

Institutional Initiatives for Electoral Literacy

1. **Whether Electoral Literacy Club (ELC) has been set up in the University?**

Yes, M S Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences has taken steps to promote electoral literacy and civic engagement. Recognizing the significance of voting as a fundamental democratic right and responsibility, the university has set up an Electoral Literacy Club on December 2022, with a dynamic team of students and faculty coordinators.

2. **Whether students' co-ordinator and co-ordinating faculty members are appointed by the University and whether the ELCs are functional? Whether the ELCs are representative in character?**

Yes, The ELC has 25 student coordinators and 5 Faculty coordinators appointed by the University.

The ELC is functional with following objectives:

1. Empowering its academic community with the knowledge and motivation needed to participate meaningfully in the electoral process.
2. Educating the students about the importance of voting in a democracy, their rights and responsibilities as voters.
3. Guiding on how to register to vote and help individuals understand the requirements and procedures involved.
4. Encouraging citizens to vote ethically, which includes voting without being influenced by money, gifts, or any other undue influence.
5. Empowering young people to become active participants in elections and civic activities.

3. **What innovative programmes and initiatives undertaken by the ELCs? These may include voluntary contribution by the students in electoral processes-participation in voter registration of students and communities where they come from, assisting district election administration in conduct of poll, voter awareness campaigns, promotion of ethical voting, enhancing participation of the under privileged sections of society especially transgender, commercial sex workers, disabled persons, senior citizens, etc.**

The Electoral Literacy Club at M. S. Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences is dedicated to fostering civic engagement and democratic participation among the student body through a range of innovative programs and initiatives.

Awareness Programs: These programs demystify the electoral process, covering voter registration and the electoral system to equip students with the knowledge they need to be active citizens.

Guest Lectures and Expert Speakers: The club invites experts, including election officers, to provide valuable insights and facilitate direct student engagement with key figures in the field.

Voter Registration Drive: The club conducts in-class voter registration drives, making it easy and convenient for students to register, ensuring their voices are heard in the democratic process.

Panel Discussions: The club hosts panel discussions on political and social issues to encourage critical thinking, diverse perspective exploration, and constructive dialogue.

Ethical Voting Promotion: Ethical voting is promoted to instill integrity and responsibility in student voters, ensuring they exercise their franchise ethically.

Inclusive Participation: The club actively works to enhance participation among underprivileged sections of society by removing voting barriers.

Increased Voter Registration and Turnout: By conducting these initiatives, the club aims to boost voter registration and turnout among students, recognizing that an informed and engaged youth is vital for a resilient democracy.

In conclusion, the Electoral Literacy Club at M. S. Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences is committed to shaping informed, responsible, and active citizens through innovative programs. Their goal is to empower students to participate in the democratic process, promoting ethical voting, inclusivity, and the responsible exercise of their franchise, ensuring a brighter, more participative future for the society and nation.

4. **Any socially relevant projects/initiatives taken by University in electoral related issues especially research projects, surveys, awareness drives, creating content, publications highlighting their contribution to advancing democratic values and participation in electoral processes, etc.**

The commitment of M. S. Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences to democratic participation goes beyond mere theoretical knowledge. The Electoral Literacy Club, a driving force on campus, is committed to transforming awareness into tangible action. One of the pivotal initiatives undertaken by the club is organizing voter registration drives on campus. These drives are strategically designed to simplify the often-complex voter registration process, ensuring that eligible members of the university community can exercise their fundamental right to vote.

Under the able guidance of the club coordinators and in collaboration with election officials, eligible students are empowered to complete the voter registration process using a convenient mobile app. This proactive approach has streamlined the registration process, eliminating many of the hurdles that often deter individuals from participating in the democratic process.

The Voter Registration Campaign spearheaded by the Electoral Literacy Club is a testament to their commitment to raising awareness about the significance of voting. This campaign has illuminated the crucial role of civic duty and highlighted the profound impact of individual participation in the democratic process. The campaign's innovative and informative strategies have engaged students and faculty alike, fostering a deeper understanding of the importance of active citizenship.

Moreover, the university's students have taken a solemn pledge to uphold democratic values. This pledge represents a resolute commitment to the core principles of democracy, including the right to vote, the responsibility to stay informed about the issues that matter, and the duty to engage constructively in the democratic process. The pledge-taking ceremony was conducted simultaneously across all faculties and schools within the university, emphasizing the universality of these democratic values and the collective responsibility of the entire university community.

By conducting these activities, the Electoral Literacy Club not only instills a sense of civic responsibility in its students but also actively contributes to nurturing responsible and engaged citizens. The club's commitment to enhancing the democratic spirit within the university community

is evident in its comprehensive approach to promoting awareness, facilitating the registration process, and inspiring active participation in the democratic process.

In a world where democratic values are cherished and safeguarded, the initiatives of the Electoral Literacy Club serve as a shining example of how educational institutions can go beyond classroom instruction to empower the future leaders of the nation. These initiatives underscore the university's vision, which goes far beyond producing educated individuals; it is about fostering individuals who are not only well-informed but also responsible, engaged, and committed citizens who actively contribute to the democratic fabric of our society.

5. Extent of students above 18 years who are yet to be enrolled as voters in the electoral roll and efforts by ELCs as well as efforts by the University to institutionalize mechanisms to register eligible students as voters.

80% of the eligible students above 18 years of age have been already registered as Voters in the Electoral Roll. About 20% of the students above 18 yrs of age and eligible to vote are yet to be enrolled as voters in the electoral roll.

The University has initiated a process to increase registration in electoral roll at the time of admission itself. Every student is required to submit his / her EPIC number in the application for University.

In addition to the above, the ELC conducts voter registration drive through its club once every semester.