UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

MOSHI CO-OPERATIVE UNIVERSITY (MoCU)
CHUO KIKUU CHA USHIRIKA MOSHI

GENDER POLICY AND GUIDELINES, 2023

(Made under Article 30(2) of the MoCU Charter, 2015)

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ARI	African Rehabilitation Institute
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRC	Convention on the rights of the Child
GAD	Gender and Development
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GEWE	Gender Equity and Women Empowerment
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ILO	International Labour Organization
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCDGC	Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children
MCDW&C	Ministry of Community Development, Women Affairs and Children
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MKUKUTA	Mkakati wa Kukuza Uchumi na Kupunguza Umaskini
MoCUASA	Moshi Co-operative University Academic Staff Association
MoCU	Moshi Co-operative University
MoCUSO	Moshi Co-operative University Students Organization
MUCCoBS	Moshi University College of Co-operatives and Business Studies
MUHAS	Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences
NSGRP	National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SUA	Sokoine University of Agriculture
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

INTERPRETATION OF KEY TERMS

"Affirmative action" means a body of policies and procedures designed to eliminate discrimination against marginalized groups".

"Discrimination" means differential treatment of individuals based on their sex.

"Gender based violence" means all forms of violence that happen to women, men, girls and boys because of the unequal power relations between them and the perpetrators of such violence.

"Gender discrimination" means one sex is treated either better or worse than the other on the basis of sex.

"Gender equality" means equal opportunities for men and women which emphasize treating people the same in working and learning environment.

"Gender equity" means achievement of fairness and justice in working and learning environment.

"Gender policy" means the Gender Policy and Guidelines (2023)

"Gender" means social differences between men and women that are psychologically, socially or culturally determined/constructed.

"Learning environment" means all processes, activities and facilities aiming at facilitating dissemination and acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences

"Other persons" means persons in the University premises other than visitors and service providers

"Service provider" mean a person in the University premises for official business

"Staff" means any person who is employed by the University on permanent or temporal basis including volunteers, visiting lecturers, researchers, and on contract.

"Student" means a person registered at the University for a specified programme of study.

"University community" means University staff, students and service provider

FOREWORD

Moshi Co-operative University (MoCU) is a community of scholars devoted to the advancement of knowledge, wisdom and understanding for the welfare of the society. The University is committed to create a favourable environment that ensures equity, equality, safety and security of all stakeholders. This Policy sets a basis for the University's commitment to address gender imbalances by considering the different needs of both male and female. The University recognises the value of every individual and is therefore, determined to ensure full participation of all persons in the educational endeavours. To this effect, the University seeks to build a community characterized by equity, fairness and respect that fosters a sense of self-worth and fulfilment of every individual. This Policy covers all aspects of the University life and applies not only to all who work and study, but also those who do business with the University and other persons within the University premises. The University expects that the Policy will be successfully implemented and bear positive results. The Policy is a product of contributions from various stakeholders of the University. It is therefore, expected that the stakeholders shall also fully participate in its implementation.

Prof. Alfred S. Sife

Vice Chancellor

PART I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Gender issues are key elements of the human rights system established by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human rights in 1948. The Declaration states that rights and freedoms shall not be limited by a person's sex. It establishes that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". Other important milestones are the adoption of the Convention in the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the 1979, the Convention on the rights of the Child (CRC) in 1990, the outcome document from the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo (1994) and the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. Furthermore, the United Nations (UN) Millennium Declaration (2000) includes the resolution which aims *inter alia,* to promote gender equity and women empowerment (GEWE). Moreover, achieving gender equality and women empowerment is among the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) specifically goal five. In Africa, gender equality is reflected in various instruments including the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (the Banjul Charter, 1981), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, 2003 and the AU agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, Goal 17 which aims at achieving full gender equality in all spheres of life.

Ensuring gender equality has for a long time been part of national priorities. The government of Tanzania has adopted and implemented various policies, strategies, laws and plans of actions as an effort to promote gender equity, equality and women empowerment. The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania recognizes equality of all persons by incorporating a Bill of Rights which bans all forms of discrimination. The Constitution provides for equity in opportunities and equal rights through equal terms and conditions and establishes affirmative principle as a temporary measure to rectify historical gender imbalances.

