

Name of Document	Child Protection Policy
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### Policy Statement

The Mahindra United World College, India (MUWCI) is committed to the prevention of child abuse and to the protection of children in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Decisions to report or act upon known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect will be based on the preliminary investigation which points to such an act having been committed as defined by the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 heading to the prevailing laws of India and Maharashtra.

This commitment means that the interests and welfare of children are our primary consideration when any decision is made about known or suspected cases of abuse or neglect.

The procedures outlined in the policy are in line with the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000 and The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.

When required, we are committed to providing families with access to outside social services/psychological support agencies and/or individuals who can support families in resolving issues associated with child abuse.

We promote safe practice within the College community whereby all students will feel confident to bring their concerns forward and feel supported in those concerns.

This policy refers to the professional responsibility of any employee of the College relating to children as students in the College or children who an employee of the College may have contact with through the outreach educational institution of Akshara/Triveni.

## **Definitions**

**Child:** Any person below the age of 18 is considered a child.

**MUWCI:** Mahindra United World College of India.

**Akshara/Triveni:** Mahindra UWC College Educational Outreach

**MUWCI Faculty:** Adults appointed, who primarily work with the educational programs and IB Diploma Students residing at the College.

**MUWCI / Akshara Faculty:** Adults appointed, who primarily work in an educational support role with children in the local community.

**Child Abuse:** Child abuse is the term used to describe different types of maltreatment inflicted on a Child. It includes non-accidental physical injury, neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse, including psychological harm of children and requires different and specialized responses. In its most serious forms, abuse can lead to death or long term harm to the physical or emotional well-being of a child.

**DSL/CPO:** Designated Safeguarding Lead/Child Protection Officer

**DDSL/DCPO:** Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Child Protection Officer

## Areas of Abuse

There are four main areas of Child Abuse. It should be recognised that any signs of abuse may also be symptomatic of other problems.

### 1. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent or severe neglect of a child, which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development. It can occur where parents/guardians fail to meet the basic and essential needs of their children such as food, clothing and medical care. Parents refusing or failing to give love and affection to their children is a case of emotional neglect.

Signs or symptoms which may possibly indicate neglect:

- a. Hunger
- b. Tiredness or listlessness
- c. Child dirty or unkempt
- d. Poor school attendance or often late for school
- e. Poor concentration
- f. Affection-demanding or attention-seeking behaviour
- g. Stealing or scavenging compulsively
- h. Failure to achieve developmental milestones

### 2. Physical Abuse:

This is physical injury to a child with reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. It involves any non-accidental injury where someone physically hurts, injures or kills a child. This can involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning and biting. It also includes giving a child poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs, cigarettes or alcohol.

Signs or symptoms which may indicate physical abuse:

- a. Unexplained burns, cuts, bruising, inconsistent account of how bruising or injuries occurred, bite marks.
- b. Bald patches.
- c. Fear of going home or parents being contacted.
- d. Depression or poor self-image.
- e. Fear of medical help.

- f. Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance.
- g. Violence or aggression towards others including bullying

### 3. Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse includes children being involved in sexual activities that they do not fully comprehend or agree to. It occurs when a person uses his/her power over the child to involve the latter in sexual activity.

In India, Sexual Abuse includes any kind of sexual offence and is defined in line with the POCSO Act (2012). In keeping with the best international child protection standards, the said Act also provides for mandatory reporting of sexual offences.

The said Act defines a child as any person below eighteen years of age, and defines different forms of sexual abuse, including but not limited to penetrative and non-penetrative assault, as well as sexual harassment and pornography, and deems a sexual assault to be “aggravated” under certain circumstances, such as when the abused child is mentally ill or when the abuse is committed by a person in a position of trust or authority vis-à-vis the child, like a family member, police officer, teacher, or doctor.

This casts a legal duty upon a person who has knowledge that a child has been sexually abused to

report the offence; if he fails to do so, he may be punished with six months’ imprisonment and/ or a fine.

