IQRA NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The policy outlines and enforces the University's commitment to maintaining a workplace environment where all individuals are treated with dignity, respect, and equity. Iqra National University is dedicated to maintaining a safer work environment and expressly prohibits any form of unlawful discriminatory practice, including harassment. This policy further serves to delineate the rights, duties, and obligations of all covered individuals to ensure strict compliance herewith.

2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to actions by faculty, students, staff, other members of the University (such as interns, residents etc.), or third parties (such as service providers, visitors etc.), who may be male, female or transgender persons, when the misconduct occurs:

a) on the University property (i.e. on campus) or in its immediate vicinity;
b) off the University property, if (i) the conduct occurs in connection with the University's recognized program or activity or (ii) the conduct may create an intimidating and offensive environment or pose a safety risk on campus; and
c) using the university's computing or network resources accessed from an off- campus location, which shall be deemed to have occurred on campus.

3. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

"University" shall mean Iqra National University, as established under the Iqra National University Act, 2011.

"Employee" shall mean any individual who is engaged in the service of the University, whether on a full-time, part-time, contractual, or temporary basis.

"Head of Department" (HoD) shall mean any person appointed to head a particular department, and shall include any person officiating in that capacity during the absence of the appointed Head.

"Supervisor" shall mean a person vested with first-line managerial authority who monitors, directs, and regulates the performance of employees to whom tasks have been assigned or delegated.

"Discrimination" shall mean any unfair or prejudicial treatment of an individual or group based on characteristics, including but not limited to gender, age, race, class, or any other impermissible parameter.

"Harassment" means any unwelcome advance, request for favours or other verbal or written communication or physical conduct of a nature, or demeaning attitudes, where:

a) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual participation in any activity at the HEI;
b) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for academic or employment decision affecting that individual; or
c) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's academic or work performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or working environment.

4. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

a. Discrimination

The University strictly prohibits discrimination in the provision of employment opportunities, benefits, or privileges; in the determination of work conditions and pay equity; and in decisions regarding promotions, appraisals, and evaluations. Such prohibition applies to discrimination based on a person's race, color, origin, age, religion, disability status, gender identity or expression, or marital status. Any act of discrimination in violation of this policy shall constitute grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

b. Harassment

"Harassment" means any unwelcome advance, request for favours or other verbal or written communication or physical conduct of a nature, or demeaning attitudes, where:
a) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual participation in any activity at the HEI;
b) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for academic or employment decision affecting that individual; or
c) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's academic or work performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or working environment.

5. IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT

The University shall implement and enforce this Policy in accordance with the following directives and shall:

a) Establish and maintain a safe, inclusive, and respectful working and learning environment free from discrimination, harassment, and other forms of inappropriate conduct, in which all employees, students, and other members of the University communit are afforded equal rights and are treated with dignity, courtesy, and respect.
b) Develop, implement, and enforce appropriate procedures to ensure that all employees and relevant members of the University community are adequately informed of their rights, responsibilities, and obligations under this Policy.
c) Provide and maintain an effective, accessible, and transparent mechanism for the submission and processing of complaints, ensuring that all complaints are received and handled with dignity and respect and are addressed in a fair, impartial, timely, and confidential manner, subject to applicable law and due process requirements.

d) Encourage and facilitate students, faculty, staff, and other members of the University community to report any alleged breach of this Policy and ensure that no complainant, respondent, witness, or other person participating in good faith in a complaint process is subjected to victimization, retaliation, intimidation, or any other adverse treatment as a consequence of reporting a concern or participating in proceedings under this Policy.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

Heads of Department (HoDs) and Supervisors have a responsibility to:

- Monitor the workplace environment to ensure that appropriate standards of conduct are maintained at all times. Where a HoD or Supervisor becomes aware of any instance of discrimination or harassment in the workplace, they must take appropriate and immediate action to stop such conduct.
- Lead by example by demonstrating appropriate and respectful behavior and ensuring that they do not engage in any conduct that constitutes a breach of this Policy.
- Ensure awareness and understanding of the Policy by informing employees and other relevant individuals of its requirements and responsibilities.
- Take all complaints seriously and ensure that appropriate and timely action is taken in response to any complaint or reported incident.

Employees have a responsibility to:

- Refrain from engaging in any conduct that violates or is inconsistent with this Policy.
- Report incidents of discrimination or harassment in the workplace through the appropriate reporting channels.
- Support individuals who experience discrimination or harassment by offering appropriate assistance and informing them of the available sources of support, guidance, and advice.
- Maintain strict confidentiality regarding information obtained in connection with a complaint or investigation and cooperate fully and honestly with any investigation into an alleged breach of this Policy.

All employees are required to comply with this policy. All Heads and employees are responsible for maintaining a work environment free of harassment and discrimination. Any employee who becomes aware of an actual or alleged incident of harassment or discrimination must promptly report it to their immediate Head and the Human Resources Department. If any HoD or Supervisor observes or receives information regarding an actual or alleged incident of harassment or discrimination, they are obligated to take immediate action to stop it and must report the incident immediately to the Human Resources Department. An employee who knowingly submits a false claim of harassment

or discrimination may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

7. COMPLAINTS AND REPORTING

The University has established a defined procedure for lodging a complaint of harassment or discrimination.

The complaint shall be lodged by following the defined procedure. Complaints should be submitted as soon as practicable after an incident has occurred, preferably in writing, to the respective Head/Supervisor or to any of the focal persons of the committee. Upon receipt and initial scrutiny of the complaint, the respective Head/Supervisor or any of the focal persons of the committee shall refer the matter to the "Discrimination & Harassment Committee."

8. INVESTIGATION AND ACTION

All reported cases of discrimination and harassment shall be presented to the "Inquiry Committee" for a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation. All staff members, whether complainant, witness, or subject of the investigation, are required to be truthful, forthcoming, and cooperative throughout the investigation. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, the Committee shall ensure that appropriate corrective actions are taken to prevent a recurrence. Any employee found to have engaged in discrimination or harassment prohibited by this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action based on the seriousness of the offense, ranging from a warning, transfer, or suspension, up to and including termination of employment.

