that the HEIs are inclusive, safe, and secure for the SEDGs students.
3. To provide socio-emotional and academic support and mentoring for the students belonging to the SEDGs through proper counselling and monitoring programme.
4. To ensure proper implementation and monitoring of orientation and bridge courses designed by the HEIs to benefit SEDGs students.
5. To ensure implementation of all such programme designed and developed by HEIs to increase the participation of SEDGs students in academic activities.

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<sup>1</sup> UGC Guidelines to Provide Equitable Opportunity for the Socio Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) in the HEIs [https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/2540260\\_SEDGs-Guidelines.pdf](https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/2540260_SEDGs-Guidelines.pdf)

6. To ensure implementation of Government's policies, including reservation policies and various schemes, programme, facilities and guidelines for SEDGs students.
7. To ensure that the HEIs develop appropriate outreach programme to help the SEDGs students avail the various opportunities of educational/academic programmes of HEIs.
8. To ensure proper implementation of preventive measures and Laws against discrimination and atrocities and for safeguards of students belonging to respective categories under SEDGs.
9. To circulate, publicize, facilitate, and monitor the implementation of all UGC and Government guidelines and instructions issued from time to time with reference to SEDGs.
10. To redress the grievances and complaints of the SEDG students within 15 days through a Grievances Redressal Committee (GRC) without compromising the safety, privacy and dignity of the complainant.

### **3. FUNCTIONING OF SEDGs CELL<sup>2</sup>**

1. To coordinate with other existing cells and statutory bodies of the HEIs and enable implementation of the existing schemes and provisions, including scholarships and fellowships of the Govt. of India and respective States.
2. To ensure the implementation of orientation and bridge courses, earn-while-learn schemes, and outreach programme designed and developed by HEIs for SEDGs.
3. To provide socio-economic, academic, and psychological support and mentoring for such students through proper counselling and mentoring programme.
4. To ensure sensitization of faculty, staff, counsellors, and students on the SEDGs issues and their inclusion in all aspects of the HEIs.
5. To explore and generate funds from various sources like Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) and Alumni to provide more financial assistance and scholarships to SEDGs to mitigate opportunity costs and fees for pursuing higher education.
6. To coordinate with the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) to raise awareness about the implementation of various policies for inclusive and equitable quality higher education.

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7. To work as a 'Single Window' for students belonging to SEDGs for their grievances, basic needs, amenities, facilities, welfare measures, and scholarships and fellowships.
8. To upload and disseminate guidelines, facilities, welfare, and safety measures on HEI's portal and maintain such records to review and monitor amenities and basic facilities for a safe and secure environment for SEDGs.
9. To circulate, publicize, and facilitate existing welfare schemes like – Remedial, NET, entry into services, and residential Coaching for SC/ST/OBC (non-creamy layer), Minority Community, and PwD Students.
10. To establish a team of counsellors, social workers, and faculty members to provide emotional and social support to SEDGs to adapt to the environment of the HEI.
11. To focus on overall personality and skill development, including professional and soft skills, so as to ensure enhancing the student employability.
12. To organize periodic meetings and to monitor the progress of various schemes and all the HEIs may prepare a database of such schemes for SEDGs.
13. To assess the needs of SEDGs and make necessary recommendations to the authorities of the HEIs.
14. To make faculty, staff, students, and service professionals aware of facilities available for SEDGs
15. To sensitize all the students to bring an attitudinal change towards SEDGs to ensure participation of SEDGs in curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities in the HEIs.
16. To hold regular meetings with representatives of SEDG students to check their grievances and also meet with management/authorities of HEIs to facilitate discussion of the grievances of SEDG students and maintain the confidentiality of deliberations and data.
17. To review, monitor, and ensure disposal of all grievances within 15 days.
18. To inform all students during induction/counselling sessions about the Zero-tolerance policy for any form of discrimination. ✓

#### **4. COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**

Any student who feels he/she has experienced discrimination is encouraged to come forward and voice their concerns. The University will handle all problems with respect, confidentiality, and seriousness.

##### **4.1 PROCEDURES**

The SEDGs Cell has to fulfil its mandate of maintaining social harmony among various

sections of the University. Every instance of social prejudice presented before the SEDG cell will be carefully looked at and evaluated, and reasonable action will be suggested. Addressing issues related to any social discrimination faced by students at any level is among the principal objectives of the SEDGs Cell.