Signs or symptoms which may indicate sexual abuse:

*\*Please note that most frequently there may be no signs of this type of abuse.*

- a. Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate behaviour.
- b. Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching.
- c. Persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains.
- d. Eating disorders.
- e. Attention-seeking behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation.
- f. Regressive behaviour.
- g. Enuresis, soiling.
- h. Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately.
- i. Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming.
- j. Bruises and/or scratches in the genital area.
- k. Lack of trust of a familiar or particular adult

#### **4. Psychological/Emotional Abuse:**

This type of abuse involves persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. This occurs where constant lack of love and affection, threats, verbal attacks, taunting, shouting, can lead to a child's loss of self-esteem. It can also include harassment or indifference on the basis of race, caste, culture, gender or disability. Aspects of psychological and emotional abuse include:

- a. Hostile rejecting/degrading (e.g. taunts).
- b. Terrorising (e.g. threats or acts that induce fear).
- c. Actively isolating (e.g. locking a child in a room for extended periods of time)
- d. Exploiting/corrupting (e.g. teaching a child to steal).
- e. Denying emotional responsiveness (e.g. denying affection and shows of love).

Signs or symptoms which may indicate psychological abuse:

- a. Rocking, banging head, regression.
- b. Self-mutilation, drug or solvent abuse.
- c. Fear of parents being contacted.
- d. Running away, compulsive stealing.
- e. Masturbation in public.
- f. Eating disorders.
- g. Soiling, smearing faces, enuresis.
- h. Sudden speech disorders, selective mutism.
- i. Over-reaction to mistakes, continual self-deprecation.
- j. Delayed physical/mental/emotional development

## **Responsibilities**

Protecting the welfare of children is the role of every professional who comes into contact with children at MUWCI. This includes all staff knowing how to respond to suspected cases of child abuse and neglect and the process for reporting the suspected cases to the relevant persons.

## **Procedures**

### **Safe Recruitment:**

MUWCI is committed to safe recruitment. The Human Resources department follows rigorous procedures for the appointment of all members of staff in the college and in the Akshara/Triveni program, such as previous employer(s) checks, checking references, background checks, and police checks.

### **Faculty and Staff Training:**

MUWCI is committed to maintaining and increasing staff awareness of how to prevent, recognise and respond to child abuse and neglect. This school ensures that all staff is updated annually on procedures relating to child abuse and neglect. As part of their induction, all adults will familiarise themselves with the MUWCI Child protection policy and will be encouraged to read additional resource material.

The College is also committed to updating staff on policies and procedures on an annual basis at the beginning of each academic year so that all those working with children understand their responsibilities and are familiar with the expected practice.

A further commitment is training senior educational leadership, faculty and staff on a regular basis to ensure that they are up to date.

**Reporting:**

**MUWCI staff must report concerns immediately to the Designated Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>E-mail Id</b>	<b>Mobile Number</b>
<b>DSL (CPO)</b> Subarna Sampat	childprotection@muwci.net	+919168680365
<b>DDSL (DCPO)</b> Karl Pestonji	childprotection@muwci.net	+917387432356

**Akshara/Triveni children and/or faculty must report to the Head of Akshara, who will then immediately inform the Designated Child Protection Officer.**

- There should be a minimum of two people meeting with the child who has a complaint or the alleged perpetrator. If both the CPO and DCPO need to first meet with the child, the counsellor should be brought in soon after, or the counsellor can meet with both children with either the CPO or DCPO.
- The Child Protection Officer will investigate and record information and observations using the Child Protection Initial Record of Concern (see Appendix 2), and will give a report to the Head of College within 24-48 hours of the matter coming to his/her attention.
- If there are obvious signs of harm the student will be taken for medical treatment immediately.
- The Head of Campus Infrastructure Services will report to the relevant authorities based on the principle of this Child Protection policy and the laws of India (POCSO Act, 2012).

