

DECEMBER 2021 | ISSUE 9

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

COMMITTEE FOR MANAGING GENDER ISSUES

THE QUESTIONS WERE COLLATED BY MEMBERS OF CMGI AND STUDENTS AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT (SASH)



If I don't want to file a formal complaint but have faced harassment, what should I do?

Our primary objective is to ensure your well-being. Even if you do not want to pursue a formal complaint, we might still be able to help you. The most important part of the healing and the recovering process is to acknowledge the harassment. Additionally, in our experience, complainants just need the harassment to stop and the CMGI can work with you towards that goal with or without a formal complaint.

If I don't have any evidence of harassment, how will the case investigation be carried out?

In many cases of sexual harassment, there may be little in terms of evidence, and hence the woman's testimony becomes central to the case. It is more important for the woman to come forward and present her case. The concerns regarding evidence will resolve as the case proceeds with the CMGI. It is also important to keep in mind that evidence can be in many forms. Our inquiry process does not just look into material evidence but will carry out a detailed investigation with both the complainant and the respondent separately. Committee will take statements from you and any witnesses you may have and from the Respondent and any witnesses respondent may have. After, hearing all the witnesses and considering all the evidence, the committee comes to a judgment.



*I have been approached on campus despite clearly stating that I am uncomfortable. I don't want to be approached again, what steps can CMGI take?*

One direct way is to file a complaint and the CMGI can look into it. If one does not wish to file a complaint but wants the behavior to stop, CMGI can work with you to find a way for the behavior to stop. CMGI does not file a complaint by itself without the consent of the complainant. A conversation on what exactly is the end the survivor wishes to have, helps CMGI to direct the survivors accordingly.



*Can I make an anonymous complaint?*

The committee has to hear both sides of any incident before making a decision. You cannot unfortunately make an anonymous complaint. We can only act as an inquiry committee on receipt of a written complaint that discloses the incident and the Respondent. If you wish to stay anonymous, you can approach the committee and have a discussion regarding the case. Your inputs (even without filing a formal case) help us in understanding the kinds of sexual harassment women face on campus. We may also be able to find out that more women have similar complaints. Hence, even if you want to stay anonymous, we encourage you to come forward. While it may not be a formal case, we will still work with you to find a solution.



*While hanging out with male friends, I have felt uncomfortable with comments and jokes of sexual color being made. Do sexist jokes constitute harassment?*

According to the definition of sexual harassment as per the Act, the following in relation to sexually colored remarks and sexist jokes are relevant and would constitute harassment:

- sexually colored remarks
- unwelcome verbal conduct of sexual nature
- conduct that can be humiliating for the woman

*If an IIMA community member (say a student) was to make advances towards me outside campus (say on a group vacation), would it come under the purview of CMGI?*



Yes! Please note that any incident taking place at the workplace comes within the purview of the committee- the workplace will include work-related travel, workshops, and research trips. However, please note that crimes committed against women anywhere at the workplace or otherwise can also be reported to the Police.



***How to effectively beat the “Not all men” argument that is posed whenever I voice out my concerns and fears?***

You need to make clear that you are not accusing all men of anything - complaints of harassment to the committee are against individual(s) who have engaged in behavior that constitutes harassment- the fact that we live in a structure, system, and culture where men are often in more powerful positions means that they are more likely to be the ones who harass women rather than the other way round. So although not all men might indulge in problematic behavior, all men are privileged by the very fact they are born male. Because all women have had experiences of sexual harassment, women will be wary of all men.

***How can I be assured that my complaint would be kept confidential and I would be protected from public scrutiny and the rumor mill?***



The committee functions under a duty of confidentiality. The CMGI policy guidelines clearly state that a breach of confidentiality will be considered a violation of the guidelines and can lead to the imposition of sanctions.



***I am not a woman. If I face harassment, will CMGI be as sensitive towards my concerns as they are for women?***

***Yes! Although the law states “women” particularly, CMGI in IIMA is sensitive towards everyone and their experiences. We recognize that women as a group are more vulnerable to such incidents but we do not rule out anyone else or their experiences. You are welcome to engage with us and even file a complaint.***

***I am supposed to work under someone who is trying to abuse power. Should I make a complaint? Will it not affect my work and position since the other person has more power?***



You can reach out to us even if you do not want to file a complaint. We will try our best to protect you from such situations. It always helps to get some advice and talk to someone about any incident that is distressing. IIM has a counselor who may be able to help and other resources that might help you in dealing with the situation. However, if you do choose to file a complaint, you will be protected from further harm. We have an external member in CMGI to neutralize such situations involving internal power dynamics.



***If someone from outside the community harasses me, will that come under the purview of CMGI?***

If the incident happens within the campus space, then definitely yes. Even if it is outside, you can always reach out to us and we will help you figure out a feasible way to take action and support you throughout.



Find the previous issues  
of our newsletters [here](#).

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Write back to [cmgioutreach@iima.ac.in](mailto:cmgioutreach@iima.ac.in) for queries, feedback, and suggestions.