In addressing gender issues, Tanzania formulated the Policy on Women in Development (1992) which was replaced by the Women and Gender Development

Policy (2000). The Policy focuses on gender mainstreaming, women's ownership of property, participation in decision making and access to business and credit facilities and technology. In addition, the Tanzania Vision 2025 encompasses a people-centred human development goal which rejects inequity and all forms of social and political exclusion. In Universities' context, the Universities Act, No. 7 of 2005, incorporates provisions on gender equity and equality.

At the institutional level, the Moshi Co-operative University (MoCU) has been in the forefront in adopting and implementing various instruments with a view of realising gender equity and equality. The University Charter (2015), Students' Disciplinary Rules and Procedures (2016), University Dress Codes (2015), Students Welfare (2017), Consultancy Policy and Guidelines (2020), Students Guidance and Counselling Policy (2021), Research Agenda (2020), Quality Assurance Policy (2015) and Students Accommodation Policy (2016); incorporate some provisions seeking to ensure gender equity and equality. In addition, the University realised that without a coherent and comprehensive overall framework for gender equity and equality, gender mainstreaming may remain an elusive reality. Thus, in 2020, the University adopted the Gender Policy.

1.2 Situation analysis

The University has been striving to ensure that gender equity and equality amongst its community members are achieved in all its core activities. The University efforts are manifested through its Charter where representation of both male and female members in University decision making organs is highly encouraged. Moreover, the University is committed to observe gender equity when carrying out its key functions of providing quality education, training, research, and consultancy and community services. This commitment requires putting in place a policy which will facilitate the enhancement of gender equity. Thus, in year 2020 the Gender Policy was formulated and adopted.

The Policy recognises that traditional development theories have not facilitated the participation of women in strategic areas and positions of power and influence because they are based on traditional assumptions of the roles and responsibilities of women and men. In addition, it recognises that it is the right of men, women, boys, girls to participate in and benefit from development and other initiatives. The Policy advocates for new means

and strategies to ensure greater participation of men, women in the decision–making processes. It enhances the principle of equal opportunities and discourage all forms of gender-based discrimination. The Policy demands gender mainstreaming to ensure that opportunities and benefits are equally accessible to all members of the University community. In order to address the emerging gender concerns and align the Policy with global, regional, and national needs and practices, the University finds it prudent to review the Gender Policy (2020).

Throughout the University existence, there has been a gender unit whose main role is to plan and oversee the implementation gender related activities in the University. Moreover, the University has introduced gender courses in its curricula, initiated gender awareness and sensitization seminars/workshops and instituted programs to promote affirmative actions and ensure gender balance. In ensuring gender balance, the University has been visiting female secondary schools to encourage them to enrol for higher education.

The University has also made efforts to ensure that Gender Based Violence (GBV) is combated and prevented. With regard to GBV, the University established the Gender Desk (GD) in April 2022 which started its operations in June 2022. The GD is responsible for handling all GBV issues at the University. The GD works in collaboration with the DSS, Vice Chancellor, the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) and Police Gender Desk. In ensuring that the University community is aware of GBV and mechanisms to prevent and combat it, the University has continually conducted seminars to students. In such seminars, the University has been engaging facilitators from within and outside the University including Police Force and PCCB. Moreover, staff from the DSS and Health Centre have been guiding and advising students on GBV and the action they should take in case of its occurrence.

Despite the University's efforts as aforestated, gender equity and equality are yet to be fully attained. Achieving gender equity and equality is challenged by several factors including; presence of gender concerns in relation to teaching, learning and working environment, gender is not mainstreamed in all University curricula, low participation of female staff in research and consultancy activities, low number of female staff recruited and those climbing up the ladder, and consequently, participation of women in

leadership position is limited. Moreover, more efforts are needed to prevent and remedy all forms of GBV.

1.3 Rationale

Initially, the Policy was adopted in order to: locate the University response and provide a framework for mainstreaming gender; demonstrate commitment and concern by the University in taking positive steps when planning to ensure timely response to gender concerns; narrate and accord special efforts in addressing gender stereotypes and gender-related discrimination as a hindrance to successful gender mainstreaming at the University; arrange for the University to make space and resources available to promote gender sensitivity and address gender concerns; connect with partner organizations and like-minded agencies to harmonize framework for successful operationalization of gender mainstreaming at the University, and; confirm rights, roles and responsibilities of all University stakeholders in issues related to gender.