## Emergency

First aid is to be given as in any emergency. Follow-up care and counselling will commence as soon as practical.

### When a MUWCI child discloses:

When a MUWCI student discloses any form of abuse, MUWCI staff must report concerns immediately to the Designated Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer.

Whenever possible, MUWCI staff should refrain from asking questions or making inappropriate comments which could damage the child further.

- a. Remain calm, do not panic or express shock
- b. Listen carefully - do not prompt responses.
- c. Reassure the student - tell them they are doing the right thing and that you are glad they are confiding in an adult.
- d. Do not project or assume anything, let the child express themselves; leave your own assumptions out.
- e. Avoid asking questions, but if it is needed use open and general questions in a non-leading manner:
  - What happened to you?
  - Who did this to you?
  - Where did it happen?
  - When did this happen?
- f. Use age-specific language. Ask for clarification for any meaning or words you don't understand.
- g. Let the student know they are believed
- h. Let the student know that you will do your best to protect and support them.
- i. Do not promise secrecy to the student. Explain that it is necessary that in order to help them, you will have to share it with the Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer, but it will be as confidential as possible. Assure them that their issue will not be general knowledge within the school community.
- j. Check that you have a full understanding of what the student has told you before the end of the discussion.
- k. Make the student feel safe and comfortable. Ensure that the student is not left in a situation where he/she may be pressured to change their story.
- l. Report to the Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer, or the Head of Akshara as soon as possible.



m. In line with international guidelines, the College will not take any photographs or video of a child's injuries but instead records them by use of diagrams -see Appendix 2-.

n. Maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss this with any other members of staff, student or people outside of school. It will be considered a breach of professional standards if you do this.

**When a student supported by Akshara/Triveni discloses**

Adopt the same procedure but report to the Head of the Akshara programme who will take appropriate action. This guidance applies to the Akshara faculty. Students who are working as volunteers should immediately inform the nearest responsible person in the partner organisation.

**Risk Assessment:**

Risk assessments will be carried out for all activities and programmes that the College judges to involve risk to students.

*Partner Organisations:* As part of the risk assessment of activities and projects, due attention will be paid to the child safeguarding arrangements that are in place at those activities and projects.

**Implementation of this Policy:**

It will be the responsibility of the Head of Campus Infrastructure and Services, to ensure that the Policy is fully implemented.

The Head of College needs to also notify the International Office in respect of any severe incident which results in any expulsion or criminal action. In case of expulsion of a student, the relevant National Committee should also be notified.

A member of the Governing Board will be nominated to have oversight into the area of child protection and they shall be informed of any child protection issues or concerns that arise at the College. This nominee will brief the UWC International Board and other UWC's of the trends of abuse or particular risks.

**Review:**

This policy will be reviewed and updated each year in August. The Head of College will sign a copy of the revised policy and will share it with the Governing Board.

**Appendix 1****STAFF HANDBOOK**

What you should do if you are worried about a student's welfare, or what you should do if a student discloses any form of abuse:

**MUWCI staff must report concerns immediately to the Designated Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer.** Do not keep your concerns to yourself.

Abuse can be:

- a. Neglect (for example: dirty, no lunch, inappropriately dressed for the weather)
- b. Physical (for example: bruising, burns, sores, bites).
- c. Emotional (for example withdrawn or disturbing behaviour).
- d. Sexual (for example inappropriate sexualised behaviour or comments). There are many other physical and behavioural indicators of abuse.

When the student/child discloses:

Whenever possible, MUWCI staff should refrain from asking questions or making inappropriate comments which could damage the child further.

