



SIKKIM ALPINE UNIVERSITY

Kamrang, Namchi, South Sikkim – 737126

(Established under Sikkim Alpine University Act, 2021)

SPECIAL CELLS FOR SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES (SC/ST CELL) POLICY

(Policy Document – 2025)

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Academic Council: Date 03 December, 2025

Approved by:

Board of Governors: Date 05 December, 2025



SPECIAL CELLS FOR SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES (SC/ST CELL) POLICY

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1. Background

As per the 1998 UGC Guidelines for establishing a Special Cell for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, for the universities and deemed to be universities, Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) include all such castes, races, or tribes that have been declared as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes by the Constitution of India under Articles 341 and 342. Scheduled Castes generally represent those communities that have historically suffered social oppression and the stigma of untouchability. Scheduled Tribes are usually communities that have lived in secluded areas and have remained largely untouched by modern civilization and development.

According to the 2011 Census, Scheduled Castes constitute about 16.6% of the total population of the country, while Scheduled Tribes constitute about 8.6%. Together, these groups make up nearly one-fourth of India's total population. After Independence, India committed itself to building a socially just and equal society. The Constitution of India (1950) recognizes the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes as the two most disadvantaged groups and provides them with special protection. Several constitutional provisions aim to eliminate discrimination and uplift these communities so they can participate equally in society.

To ensure adequate representation, specific provisions for reservations in services for SCs and STs have been laid down in the Constitution:

Article 16(4): Guarantees equality of opportunity in public employment and allows the State to make special provisions for the reservation of appointments in favor of any backward class that is under-represented in State services.

Article 335: Requires the State to consider the claims of SCs and STs in appointments to services, balanced with the need for efficiency in administration.

In the field of education, **Article 15(4)** empowers the State to make special provisions for the educational advancement of SCs and STs. This includes reservation of seats in educational institutions run by the Central or State governments, as well as all government-aided institutions. Financial support such as scholarships, hostels, fee concessions, grants for books, and coaching assistance further promotes the advancement of SC/ST students (<https://rb.gy/yj0ihw>).

The main aim of reservation for SCs and STs in government services is not only to provide them with jobs but also to improve their social and educational status, enabling them to take their rightful place in the mainstream of society. The true essence of the establishment of SC/ST cell in the higher educational institutions reflects from the Xth Plan profile of Higher Education in India under Para 10.B2 states as under:

“To ensure the effective implementation of the reservation policy in admission, recruitment, allotment of staff quarters, Hostels, etc. SC/ST Cells are established in the Universities.”

1. Introduction to SC/ST Cell, Sikkim Alpine University

The Constitution of India recognizes the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes as the most disadvantaged social groups. It contains several provisions to ensure equality as well as special protections for weaker sections, particularly SCs and STs, along with other groups.

In accordance with the Constitution and the guidelines issued by the University Grants Commission (UGC), Sikkim Alpine University established a Special Cell for SC/ST/OBC students in December 2021, with support from the University and the State Government. The purpose of this Cell was to support students belonging to SC/ST/OBC categories in enhancing their academic performance and improving their personal and social development. This SC/ST/OBC cell is reconstituted as the SC/ST Cell, Sikkim Alpine University, in November 2025 with the following vision, mission, objectives, and functions.

2. Vision

- a) To ensure the effective and efficient execution of reservation policies and programs.
- b) To provide social, psychological, and financial assistance to vulnerable groups supported under the Cell.

3. Mission

- a) To provide guidance and counselling to vulnerable groups in all matters of education.
- b) To offer social, psychological, and emotional support to these groups and oversee their overall welfare.
- c) To ensure that vulnerable communities receive equal opportunities and facilities to progress toward social justice and equality.

