



Equity, Safety & Code of Conduct Policy

| BINDING ON ALL PARTIES

This Policy is mandatory on every individual who participates in, organises, volunteers for, judges, sponsors, or is otherwise involved with ccuhacks in any capacity. Participation in ccuhacks constitutes unconditional acceptance of this Policy in its entirety. No exceptions will be made.

Covered parties include:

- Participants (ages 13–19)
- Organisers & Co-Organisers
- Volunteers
- Judges & Mentors
- Sponsors & their representatives
- Any guest or visitor on-site or in official digital spaces.

1. Preamble & Purpose

ccuhacks is a youth-led, youth-first hackathon. Every participant is between 13 and 19 years old. Our co-organising team is between 16 and 18 years old. This demographic places an extraordinary duty of care on every adult and non-participant who enters our community — whether physically at the venue or in any digital space.

This Policy exists to guarantee that every person — regardless of age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, caste, socioeconomic background, or skill level — can participate fully, safely, and with dignity. It is not a formality. It will be enforced.

2. Core Values

ccuhacks is built on five non-negotiable principles:

- Safety First — The physical and emotional wellbeing of every participant, especially minors, takes absolute precedence over any operational or creative consideration.
 - Respect — Every interaction must be respected. Every acquaintance must be respectfully addressed to.
 - Equity — We actively work to dismantle barriers. No one is treated differently based on identity, background, or level of experience.
 - Accountability — Violations carry real consequences. Ignorance is not an excuse. Intent does not erase impact.
 - Zero Tolerance for Harm — Behaviour that causes harm to another person has no place at ccuhacks, regardless of the seniority or role of the person responsible.
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3. Prohibited Conduct

The following conduct is strictly prohibited at all times — at the venue, in transit, and in all official and unofficial digital spaces connected to ccuhacks (WhatsApp groups/DMs, Discord, Instagram, email, etc.).

3.1 Harassment & Intimidation

- Verbal, written, or physical conduct that demeans, threatens, insults, or humiliates any person.
- Unwelcome comments about a person's appearance, body, gender, sexuality, race, religion, caste, disability, or personal life.
- Repeated contact after being asked to stop, in any medium.
- Deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following — physically or digitally.
- Public humiliation, shouting, or aggressive confrontation.

3.2 Sexual Misconduct

- Sexual harassment of any kind — verbal, written, or physical.
- Sending, sharing, or soliciting sexually suggestive, explicit, or romantic messages, images, or content to or from any participant, especially any person under 18.
- Unwelcome physical contact of any kind.
- Displaying or sharing sexually explicit material at the venue or in any [ccuhacks](#)-associated digital space.
- Making sexual jokes or innuendos directed at any individual.

3.3 Digital Harassment & Unsolicited Private Communication

CRITICAL: Protection of Minors in Digital Spaces

Most of the participants in [ccuhacks](#) are minors (ages 13–19). Adults involved in [ccuhacks](#) — including organisers of age 18 or above, judges, mentors, volunteers, and sponsors' representatives — must observe the following rules absolutely:

- Adults may NOT initiate unsolicited private (one-on-one) digital communication with any minor participant or co-organiser outside of official, role-related channels.
 - Any private communication by an adult with a minor must be limited strictly to official, professional, event-related matters, and should, where possible, be conducted in group channels where other team members are visible.
 - Adults may not send personal messages, add minors on personal social media, or attempt to establish personal relationships outside the scope of [ccuhacks](#).
 - Romantic, flirtatious, or sexual communication directed at any minor — regardless of the medium — will be treated as a criminal matter and referred to appropriate authorities.
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- ❖ Cyberbullying: Repeated hostile, threatening, or humiliating messages via any digital platform.
 - ❖ Doxxing: Sharing a person's private information (address, phone number, school, etc.) without consent.
 - ❖ Impersonation: Creating fake accounts or misrepresenting oneself to contact participants.
 - ❖ Sharing screenshots or private conversations without the explicit consent of all parties.

3.4 Discrimination

- Treating any person less favourably based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, caste, religion, race, ethnicity, disability, or socioeconomic background.
- Gatekeeping based on technical skill level, school prestige, or prior experience.
- Making derogatory remarks, slurs, or stereotypes about any group.

3.5 Misconduct Specific to Minors

- Any adult-to-minor romantic communication, advances, grooming behaviour, or unsolicited personal contact is a zero-tolerance violation and will be reported to law enforcement and the minor's guardians immediately.
- Sharing alcohol, tobacco, or any controlled substances with participants of any age is strictly prohibited.
- Photographing or recording minors without explicit consent from both the minor and, where required, their guardian.

3.6 Venue & Competitive Misconduct

- Damaging venue property, equipment, or another participant's work.
- Academic dishonesty or submission fraud: misrepresenting work, plagiarism, or using AI tools in violation of [ccuhacks](#) rules.
- Interfering with another team's project or access to shared resources.
- Disrupting events, talks, or judging sessions.

4. Communication Standards

All communication among [ccuhacks](#) team members, volunteers, judges, and participants — whether in-person or digital — must comply with the following standards.

4.1 Official Channels

- Primary team communication must take place in group channels (WhatsApp groups, Discord servers, email threads) where multiple team members are visible.
- One-on-one private communication should be limited to operational necessity and must remain professional and task-specific at all times.
- Judges and mentors must communicate with participants only through official channels designated by the ccuhacks organising team.

4.2 Language & Tone

- All communication must be respectful, professional, and inclusive.
- Profanity, insults, sarcasm intended to demean, or passive-aggressive language directed at any individual is prohibited.
- Criticism of ideas or work must be constructive and never personal.