- e. Remain calm, do not panic or express shock
- f. Listen carefully - do not prompt responses.
- g. Reassure the student - tell them they are doing the right thing and that you are glad they are confiding in an adult.
- h. Do not project or assume anything, let the child express themselves; leave your own assumptions out.
- i. Avoid asking questions, but if it is needed use open and general questions in a non-leading manner:
  - What happened to you?
  - Who did this to you?
  - Where did it happen?
  - When did this happen?
- j. Use age-specific language. Ask for clarification for any meaning or words you don't understand.

- k. Let the student know they are believed
- l. Let the student know that you will do your best to protect and support them.
- m. Do not promise secrecy to the student. Explain that it is necessary that in order to help them, you will have to share it with the Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer, but it will be as confidential as possible. Assure them that their issue will not be general knowledge within the school community.
- n. Check that you have a full understanding of what the student has told you before the end of the discussion.
- o. Make the student feel safe and comfortable. Ensure that the student is not left in a situation where he/she may be pressured to change their story.
- p. Report to the Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer, or the Head of Akshara as soon as possible.
- q. In line with international guidelines, the College will not take any photographs or video of a child's injuries but instead records them by use of diagrams -see Appendix 2-.
- r. Maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss this with any other members of staff, children or people outside of school. It will be considered a breach of professional standards if you do this.

**When a student supported by Akshara/Triveni discloses**

Adopt the same procedure but report to the Head of the Akshara programme who will take appropriate action. This guidance applies to the Akshara faculty. Students who are working as volunteers should immediately inform the nearest responsible person in the partner organisation.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AND LEGAL DUTY AS A MEMBER OF STAFF AT MUWCI, TO PASS ON ANY CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS ABOUT A STUDENT.

**Appendix 2**

**INITIAL RECORD OF CONCERN**

(To be completed by the Child Protection Officer / Deputy Child Protection Officer / Head of Akshara)

<b>Child's Name:</b>			
<b>Date of Birth:</b>		<b>Child's School:</b>	
<b>Child's Wada or Village:</b>			
<b>Context: MUWCI / Akshara Teacher:</b>			
<b>Male/ Female /Other:</b>	<b>Ethnic Origin:</b>	<b>Disability:</b>	<b>Religion:</b>
<b>Name of the alleged offender:</b>			
<b>Date of Birth of the alleged offender:</b>		<b>Nationality of the alleged offender:</b>	
<b>Name of parents/guardian of the alleged offender:</b>			
<b>Address of parents/guardian of the alleged offender:</b>			
<b>Record of initial discussion:</b>	<b>Date of referral:</b>	<b>Reported by:</b>	

<b>Who has the information been shared with?</b>		
<b>Initial action points:</b>	<b>Agreed timeline:</b>	<b>Action by:</b>
<p><b>Nature of the disclosure:</b></p> <p>Please include here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Date, Time, Place of disclosure:</li> <li>- What did you observe?</li> <li>- Was someone else there when the child made the disclosure?</li> </ul> <p>Indicate name and position/relationship with the child.</p>		

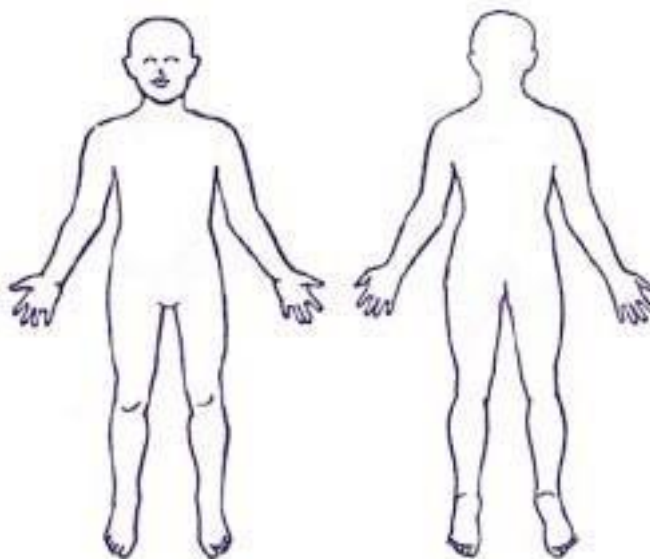
**Nature of the concern:**

Please include here:

- Date, Time, Place of concern:
- What did the child say or do?
- Was there someone else with the child when the incident took place? Indicate name and position/relationship with the child.