The review of this Policy is considered imminent in order to strengthen the previous policy. The reasons which have contributed to the review include: enhancing implementation through formulation of Policy Guidelines; keeping it abreast with global, regional and national needs and practices; compliance with Government directives on gender-based framework; addressing the emerging gender based violences; and aligning with development project needs.

This Policy mainly focuses on the following areas:
 (i)   Teaching and Learning Environment;
 (ii) Gender responsive Curricula;
 (iii) Research and Consultancy;
 (iv) Staff Recruitment and Development;
 (v) Student Enrolment, Retention and Performance;
 (vi) Gender Based Violence (GBV);
 (vii) Leadership and governance; and
(viii) Working Environment

1.4 Policy Objectives

The general objective of the Policy is to promote and enhance gender equity, equality and empowerment in areas of enrolment, employment, appointment and promotion, health, education, training, research and consultancy at all levels of the University operations.

The specific objectives of the Policy are to:

(a)   Enable formulation of the guidelines that will facilitate equality and equity of opportunities for women and men at this University;

(b)   Mainstream gender equality and equity in all operations and activities of the University by ensuring that the dignity and integrity of both women and men are equally respected and valued;

(c)   Encourage participation of both men and women in the management of the University;

(d)   Deploy sensitization programs geared towards changing cultural attitudes that undermine participation of women in development;

(e)   Promote gender responsive research and dissemination of research findings;

(f)   Ensure that gender equity is integrated into institutional strategic planning and that policy development, operational practices and procedures are all geared to promote gender balance;

(g)   Inclusion of gender equity as one of the criteria for staff recruitment, rewarding and development without compromising competence and qualifications; and

(h)   Establish linkages, partnerships and collaborations in gender and education.

1.5 Application of the Policy

The provisions of the Policy shall apply to all activities and programs in education, training, research, consultancy and advisory services at all levels of the University. It also applies to financing, governance and management of the University. The Policy shall apply to the University staff, students, service providers, visitors, and any other person in the University premises including but not limited to children and other dependants of staff and students. In addition, the Policy shall as well apply to development and review of University curricula and policies; improvement of teaching and learning environment. The Policy incorporates issues of access, equity, retention, progression, transaction, relevance and quality.

1.6 Guiding Principles

The Policy is guided by the following principles and assumptions:

(i) Equal opportunity for men and women;

(ii) Zero tolerance to all forms of gender inequality; and

(iii) Gender inclusion and participation to learning and working environment.

PART II
POLICY ISSUES, STATEMENTS AND STRATEGIES

2.1 Teaching and Learning Environment

2.1.1 Issue

Teaching and learning environment are expected to be gender sensitive in all education institutions. The expectations are even higher when it comes to higher learning institutions. The University has been taking several measures to ensure that gender equity and equality are promoted and realised. The measures include strategic planning and budgeting for gender related issues, developing and improving teaching and learning facilities, facilitating the availability of advisory services and ensuring students progression. However, the measures are yet to address all gender concerns embedded in teaching and learning including non-availability of gender sensitive physical infrastructure and limited guidance and counselling services.

2.1.2 Statement

The University shall take all measures to ensure that teaching and learning environment are gender sensitive.

2.1.3 Strategies

The University will:

(i) Put in place gender sensitive physical infrastructures to address specific gender needs;

(ii) Institutionalise and strengthen guidance and counselling services;

(iii) Set aside sufficient funds to facilitate gender related activities; and

(iv) Sensitise to sustain students' progression;

2.2   Gender responsive Curricula

2.2.1 Issue

Curriculum development is a crucial vehicle to facilitate teaching, which is one of the core activities of the University. Curricula are vital instruments to institutions' visibility and quality. They define competence and the output. Curricula are supposed to be gender responsive in their design, content, and implementation. The University has taken several measures to ensure that all its curricula are gender responsive by, *inter alia,* incorporating gender courses/topics in its programmes and formulating gender sensitive teams in curricula development and review. However, gender sensitivity in curricula design, content, and implementation is yet to be fully realised.

2.2.2 Statement

The University shall progressively mainstream gender in its programmes, development processes and delivery.