The University urges any student who believes he/she has been the victim of harassment or discrimination to notify the SEDGs Cell as soon as possible. Any university employee who witnesses harassment or discrimination against any student on campus should report the behaviour to the SEDGs Cell. No university employee or student should presume that a university official is aware of a specific instance of harassment or discrimination. Bullying, victimization, discrimination, and harassment can all be considered serious misconduct for students, and they can all lead to disciplinary action.

**4.1.1. Reporting:** Any victim student can file their complaints by writing to SEDGs Cell ([sedgcell@bgu.ac.in](mailto:sedgcell@bgu.ac.in)). Any administrator, faculty, or other authority who receives a complaint alleging discrimination must wholly and promptly disclose the information to the SEDGs Cell. The SEDGs Cell, not the person who receives the complaint or report, is in charge of conducting the investigation. Failure to promptly report may constitute a violation of the SEDGs Cell Policy.

**4.1.2. Standard of Proof:** Investigative findings under this Policy will be made utilizing the preponderance of the evidence standard (i.e., "more likely than not"). According to this criterion, the evidence favouring an alleged breach must be more substantial than the evidence against it.

**4.1.3. Interim Protective Measures:** SEDGs Cell may recommend interim protective measures if failing to do so would endanger the complainant's safety and well-being. The imposition of interim protective measures does not prove that this Policy has been broken. These interim measures may include but are not limited to—

- Issuance of "no contact" directives
- Prohibitions or limitations on accessing specific university property
- Modifications to academic or employment arrangements, schedules, or supervision
- Temporary suspension
- Other actions are intended for the parties' security and welfare.

After receiving notice of the restriction, the affected party may submit a written appeal against the interim limits within two working days. All interim protective measures will

remain in effect during the appeal process and thereafter, unless modified by the SEDGs Cell.

**4.1.4. Initiation of Investigation:** As part of any investigative process, the investigator will-

- Provide a copy of this Policy to the complainant;
- Determine whether the complaint falls under the purview of Policy or not;
- Inform the respondent of the complaint brought against him/her and provide a copy of this Policy.

**4.1.5. Detailed Procedure:** The SEDGs Cell may follow either procedure to resolve the disputes at the complainant's request.

***4.1.5.1 Informal Process***

The informal procedure offers a chance to resolve a complaint by raising awareness, educating others, and/or facilitating a conversation. An informal resolution can be suitable if the complainant, respondent, SEDG CELL coordinator, or designee agrees. The complainant or respondent always has the option to end the informal process and request a formal process. Informal resolutions may include but are not limited to:

- ✓ Training;
- ✓ Changes to work or academic arrangements;
- ✓ Informal discussion with a person whose conduct, if not stopped, could rise to the level of discrimination or harassment;
- ✓ Advisory discussion with the respondent's professor or advisor; &
- ✓ "No contact" directive to one or more of the parties;

***4.1.5.2 Formal Process***

All complaints that have not been resolved through the informal process will be resolved through a formal process involving a full investigation conducted by the SEDG CELL coordinator or their designees. As part of the formal process, the investigator will-

- ✓ Inform complainant and respondent regarding their right to be interviewed and provide evidence;
- ✓ Obtain information and evidence, including the identity of any witnesses, from the complainant and the respondent;
- ✓ Attempt to obtain information from the identified witnesses;

- ✓ Collect and maintain appropriate documentation;
- ✓ Disclose appropriate information to others only on a need-to-know basis consistent with state and central law; and
- ✓ Keep the competent authority informed regarding the status of the complaint and investigation, and seek input from them as appropriate when implementing any resolution or discipline.

**4.1.6. Time Period:** The amount of time needed to conduct an investigation will depend in part on the nature of the allegation(s) and the evidence to be investigated (e.g., the scope of the allegations, the time period and number of events implicated by or relevant to the complaint, the number or availability of witnesses involved and the volume of documents).

- ✓ Within 15 working days of receipt of the complaint, the SEDGs CELL coordinator or his/her designee will provide notice of the outcome of the investigation or will advise the parties of the additional estimated amount of time needed for the investigation.
- ✓ Upon conclusion, the SEDGs CELL coordinator or his/her designee will notify the complainant and respondent, in writing, of the investigation results.
- ✓ The written decision will be disclosed only to the complainant, respondent, and the Competent Authority of the University to determine and enforce any remedial actions, discipline, or sanctions.
- ✓ The SEDGs CELL will follow up as appropriate to ensure effective remedial action.
- ✓ Complainants are encouraged to report the SEDGs CELL regarding any recurrence of conduct that was found to violate this Policy and to report any retaliation for the complaint or related investigation.
- ✓ Remedial and preventative measures may be imposed by the SEDGs CELL even in the absence of a violation of this Policy if conduct is found to occur that may, if not addressed, rise to the level of a breach.
- ✓ Any unprofessional conduct or inappropriate behaviour found during the course of the investigation that the Policy does not cover will be addressed with the respective department or Human Resources department.