**Additional Information:**

(Details of any reported and/or visible physical injuries)



**Please indicate any markings on the body outline.** Please, do not take any pictures, audio visual recordings, and do not ask the child to reveal any injury beneath any clothing.

<p><b>Report on the action taken:</b> <i>including professional agencies known to be involved with the family, the extent to which both the child and the family are aware of the steps already taken if parents have been informed then times and dates and a record of the meeting.</i></p>	<p><b>Date:</b></p>	<p><b>Action by:</b></p>
<p><b>Further action points:</b></p>	<p><b>Date:</b></p>	<p><b>Action by:</b></p>
<p><b>Reported by:</b></p>		
<p><b>Your Role / Responsibility / Position:</b></p>		
<p><b>Date and Time of this Recording:</b></p>		
<p><b>Initial Form passed on to:</b>  <b>Head of College: Yes / No</b>  <b>Head of Campus Infrastructure Services: Yes / No</b></p>		
<p><b>College contact details:</b></p>		
<p><b>Your Signature:</b></p>		



## **ANNEXURE A - CHILD PROTECTION - CODE OF CONDUCT**

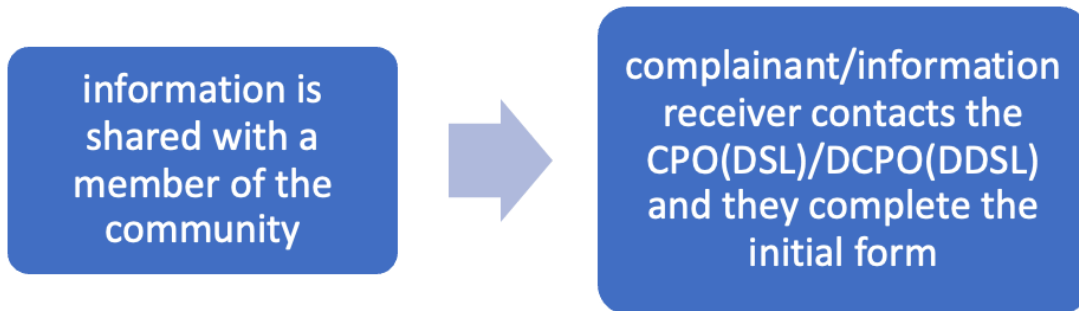
1. MUWCI is committed to the safety and protection of students. This Code of Conduct applies to all employees and volunteers who represent the College and who interact with students in both a direct and/or unsupervised capacity.
2. MUWCI is committed to the safety and protection of children in the local community with whom the college works through Akshara/ Triveni.
3. MUWCI committee to provide education and awareness of child abuse for employees and volunteers.
4. The public and private conduct of those acting on behalf of MUWCI can inspire and motivate those with whom they interact or can cause great harm if inappropriate. We must, at all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany our work.
5. We should be aware of our own and other persons' vulnerability, especially when working alone with students, and be particularly aware that we are responsible for maintaining physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries in such interactions. We must avoid any covert or overt sexual behaviours with those for whom we have responsibility. This includes speech or gestures as well as physical contact that exploits, abuses, or harasses.
6. We must show prudent discretion before touching a student and be aware of how physical touch may be perceived or received, and whether it would be an appropriate expression of greeting, care, concern, or celebration. MUWCI staff and volunteers are prohibited at all times from physically disciplining a student.
7. Physical contact with students can be misconstrued both by the recipient and by those who observe it and should occur only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate, and never in private. One-on-one meetings with a student are best held in a public area; in a room where the interaction can be (or is being) observed; or in a room with the door left open, and another staff member is notified about the meeting.
8. MUWCI staff should not travel in a car alone with a student and if this is unavoidable the relevant Deputy Head should be informed.
9. We must intervene when there is evidence of, or there is reasonable cause to suspect, that students are being abused in any way. Suspected abuse or neglect must be reported to the appropriate school and civil authorities as described in the Child Protection Policy.

