POLICY & STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONING OF SPECIAL CELL FOR SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES (SC/ST CELL)

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Applicable to	:	All internal and external stakeholders of AMGOI
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Reviewed By	:	Dean, IQAC
Approved By	:	Director & Campus Director, AMGOI

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to establish a comprehensive institutional framework for the effective implementation of reservation policies, constitutional safeguards, welfare schemes, and equal opportunity initiatives for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) students, faculty, and non-teaching staff at Ashokrao Mane Group of Institutions (AMGOI), in alignment with the guidelines of the University Grants Commission (UGC), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Government of India, and Government of Maharashtra.

The Institute is committed to nurturing a socially just, inclusive, non-discriminatory, and equitable campus environment that assists SC and ST categories in overcoming academic, social, and administrative difficulties and integrating seamlessly with the mainstream of the institutional community.

2. Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are to:

1. Implement the reservation policy for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) effectively in student admissions, teaching and non-teaching appointments, hostel accommodation, and staff quarters allotment, as applicable.
2. Collect, maintain, and analyze annual statistical data regarding implementation of reservation policies in admissions and appointments to teaching and non-teaching positions, showing trends and progress towards fulfilling the required quota.
3. Take proactive follow-up measures for achieving the objectives and targets laid down for the purpose by the Government of India, Government of Maharashtra, UGC, AICTE, and affiliating university/board (DBATU/MSBTE).
4. Implement, monitor, and evaluate continuously the reservation policy in the Institute and plan remedial measures for ensuring effective implementation of the policies and programmes of the Government of India and State Government.
5. Function as an effective Grievances Redressal Cell for the grievances of SC/ST students and employees of the Institute and render them necessary assistance in solving their academic, scholarship, and administrative problems.

6. Monitor the effective working of the Remedial Coaching Scheme, skill enhancement initiatives, and scholarship/freeship support for SC/ST students.
7. Promote higher education, social equity, and mainstream integration among SC and ST communities suffering from economic, social, and educational deprivations.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all academic departments, administrative sections, hostels, admission and recruitment committees, and all internal and external stakeholders of the AMGOI, with specific focus on students, teaching faculty, and non-teaching staff belonging to the Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) communities.

4. Policy Guidelines

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been identified as the two most backward groups of Indian society under the provisions of Articles 341 and 342 of the Constitution of India. In commitment to a socially just and equal social order, the Constitution of India provides special safeguards—including Article 15(4), Article 16(4) (equality of opportunity in matters of public employment and reservation of appointments or posts), and Article 335 (consideration of claims of SC/ST members in services and posts)—to abolish all forms of discrimination and improve their status socially and educationally so that they can take their rightful place in the mainstream of society.

In accordance with the University Grants Commission (UGC) Guidelines for the Establishment of Special Cells for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Higher Education Institutions are mandated to operate a dedicated SC/ST Cell to ensure the effective implementation of reservation policies in admissions, recruitment, allotment of hostels/staff quarters, remedial coaching, and grievance redressal. Recognizing this responsibility, AMGOI has established the Special Cell for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST Cell), which exclusively looks after work related to SC/ST matters and ensures full institutional compliance with central, state, and university mandates.

Function / Mandate	Statutory / UGC Provision	Institutional Implementation Focus at AMGOI
Mandate 1	Constitutional Safeguards (Articles 341, 342, 16(4) & 335)	Ensure equality of opportunity, non-discrimination, and rightful representation of SC and ST communities in education and employment.
Mandate 2	Admission Reservation & Course-wise Data	Circulate Government/UGC/CET Cell orders and collect annual course-wise SC/ST admission data across UG, PG, and Diploma programmes.
Mandate 3	Recruitment, Training & Promotion Monitoring	Circulate orders and collect annual data on appointment, training, and promotion of SC/ST candidates in teaching and non-teaching posts.
Mandate 4	SC/ST Employment Register Maintenance	Maintain an updated register of employment of SCs/STs across all teaching and non-teaching cadres and initiate follow-up to fill required quotas.
Mandate 5	Statistical Analysis & Statutory Reporting	Compile Consolidated (Annexure-II) and Detailed (Annexure-III) statistical digests and submit annual appraisal reports to the University/UGC/AICTE.
Mandate 6	Representations & Grievance Redressal Cell	Function as a dedicated Grievance Redressal Cell to resolve representations from SC/ST students and staff regarding academic or administrative issues.
Mandate 7	Remedial Coaching & Scholarship Facilitation	Monitor the working of the Remedial Coaching Scheme, mentorship, and MahaDBT/NSP scholarship/freeship disbursement for SC/ST students.
Mandate 8	Hostel & Campus Amenity Allotment	Monitor fair implementation of reservation quotas in boys' and girls' hostels, staff quarters (where applicable), and book bank facilities.
Mandate 9	Advisory / Standing Committee Oversight	Conduct biannual review meetings under the Institutional Standing Committee chaired by the Director with the Liaison Officer and Coordinator.
Mandate 10	Exclusive Dedication to SC/ST Welfare	Ensure the Special Cell exclusively looks after work related to SC/ST matters and promotes higher education among deprived communities.