Table 1: Reservation status

No.	Category	Percentage of Reservation
	Scheduled Castes (SC)	15%
	Scheduled Tribes (ST)	7.5%
	Other Backward Classes (OBC- Non-Creamy Layer)	27%
	Economically Weaker Sections (EWS)	10%
	BD/ PwD (Persons with Benchmark Disabilities)	5% horizontal reservation
	Unreserved (General)	Remaining

Note: This information is based on the DOPT (Department of Personnel & Training) guidelines.

4. Objectives of the SC/ST Cell

- To implement reservation policies for SC/ST as provided by the State Government, the Government of India (GOI), and the UGC under appropriate laws and guidelines.
- To coordinate, collect, and monitor the implementation of policies in university admissions.
- To ensure reservations in teaching and non-teaching positions in the university.
- To mentor the students from the SC/ST group at the university.
- To support the staff of the SC/ST Cell in fulfilling their responsibilities.
- To guide SC/ST students regarding the benefits offered by the State Government, GOI, and UGC.
- To ensure compliance with UGC guidelines and constitutional mandates for the functioning of the SC/ST Cell at Sikkim Alpine University.

5. Functional Responsibilities of the SC/ST Cell

A. Policy Implementation

- Ensuring adherence to reservation norms in:
 - Admissions
 - Faculty recruitment
 - Non-teaching staff recruitment
 - Research fellowships, hostels, and scholarships

B. Support Services

- a) Conduct career counselling, soft-skill training, and remedial coaching.
- b) Provide guidance on scholarships (Central/State/UGC).
- c) Assist students in competitive exam preparation.
- d) Organize awareness programs on constitutional rights and welfare schemes.

C. Grievance Redressal

- a) Prevents discrimination or harassment based on caste.
- b) Handles complaints sensitively and confidentially.
- c) Forwards unresolved grievances to the Standing Committee for further action.

D. Data & Documentation

- a) Maintains category-wise admission and employment records.
- b) Prepares annual reports for submission to UGC and State authorities.
- c) Maintains minutes of meetings, student service records, and outcome analysis.

6. Activities of the Cell

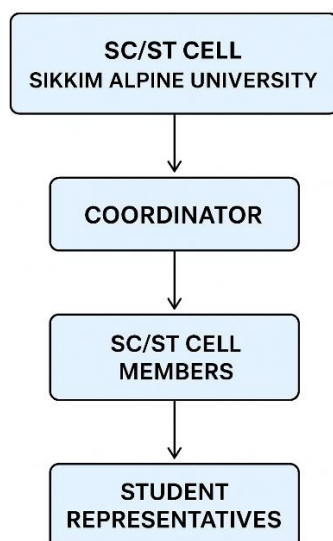
- a) To organize interactive sessions with students to address personal, social, and academic problems.
- b) Counselling students and encouraging them in future planning.
- c) Provide students with guidance about scholarships available for SC/ST students at the university, state, and central levels.
- d) Providing information about competitive examinations and related facilities to enable such competitive exams.
- e) Maintaining reservation-related data for the SC/ST Cell.
- f) Assisting SC/ST/OBC candidates by addressing grievances and guiding them on required documentation or procedures.
- g) Ensuring timely submission of reports to appropriate authorities.

7. Governance Structure of the SC/ST Cell, SAU

As per UGC Guidelines for Establishment and Effective Functioning of SC/ST Cells in Universities and Colleges. The SC/ST cell ensures the effective implementation of government policies and programs, including those of the Government of India, the UGC, and the State Government, concerning the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and the Scheduled Tribes (STs).

The cell also monitors the academic progress of SC/ST students, assists them in overcoming

difficulties, and supports them in all relevant matters. The cell meets at least three times a year, and any decisions made during these meetings must be implemented. The cell is supervised by the coordinator and the members of the SC/ST cell, which is of the following hierarchy. Further, the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor and the Registrar of the university act as the statutory bodies, advisory authority, and the administrative supervisors of the cell activities.



Along with the SC/ST Cell, the university may have the SC/ST Standing Committee with the following structure, mainly with the purpose of high-level monitoring and decision-making bodies, reviewing grievances, and compliance whenever necessary.