10. Possession and consumption of alcohol, tobacco or cigarettes by Employees and volunteers is forbidden when working or interacting with students. Adults should never give students any alcohol, tobacco, cigarettes or share images or reading material that is inappropriate.

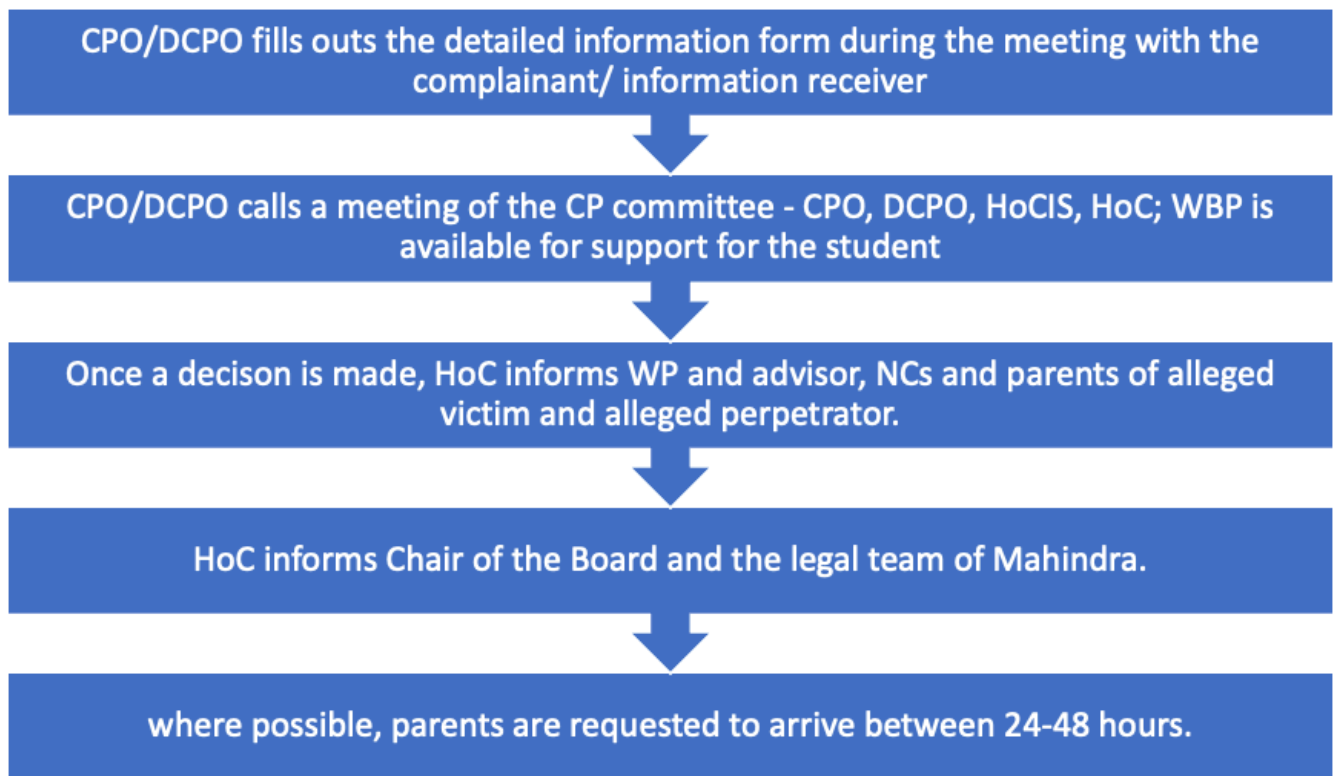
11. Employees and volunteers should not accept gifts from students of a value greater than Rs. 1000 without prior written permission from the Head of College.