2.2.3 Strategies

The University will:

(i) Ensure that all curricula developed and revised encompass gender issues;

(ii) Create a framework for engendering the delivery approaches to all staff;

(iii) Build capacity to its staff on gender sensitive curricula; and

(iv) Put in place mechanism to monitor curricula design, content, and delivery;

2.3 Research and Consultancy

2.3.1 Issue

Consultancy and research are amongst the University core activities. The activities are undertaken by both men and women. Participation of women and men in consultancy and research is central to maximising gender equity and critically important in achieving University objectives. The University has, over time, initiated and implemented various measures to ensure equal participation of its male and female staff in research and consultancy undertakings. The measures are evident in its internal instruments and practices including teams' composition. Despite the efforts, there are still issues

requiring the University attention including low participation of female staff and absence of express provisions on gender equality in some of its instruments.

2.3.2 Statement

The University shall promote gender equity and equality on all its research and consultancy undertakings.

2.3.3 Strategies

The University will:

(i) Enshrine express provisions on gender equity and equality on its research and consultancy instruments;

(ii) Encourage its male and female staff to undertake research and consultancies;

(iii) Ensure equal access to research resources and consultancy opportunities;

(iv) Build capacity on gender sensitive research and consultancy undertakings; and

(v) Put in place mechanisms to ensure all staff equally participate in research and consultancy undertakings.

2.4 Staff Recruitment and Development

2.4.1 Issue

Staff recruitment and development is an important aspect for the development and effective performance of any organisation. Recruitment and development of staff involves a number of considerations including ensuring gender equity and equality. The University has created a framework for equal opportunities in staff recruitment and development through, among others, invitation of applications from all qualified male and female applicants as well as adoption and implementation of staff development related policies. Notwithstanding all the efforts, the number of female staff recruits is not satisfactory. In addition, the number of female staff climbing up the ladder and attending training, especially abroad, is inadequate. Consequently, manifested is the low number of female staff in University decision making bodies.

2.4.2 Statement

The University shall ensure equal opportunities in staff recruitment and development.

2.4.3 Strategies

The University will:

(i)   Ensure gender-responsive staff recruitment, training, scholarship and promotion;

(ii)   Ensure parity in promotions and appointment to management positions without prejudice to merit;

(iii) Strengthen a mechanism for ensuring women's participation in recruitment, staff development and promotion; and

(iv)   Create mechanisms for tracking staff performance and retention by gender in their duties.

2.5 Student Enrolment, Retention and Performance

2.5.1 Issue

Developing countries, including Tanzania, have witnessed a significant change in terms of male and female students' enrolment in higher learning institutions. Initially, women enrolment was challenging. Of latest, women enrolment has taken a positive trend. The University has experienced a reasonable sex ratio in students' enrolment, retention and performance for the last decade. However, there are still issues with postgraduate students' enrolment. Besides, traditional forces (beliefs and practices) which for longstanding had limited women enrolment, retention and performance are still there.

2.5.2 Statement

The University shall mainstream gender concerns at every stage of learning process for the realisation of equality in enrolment, retention and performance.

2.5.3 Strategies

The University will:

(i)   Put mechanisms to ensure students' sex ratio in enrolment, retention and performance is maintained;

(ii)   Support affirmative action to address gender gaps in enrolment, retention and performance of students to all its programmes;

(iii) Enhance students' self-esteem and confidence; and

(iv) Create mechanisms for tracking students' performance and retention by gender in their studies.

2.6 Gender Based Violence

2.6.1 Issue

The University has put in place GBV specific preventive and curative mechanisms including adoption of gender policy, legal instruments, disciplinary and integrity handling bodies. Even with the policy, instruments and bodies in place, there are still occurrences signalling the persistence of GBV at the University.

2.6.2 Statement

The University shall strengthen measures to prevent and remedy all forms of GBV

2.6.3 Strategies

The University will:

(i) Increase staff and student capacity to recognize and respond to GBV symptoms;

(ii) Strengthen procedure for detecting and reporting GBV cases; and

(iii) Strengthen mechanisms to prevent, handle and remedy violations.

2.7 Leadership and Governance

2.7.1 Issue

Participation of women and men in formal decision-making structures varies at international, national and institutional levels. Equal opportunities in leadership and governance are vital to achieve gender equality. The University has taken and continues to take deliberate measures to ensure equality in leadership and governance. Students and staff policies and instruments encompass provisions promoting proportional opportunities for men and women in leadership. Challenging, however, are the longstanding cultural, economic and societal factors which limits women's opportunities and abilities to participate in leadership.

2.7.2 Statement

The University shall strengthen its measures to achieve gender equality in leadership and governance.