A. Reservation in Admissions and Hostel Allotment

The Institute shall strictly implement the reservation policy prescribed by the Government of India, Government of Maharashtra, State CET Cell, AICTE, and DBATU/MSBTE in course-wise student admissions as well as in the allotment of hostel rooms and campus facilities. The Special Cell shall circulate all admission circulars and collect annual course-wise and gender-wise admission statistics in prescribed forms.

B. Reservation in Recruitment, Promotions and Roster Maintenance

The Institute shall circulate Government and UGC/AICTE decisions regarding reservation in appointments, training, and promotions for teaching and non-teaching posts. The Special Cell, in coordination with the Establishment Section, shall maintain a dedicated SC/ST Employment Register, monitor roster compliance, and take follow-up action to fulfill required reservation quotas.

C. Remedial Coaching and Academic Support

The Special Cell shall monitor the working of the Remedial Coaching Scheme across all departments to help SC/ST students overcome academic difficulties, improve subject comprehension, develop communication and technical skills, prepare for GATE/competitive examinations, and integrate confidently with the mainstream student body.

D. Scholarships, Freeships and Welfare Schemes

The Special Cell shall create awareness and provide end-to-end guidance to SC/ST students regarding Central and State Government Post-Matric Scholarships, Tuition Fee and Exam Fee Freeships (MahaDBT and National Scholarship Portal), research fellowships, and book bank schemes, ensuring timely application and verification.

E. Grievance Redressal and Anti-Discrimination Mechanism

The Special Cell shall function as a dedicated Grievances Redressal Cell for SC/ST students and employees, dealing promptly and confidentially with representations regarding admission, recruitment, promotion, scholarship, or any form of social discrimination, and rendering all necessary academic and administrative assistance.

F. Institutional Standing / Advisory Committee for SC/ST

In accordance with UGC guidelines, the Institute shall constitute a Standing / Advisory Committee chaired by the Director / Campus Director, with a senior Professor appointed as Liaison Officer, 2 to 3 Heads of Departments, 2 to 3 faculty members (including representation from SC/ST categories), and the Coordinator of the SC/ST Cell as Member Secretary. The Committee shall meet at least twice a year to review reservation compliance and resolve difficulties.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

A. Director / Campus Director (Chairman, Standing Committee)

- Provide strategic direction and administrative support for implementing SC/ST reservation and welfare policies.
- Appoint the Liaison Officer (in the rank of Professor) and the Coordinator / In-Charge of the Special Cell.
- Constitute and chair the Institutional Standing / Advisory Committee on SC/ST twice every academic year.
- Allocate required infrastructure (office, computer, printer) and financial resources for the smooth functioning of the Cell.
- Review and approve the Annual SC/ST Appraisal and Statistical Report for submission to statutory authorities.

B. Liaison Officer (SC/ST Cell)

- Supervise the overall functioning of the Special Cell and ensure institutional compliance with Government, UGC, AICTE, and University reservation orders.
- Verify the SC/ST Employment Register, admission reservation records, and roster compliance across the Institute.
- Oversee impartial inquiry and resolution of representations and grievances submitted by SC/ST students and employees.
- Countersign the Annual Appraisal Report and statistical returns (Annexures I to VI) prepared by the Coordinator.