**4.1.7. Remedies:** Where discrimination in violation of this Policy is determined to have occurred, the University will take timely action to remedy the effects. Potential remedies for the complainant or victim include but are not limited to:

- ✓ Extension of time to re-do or complete academic work without an academic or financial penalty;
- ✓ Changes to academic or employment arrangements, schedules, or supervision that minimize the burden on the complainant or victim;
- ✓ Referral to medical, counselling, and academic support services;
- ✓ Training/re-training on this Policy and other relevant topics for individuals or groups implicated in the discrimination or harassment; and
- ✓ Other measures are designed to repair the negative impact of discrimination or harassment.

**4.1.8. Sanctions:** If a violation of this Policy is found, the level of disciplinary action and type or scope of sanctions will depend on the severity and nature of the discrimination, the weight of the evidence, and the need to maintain a safe and respectful environment. Available sanctions include but are not limited to:

- ✓ Mandatory training or counselling;
- ✓ “No Contact” directive;
- ✓ Restriction or bar to entering specific University property or attending University events;
- ✓ Written warning;
- ✓ Suspension; and
- ✓ Expulsion or termination

**4.1.9. Right to Appeal:** Either party shall have the right to appeal the outcome of the formal process and decision to the Vice Chancellor. The Vice-Chancellor must receive a written appeal within seven (07) working days from the date of declaration of findings & sanctions imposed. The Vice-Chancellor may overturn or modify a finding or sanction if, in his or her reasonable discretion, he or she finds any of the following factors had a material impact on the finding or sanction-

- ✓ Failure to comply with applicable procedures in the SEDGs CELL Policy OR
- ✓ Partiality, bias, or conflict of interest by the investigation committee / SEDGs CELL coordinator / SEDGs CELL Chairperson; OR
- ✓ Findings, if not overturned or modified, would result in a substantial injustice to a party or parties, including a substantially inadequate or excessive sanction OR
- ✓ New evidence that was not reasonably available to be presented by the parties during the course of the investigation.

A decision by the Vice-Chancellor or their designee will be made within a reasonable

time, and the SEDGs CELL Coordinator, the complainant, and the respondent will be notified in writing of the decision on the appeal.

During the time of appeal and review, disciplinary action or sanction or remedial/preventative measures, if any, may be implemented and enforced. Upon the request of the appealing party, the Vice Chancellor may, at their discretion, temporarily suspend the imposition of the disciplinary action, sanction, or remedial/preventative measures while the appeal is pending.

***If an appeal is not filed within the period, the findings become final and are not subject to any review.***

#### 5. REVIEW AND MONITORING OF POLICY:

The University may change this Policy and procedures from time to time to improve the effectiveness of its operation. Any employee or student who wishes to comment about this Policy may forward their suggestions to the SEDGs CELL.

#### 6. COMPOSITION AND CONTACT DETAILS OF SEDGs CELL:

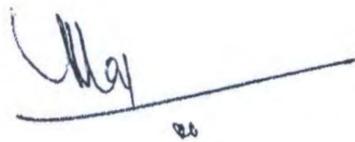
The following are the members of the SEDGs CELL. They can be contacted by mail/telephone by any student /staff of Birla Global University for redressal of their issues.

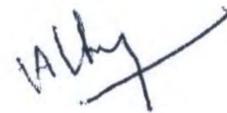
### SEDGs Cell

Email- [sedgcell@bgu.ac.in](mailto:sedgcell@bgu.ac.in)

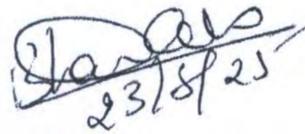
Name	Designation	Email ID	Phone Number
Dr Bhavana Sharma	Chairperson	Bhavana.sharma@bgu.ac.in	9654032085
Dr. Manas Kumar Pal	Member	manas.pal@bgu.ac.in	9937396605
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Dr. Manidatta Ray	Member	manidatta.ray@bgu.ac.in	9437250083
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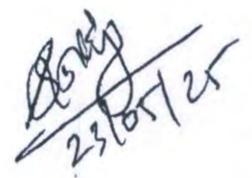






  
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