2.7.3 Strategies

The University will:

(i)   Encourage the building of self-esteem and confidence;

(ii)   Build capacity for leadership and governance for staff and students;

(iii)   Ensure leadership mentoring programmes are available;

(iv)   Design and implement sensitisation programmes to challenge stereotypes that associates management and leadership roles.

(v)   Take affirmative action to ensure participation of female staff in management and leadership.

2.8 Working Environment

2.8.1 Issue

Conducive working environment has significant impacts on work performance and ultimately outcome. Conducive working environment entails, among others, gender sensitive facilities and surrounding environment. Men and women approach their work in different ways and encounter different hurdles in different ways. Likely, they are impacted by institutional work environments differently. The University efforts have always been towards improving work environment so that male and female staff are well accommodated. Notwithstanding the efforts, the University's working environment is yet to address all gender specific concerns.

2.8.2 Statement

The University shall improve its working environment to address gender concerns amongst staff.

2.8.3 Strategies

The University will:

(i)   Ensure conducive gender responsive working environment;

(ii)   Strengthen working environment and complaints reporting mechanism; and

(iii) Put in place complaints tracking and handling mechanism.

(iv) Ensure that the environment is conducive for its staff to participate in sports activities.

PART III

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE

3.1 Implementation

This Policy shall be implemented and complied with by all University organs, staff, students service providers, visitors, and any other person in the University premises including but not limited to children and other dependants of staff and students.

3.2 Overall Responsibility on Implementation

The office responsible for gender issues shall have the overall responsibility of overseeing the implementation of this Policy at the University. It shall be the custodian of the Policy and shall operate under the office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor responsible for Planning, Finance and Administration. In particular, the office shall:

(i)   Translate policy goals, objectives and strategies into actual programmes;

(ii)   Develop gender responsive strategic action plans;

(iii)   Coordinate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Policy;

(iv)   Coordinate capacity building and gender awareness programmes;

(v)   Liaise with the University Gender Desk in addressing gender issues;

(vi)   Collaborate with other University organs to realise gendered budget; and

(vii) Liaise with stakeholders in implementation of the Policy.

3.3 Role of Faculties/Directorates/Institutes/Departments

Faculties/Directorates/Institutes/Departments will ensure that the Policy is implemented and complied with in all core functions of the University. In particular, they shall ensure that teaching, research and consultancy services are gender responsive. They shall put in place mechanisms of detecting, reporting and handling gender concerns at their levels.

3.4. University Staff

University staff shall implement and ensure compliance with the Policy when discharging their teaching, research, advisory, and consultancy roles. Specifically, they shall be:

(i) Gender sensitive in contents preparation, delivery and assessment;

(ii) Encouraging students to build self-esteem and confidence;

(iii) Guidance providers to gender issues identification and handling procedures;

(iv) Advisors on gender sensitivity; and

(v) Accountable for Policy non-observance.

3.5 Students and Other Stakeholders

University students and all those associated with the University shall implement and comply with the Policy. They shall play roles in reporting gender-based issues to the relevant authorities and observe all the principles guiding the implementation of the Policy.

PART IV
MISCELLANOUS PROVISIONS

4.1 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the Policy implementation shall be an ongoing activity under the mandate of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Planning, Finance and Administration) through relevant department for gender issues. To appraise the steps taken and the success in the implementation of the Policy, the University Management shall ensure compliance of the Policy at all levels and that the necessary measures are taken promptly for non-compliance.

4.2 Conflict of interest

In handling gender issues, members of investigative and decision-making organs shall at all times avoid conflict of interest. A member with conflict of interest shall declare it to the relevant organ. Such a member shall not be allowed to participate in investigation and decision-making processes concerning the person with whom he/she has a conflict of interest.

PART V

POLICY GUIDELINES

5.1 Purpose

These Guidelines are meant to provide for specific procedures for implementing the Gender Policy and shall be read together with the Policy.

5.2 Implementation Principles

The implementation of this Policy shall be based on the following principles:
(i)   Diligence, confidentiality, fairness, justice and due process in handling complaints;
(ii) Access to information by all individuals involved in the investigation and decision-making processes on gender issue;
(iii) Presumption of innocence to the accused person;
(iv) Protection of the victim, whistle blowers and accused person;
(v)   Prompt and thorough investigations;
(vi) Notification of investigations outcome; and
(vii) Non-retaliation/non-victimisation of complainant, whistle blower and witness.