ANNEXURE B - REPORTING SEXUAL ABUSE/ASSAULT/HARASSMENT for those Under 18 <sup>1</sup>

Complainant/3<sup>rd</sup> Party complaint



Once the CPO(DSL)/DCPO(DDSL) receives the complaint, the following steps must be completed:



**Top Priorities:**

- Reassure the student and ensure safety. Remove the student from imminent danger and assure student safety. Avoid any invasive examinations of the student.
- The school doctor or registered medical practitioner addresses immediate needs and contacts the nearest hospital as necessary.
- If the student has suffered sexual abuse, the staff, faculty or management personnel shall not examine the student.
- Risk assessment: if the student is at any kind of continued risk, the CPO/DCPO (DSL/DDSL) shall inform the child protection committee and ensure that the student is taken to a place of safety.

<sup>1</sup> In case of Akshara students who are mostly at home, this flowchart will not be applicable and in those cases the College will simply report the matter directly to the concerned authorities.

**All cases of sexual abuse/assault are mandatorily reportable under the POCSO Act, 2012 without delay**

1. CPO prepares a report for the local authorities. The report to include the following details as far as possible:
  - Gender, DOB, and nationality of the complainant
  - Gender, DOB, and nationality of the alleged offender
  - Brief details of the incident – what type (eg – inappropriate touch, etc), when it happened (date) and whether it happened on or off campus.
  - College contact details along with signature.
2. HoCIS submits the report to the Paud Police Station within 48 hours of gathering all relevant information. The Head of Student Life and a legal representative from a law firm will also go to the police station. The college will arrange the presence of a lawyer. It is mandatory for the police to receive the report and give acknowledgement. If the police refuse, the college representative has to insist on the same. In case of a situation that Paud police still refuse to accept, the report is to be filed with the Superintendent of Police Office HQ Pashan Road, Pashan, Pune 411043 Maharashtra, stating that the Paud police have refused to accept the report. The police report is to be filed irrespective of the desire of the complainant or the parent.
3. If an incident of sexual assault or sexual harassment takes place outside of India while on a college trip, the adult chaperone of the student is to contact the UWC International Office for advice and follow the legal procedures and protocols of the country where they are situated. The college will inform the National Committees of the students involved. The college will also contact the embassies or consulates of the students involved.
4. The wellbeing counsellor will provide psychological support to both parties.
5. Until the time that an FIR is lodged or the complainant chooses not to pursue the complaint further, the College will provide support to both parties throughout the Police process.
6. Submission of the police report and conduct of the internal enquiry by the Child Protection Committee are independent of each other.
7. The internal inquiry is to be conducted by the Child Protection Committee duly following principles of natural justice.

## ANNEXURE C

### **Seeking Guidance about or Reporting Sexual Assault**

THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT, 2012 NO.32 OF 2012 (W.E.F.

14-11-2012) defines a range of offences that must be reported.

Under this act any person (including the child), who has apprehension that an offence under this Act is likely to be committed or has knowledge that such an offence has been committed, shall provide such information to, — (a) the Special Juvenile Police Unit; or (b) the local police.

### **Reporting Sexual Assault**

If you or someone you know has been hurt, threatened or assaulted, you need to talk to the College Health and Wellness Counsellor as soon as possible to get the necessary support so that the offence can be reported. If you have any concerns about reporting we still want you to speak with an adult who will direct you to people who can give you the guidance you need: Speak with your advisor, an adult member of faculty you trust or the counsellor. They will give you appropriate advice. Under Indian Law, if details of a sexual assault affecting someone under 18 years of age are given to anyone, they are legally obliged to report this to the authorities.