C. Coordinator / In-Charge, Special Cell (Member Secretary)

- Exclusively look after the work related to SC/ST matters in strict compliance with UGC guidelines.
- Circulate Government of India, State Government, UGC, AICTE, and University orders regarding reservations, scholarships, and welfare schemes.
- Collect, compile, and analyze annual statistical data on course-wise admissions, teaching/non-teaching appointments, and hostel occupancy by the stipulated dates.
- Maintain the SC/ST Employment Register, Grievance Redressal Register, and documentation of remedial coaching schemes.
- Convene biannual Standing Committee meetings and submit semester-wise reports to IQAC and the Annual Appraisal Report to the Director and statutory bodies.

D. Dean IQAC

- Incorporate SC/ST Cell welfare, remedial coaching, and equity initiatives into the institutional quality assurance calendar.
- Monitor semester-wise implementation and documentation of Special Cell activities across departments.
- Verify alignment of Special Cell records with UGC, AICTE, NAAC, NBA, and DBATU/MSBTE requirements.

E. Heads of Departments & Section Heads

- Supply accurate course-wise admission, recruitment, scholarship, and hostel data to the Special Cell within stipulated deadlines.
- Implement and monitor departmental Remedial Coaching classes and mentoring sessions for SC/ST students.
- Ensure a harmonious, inclusive, and discrimination-free academic and working environment in their respective departments and sections.
- Submit semester-wise remedial coaching and student progression reports to the Special Cell and IQAC.

F. Faculty Members

- Conduct remedial coaching, tutorial sessions, and career/competitive exam guidance for SC/ST students.
- Act as mentors to help SC/ST students overcome academic difficulties and integrate into the mainstream campus community.
- Promote constitutional values of equality, inclusivity, and social harmony among all students.

G. Students

- Actively participate in remedial coaching, skill development, and scholarship awareness programmes organized by the Special Cell.

- Submit scholarship and freeship applications (MahaDBT / NSP) with complete supporting documents within prescribed timelines.
- Maintain mutual respect and harmony on campus and bring any academic, administrative, or social difficulty promptly to the notice of the Special Cell.

6. Review and Revision of Policy

This Policy shall be reviewed once every three years, or earlier if mandated by statutory updates from the UGC, AICTE, Government of India, State Government legislation, or directives from the Academic Council/Governing Body. Any amendment to this Policy shall be processed through the Special Cell (SC/ST Cell) and IQAC, becoming effective only after formal approval by the Director & Campus Director.

7. Annexures/Supporting Documents

1. All awareness, orientation, and capacity-building activities under the Special Cell should be strictly carried out as per the Policy and SOP for Organization of Activities (Institute Level / Department Level) IQAC/120/11.
2. The Special Cell shall maintain statutory registers and prescribed UGC statistical proformas, including Annexure-I (Basic Information & Standing Committee Constitution), Annexure-II (Consolidated Statistical Data on Enrolment, Teaching & Non-Teaching Staff), Annexure-III (Detailed Course-wise & Gender-wise Statistical Data on Enrolment, Hostels & Services Personnel), Annexure-IV & V (Statement of Expenditure & Utilization Certificate, where applicable), Annexure-VI (Details of Posts Filled & SC/ST Employment Register), and the SC/ST Grievance Redressal Register.
3. The IQAC and Special Cell shall issue additional guidelines, data collection templates, remedial coaching formats, checklists, and reporting proformas from time to time, as required.

8. Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

1. At the beginning of every academic year, the Director & Campus Director, in consultation with the Dean IQAC, shall notify the constitution of the Special Cell for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST Cell) and the Institutional Standing / Advisory Committee, designating a senior Professor as the Liaison Officer and a faculty member as the Coordinator / In-Charge (Member Secretary).
2. The Coordinator of the Special Cell shall communicate the institutional reservation compliance guidelines, UGC statistical data proformas, scholarship schedules, and documentation requirements to all Heads of Departments, Admission Cell, Establishment Section, Scholarship Section, and Hostel Wardens.
3. At the commencement of the academic year, the Coordinator shall convene a meeting of the Special Cell to prepare the Annual SC/ST Welfare & Action Plan covering admission facilitation, scholarship awareness drives, remedial coaching schedules, sensitization programmes, and statutory data collection timelines.
4. The Annual Action Plan of the Special Cell shall be verified by the Liaison Officer and submitted to the Dean IQAC and Director & Campus Director for institutional approval.
5. Whenever Government of India, State Government, UGC, AICTE, or University circulars and orders regarding SC/ST reservation in admissions, appointments, promotions, scholarships, or hostels are received, the Special Cell shall immediately circulate them to all concerned sections for strict compliance and follow-up.

