**Criteria 7.1.1**

**Gender Equity & Sensitization at IMI Bhubaneswar**

IMI Bhubaneswar has a robust ethical work culture which is based on equality and inclusion. Equal opportunities are provided to all individuals irrespective of gender, race, caste, and socio-economic background. Due to its inclusive policies, women enjoy a **fair representation** among students, staff, and faculty. The main focus is to create a **safe, inclusive, and discrimination-free culture** for everyone who is part of the institute. It also aims to hold meaningful discussions and provide support on gender, sexuality, and related issues irrespective of anyone’s sex, gender identity, caste, class, religion, ethnicity, language, age, position, work, race, disability, and sexual orientation. **Gender Equity** is important in any workplace, and it is imperative for all individuals to understand the distinction between sex and gender. Education and training can play a vital role in the way in which gender and other gender related terminology are socially constructed in sensitizing the people to change their mindset. As an example of gender equity, female candidates appearing in admission interviews are allotted 2 extra marks to level the playing fields. Once the female candidate is admitted, she is eligible to get 20% extra scholarship provided she qualifies the scholarship norms. This also helps lessen the financial burden on the girl students and their guardians during the programme.

In order to address issues related to gender sensitization and sexual harassment, IMI Bhubaneswar has an Internal Complaints Committee called ***Gender Sensitization Committee Against Sexual Harassment*** (GSCASH) which has a representation from students, staff and faculty members, and an external expert. The main aim of this committee is to sensitize the employees and students at the Institute on the issues related to gender sensitization and harassment at workplace. ***Frequent trainings and workshops*** are conducted for students and staff in order to create a workplace free of discrimination and harassment. These trainings focus of making the students and staff members aware about the issues related to different kinds of workplace harassment and the steps which need to be taken if someone experiences or sees a coworker or other student being harassed, and the responsibility of the organization or an institution in tackling such issues or complaints. A separate email ID exists for the GSCASH Committee and is promoted amongst the students, staff, and faculty members via the Institutes website. In case of any issue one can email to the GSCASH committee for redressal.

The Institute also provides ***formal and informal avenues for counseling male and female students*** and staff for issues related to gender equity and sensitization. In order to give the girl students a safe space, a separate room is designated as ***Girls Common Room***. Due to its proactive stance in dealing with these issues, GSCASH at IMI Bhubaneswar has till date did not receive any complaint from either students or staff/faculty members.