5.3 Reporting of Incidences

Gender-based issues can be reported by any of the following:
(i)   Member of the Policy implementing organs who receives information about any act of gender issue has an obligation to report it through the established channels as prescribed in this Policy.
(ii) Victims of gender discrimination or gender-based violence.
(iii) Witness of gender-based discrimination or gender-based violence, provided that person is able to provide evidence.

A gender-based complaint may be made through:
(i)   Complaint box installed at the University Gender Desk Office;
(ii)   Gender Desk telephone;
(iii) Electronic means including e-mail or special application; and
(iv)   Formal letter.

5.4 Protection of Victims and Whistle blowers

   (i)   When a complaint has been lodged, it shall be treated with utmost confidentiality;

   (ii) Where it is necessary to interview a witness, the investigating committee shall maintain strict confidentiality; and

   (iii) Any person handling a complaint of gender-based issue and any party to the complaint shall treat it with confidentiality except where disclosure is necessary to prevent imminent harm.

5.5 Complaints Handling Procedures

A gender related complaint may be formal, informal or anonymous.

5.5.1 Formal complaints

   (i)   A formal complaint shall be lodged in the prescribed form (See section 3 of "Daftari la Kusajili Taarifa za Ukatili wa Kijinsia katika Taasisi za Elimu ya Juu na ya Kati, 2022").

   (ii) Any member of the University community who believes that he or she has been subjected to gender-based violence may lodge a complaint with the Gender Desk.

   (iii) Any person with a non-gender-based violence complaint may lodge a complaint to the office responsible for gender issues;

   (iv) The office responsible for gender issues or the Gender Desk may initiate an official investigation if there is a reason to believe that any of its members is committing gender discrimination or being subjected to gender-based violence, respectively; and

   (v)   Upon completion of the investigation process, the office responsible for gender issues or the Gender Desk shall refer the matter to the relevant authority or take necessary action, as the case may be.

   (vi) Parties to the complaint shall have a right to be notified of the outcome by the Gender Desk.

5.5.2 Informal complaint procedure

   (i)   An informal complaint may be lodged to any member of staff, gender desk, gender unit, guidance and counselling unit, student's organisation or any academic/

administrative unit or person of authority that the victim trusts. Such complaint may be lodged where the victim anticipates for an immediate action to be taken to remedy or redress the harm without pursuing disciplinary action or seeking sanctions against the respondent. In any case, the respondent must be notified of the complaint lodged against him/her;

(ii) Informal procedure may involve the respondent asking the complainant for forgiveness on his or her own motion;

(iii) Where an informal complaint has been lodged to any member of the Policy implementation bodies, and such complaint warrants a disciplinary action, it shall be forwarded to the relevant authority;

(iv) Any person with a gender issue may report his/her concerns to the appropriate authority;

(v) Informal procedure may involve the complainant and the respondent themselves where the complainant may openly face the respondent and express his/her dissatisfaction with the acts of the respondent; and

(vi) An informal complaint shall be documented and may be used in future as evidence of repeated unwanted conduct.

5.5.3 Anonymous complaints

Anonymous complaints shall first be investigated to determine their authenticity before any action is taken. In any case, a complainant/witness/victim of gender discrimination or gender-based violence who wishes to pursue a remedy through these procedures must be prepared to be identified to the respondent.

5.6 Offences and Penalties

(i) Any person who makes a frivolous, malicious and vexatious or false accusation of gender issue against another person commits a disciplinary offence and shall be subjected to disciplinary action by the relevant authority.

(ii) Any person in authority who receives a complaint of gender issue and fails to take any pro-active steps to progress the matter in a timely and appropriate manner commits a disciplinary offence and shall be subjected to disciplinary action by the relevant authority.

(iii) Any person who fails to comply with the requirement of this Policy commits a disciplinary offence and shall be subjected to disciplinary action by the relevant authority.

(iv) A person found guilty of gender discrimination and gender-based violence shall, depending on the gravity of the offence, be liable to any or a combination of the following:

(a) Written warning;

(b) Counselling;

(c) Apology to the aggrieved party;

(d) Compensation to the aggrieved party;

(e) Suspension;

(f) Dismissal;

(g) Criminal investigation and prosecution;

(h) Any other penalty as may be stipulated by the relevant rules.