4.3 Age-Appropriate Conduct for Adults

Any adult (age 18+) interacting with participants or minor co-organisers must maintain an exclusively professional and mentorship-oriented relationship. Adults are in a position of trust and relative power. That position must never be exploited.

5. Reporting Procedure

5.1 How to Report

Report any violation to the Organizers immediately:

Lead Organizer: Ritam Das

Contact Mail: team@ccuhacks.in

Website: ccuhacks.in

Reports may also be submitted anonymously through a form that will be shared in the participant welcome packet (via contact mail). Anonymous reports will be investigated to the fullest extent possible.

5.2 What Happens After a Report

1. The report is received by the Organisers within the event.
2. The reporter's identity is kept confidential from the respondent.
3. The respondent is contacted separately and informed that an investigation is underway.
4. The Lead Organiser and at least one other Co-Organiser review the evidence.
5. A decision is made within the hours for in-event violations; longer for post-event investigations.
6. Both parties are informed of the outcome and the action taken.
7. In cases involving minors and potential criminal conduct, guardians and/or law enforcement are contacted regardless of the reporter's preference.

5.3 Anti-Retaliation

Retaliation against any person for making a good-faith report, assisting in an investigation, or supporting a complainant is itself a serious violation of this Policy and will result in immediate removal. This protection applies to all parties.

6. Consequences & Enforcement

6.1 Consequence Framework

Category	Example	Consequence
Level 1 - Caution	Minor language offence, isolated insensitive comment, minor disruption	Formal verbal warning; documented internally
Level 2 - Warning	Repeated Level 1 behaviour; discriminatory remark; aggressive language; harassment of a mild nature	Written warning on record; restricted access to certain event areas/channels
Level 3 - Removal	Sustained harassment; digital harassment; any violation of communication standards with a minor; intimidation; serious discrimination	Immediate removal from the event; no refund; banned from future ccuhacks events
Level 4 - Zero Tolerance	Sexual misconduct; sexual communication directed at any minor; physical assault; doxxing; criminal conduct of any kind	Immediate removal; reported to law enforcement; guardians notified; permanent ban; public statement if required for safety

ZERO-TOLERANCE CLAUSE

The following violations result in immediate, unconditional removal — without warning, negotiation, or appeal — and are reported to law enforcement and relevant guardians:

- Any sexual communication, solicitation, or grooming behaviour directed at a minor.
- Physical assault or credible physical threat against any person.
- Sharing of CSAM or any sexually explicit content involving minors.
- Targeted doxxing or stalking with intent to harm.

Role, seniority, age, prior contribution, or relationship to the organising team provides absolutely no immunity from zero-tolerance enforcement.

6.2 Appeals

A person who believes a consequence was applied in error may submit a written appeal to the Lead Organiser within 24 hours of the decision. Appeals must present new information or identify a procedural error. The appeal decision is final.

7. Organiser Responsibilities

The organising team has a heightened duty of care given their direct management of minor participants. All Organisers are required to:

- Familiarise themselves fully with this Policy before the event.
- Model the behaviour required of all participants at all times.
- Intervene or report any violation they witness, without hesitation.
- Never use their role to initiate personal contact with younger co-organisers or participants outside of official, group channels.
- Immediately escalate any reports involving sexual misconduct, threats, or criminal conduct — not mediate or negotiate.
- Ensure this Policy is communicated clearly to all participants, judges, and volunteers in writing and in the opening session.

Note on Age Dynamics: Any Organiser or Adult who is 18 or above must be especially conscious of their position of relative authority and trust when interacting with younger Co-Organisers and participants. This responsibility does not end when the event does — it applies to all communication connected to [ccuhacks](#).

8. Special Provisions for Judges, Mentors & Sponsors

- Judges and mentors must interact with participants only within organised, designated sessions. Private, unsolicited contact with participants is prohibited.
- Judging must be based solely on the quality, creativity, and impact of work. Bias based on identity or institution is a violation of this Policy.
- Judges and mentors may not solicit participants' contact information for personal use.
- Sponsors and their representatives may not use the event as a platform for personal contact with minors.

- Any adults in an advisory or evaluative role are prohibited from initiating private communication with any participant under 18.
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9. Media, Photography & Digital Privacy

- Official photography and videography will be conducted only by designated, identified team members.
 - Participants, volunteers, judges, and guests must be asked for explicit consent before being photographed or recorded, and may decline at any time.
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10. Mental Health & Wellbeing

ccuhacks recognises that hackathons are high-pressure environments. We are committed to supporting the mental health of all participants.

- Participants are encouraged to take breaks and look after themselves. No one is expected to work through the hacking time without rest.
 - Any participant who is experiencing distress — whether from event-related stress or a personal matter — is encouraged to speak to an Organiser privately.
 - Organisers will not share information about a participant's mental health status without their consent, except where their safety or the safety of others is at immediate risk.
 - Mocking, trivialising, or weaponising another person's emotional distress is a violation of this Policy.
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11. Amendments & Updates

ccuhacks reserves the right to amend this Policy at any time. Material amendments will be communicated in writing to all registered participants and team members with reasonable notice. Continued participation following an amendment constitutes acceptance of the revised Policy.

12. Acknowledgement & Pledge

By signing for ccuhacks, I confirm that:

1. I have read, understood, and agree to the ccuhacks Equity, Safety & Code of Conduct Policy in its entirety.
2. I understand that violation of this Policy may result in immediate removal from the event and, in serious cases, referral to law enforcement.
3. I commit to treating every participant, organiser, volunteer, judge, and guest with dignity, respect, and professionalism at all times — in person and online.
4. I understand that this Policy exists to protect every person, especially minors, and I take that responsibility seriously.