6. During the admission process, the Special Cell shall coordinate with the Admission Section to monitor course-wise SC/ST intake against prescribed quotas and operate a guidance counter to assist SC/ST candidates with admission and hostel allotment formalities.
7. Within the first month of the academic session, the Special Cell, in coordination with the Scholarship Section, shall organize an orientation workshop for SC/ST students on Post-Matric Scholarships and Freeship schemes (MahaDBT / National Scholarship Portal) and monitor timely submission and institutional verification of applications.
8. Each Head of Department, in coordination with the Special Cell, shall identify SC/ST students requiring academic reinforcement and implement the Remedial Coaching Scheme, communication skills training, and competitive exam guidance, maintaining attendance and performance records.
9. Every year, prior to the stipulated statutory deadline, the Coordinator of the Special Cell shall issue data collection formats (aligned with UGC Annexures II, III, and VI) to the Admission Section, Establishment Section, Examination Section, and Hostel Administration.
10. All concerned Section Heads and Heads of Departments shall compile and submit verified statistical data to the Special Cell within the prescribed date.
11. The Coordinator of the Special Cell and Liaison Officer shall scrutinize and analyze the collected institutional data by verifying:
    - Course-wise and gender-wise enrolment numbers and percentages of SC and ST students across UG, PG, and Diploma programmes against sanctioned intake and required reservation quotas.
    - Category-wise representation, appointments, promotions, and backlog vacancies in teaching positions (Professor, Associate Professor/Reader, Assistant Professor/Lecturer) and non-teaching posts (Groups A, B, C, and D).
    - Allotment of rooms in boys' and girls' hostels and staff quarters (where applicable) to SC and ST inmates.
    - Updation and accuracy of the permanent SC/ST Employment Register and Roster records maintained in the Institute.
    - Enrolment, attendance, and academic improvement of SC/ST students under the Remedial Coaching Scheme.
    - Status of scholarship and freeship applications, sanction orders, and fee disbursement for eligible SC/ST students.
    - Compliance with directives issued by UGC, AICTE, NAAC, NBA, Government of Maharashtra, and DBATU/MSBTE.
12. For Grievance Redressal, any SC/ST student or staff member experiencing difficulty regarding admission, academics, scholarships, recruitment, promotion, or any instance of discrimination may submit a representation (online or offline) directly to the Coordinator of the Special Cell or the Liaison Officer.
13. Upon receipt, the Coordinator shall register the representation in the confidential SC/ST Grievance Register and issue an acknowledgment within 2 working days.
14. Academic, scholarship, or routine administrative difficulties shall be resolved by the Coordinator and Liaison Officer in consultation with the concerned Head of Department or Section Head within 7 working days.
15. Representations involving reservation policy violations or complaints of caste-based discrimination shall be placed before the Institutional SC/ST Standing Committee within 5 working days for impartial inquiry and resolution within 15 working days, with recommendations submitted to the Director & Campus Director for necessary action.

16. The Institutional Standing / Advisory Committee for SC/ST shall meet at least twice a year (once every semester) to review the statistical position, evaluate remedial coaching and scholarship progress, and solve any systemic problems faced by SC/ST stakeholders.
17. At the end of every semester, the Coordinator of the Special Cell shall compile a Semester-wise Activity and Compliance Report along with supporting evidence (notices, circulars, attendance sheets, geo-tagged photographs, statistical tables, and minutes of meetings) and submit it to the Dean IQAC.
18. At the end of each academic year, the Coordinator / In-Charge of the Special Cell shall prepare a comprehensive Annual Appraisal Report (duly countersigned by the Liaison Officer) indicating the consolidated statistical statement, progress achieved, problems faced, and action taken by the Cell.
19. The Annual Appraisal Report shall be submitted through the Director & Campus Director to the Affiliating University, UGC, AICTE, and other statutory authorities within the stipulated date so that no statutory grant or approval is withheld.
20. Based on the annual review and feedback from the Standing Committee and IQAC, the Special Cell shall initiate follow-up measures and continuous improvement plans for the subsequent academic year.

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