

# Our inter-disciplinary APPROACH IS OUR USP

DR. DEEPENDRA KUMAR JHA, VICE CHANCELLOR, UPES, DEHRADUN, SHARES THAT THE UNIVERSITY BELIEVES IN DEVELOPING LIFE-LONG LEARNERS

Education in India has been witnessing a paradigm shift over the years. From run-of-the-mill programmes, the sector has witnessed an emergence of unique speciality programs that were unheard of even a decade back...

The emergence of unique programs has become necessary to keep up with the pace changing requirements. Technology has disrupted every sector, creating its place across every operation. In addition, amalgamation of different streams to create new solutions has redefined innovation. To cite an example, it has now become impossible to run a financial business without digital technologies or an automobile business without considering renewable energy. One cannot become a legal expert without understanding the nature of cybercrimes and appropriate laws and guidelines needed to mitigate them. Moreover, when put in global context, this amalgamation leads to more evolved nature of businesses, creating the need for specialisation.

UPES understood this need since its inception and in last 15 years we have extended the same approach through our six different schools that offer specialized programmes in engineering, computer science, law, design, business and health sciences. We are on the right track with this because industry leaders across all domains whole-heartedly support us in designing, delivering and certifying these specialized programmes. Consequently, our students are highly employable, as reflected in our placement figures (94 per cent in 2018-19) year-on-year.

UPES is a young university that has made a prominent mark in specialised education in India. What are some of the most integral principles that UPES models its education system on?

As you have rightly mentioned, a young university like UPES cannot gain industry recognition and prominence in a short span of 15 years without concrete principles guiding us. Students and faculty are at the core of our organizational philosophy and the values-Respect,

Innovation, Passion, Inclusivity and Trust-drive everything that we do at UPES. Our vision is to become a leading multi-disciplinary institute with global repute. Our focus is on developing students as industry-ready professionals with skills and attitude to be life-long learners; continually improve teaching-learning and research; practice high standards of professional ethics and develop harmonious relationship with environment and society.

Tell us about the courses on offer and the kind of response they have been generating through the years. Also, please share your views on whether domain knowledge is enough in today's age and time.

We are a specialization-focused, multi-disciplinary University with unique programme offerings. These programmes have been designed to make students not just industry-ready but also future-ready with the agility to adapt themselves to the changing market dynamics.

As businesses are evolving at a never seen pace, applicable knowledge has started gaining more prominence to help students navigate through the entrepreneurial or corporate enterprises. Keeping these factors into consideration, UPES focuses on personality enhancement programmes, soft skills developments for students and provides them opportunities to help them garner global exposure.

What kind of a student portfolio has UPES been witnessing over the years?

UPES currently has 12000-plus students across its School of Business, School of Engineering, School of Computer Science, School of Law, School of Design and School of Health Sciences. We have become one of the preferred choices for students with specific interest in niche careers. It is extremely heartening for us to see ambitious female students from non-metro cities join our aerospace engineering programme or working professionals opting for our specialized MBA programs because of the value it will bring to their future.

At the time of admissions, what is it that you look for you in your students?

Since we are an UCG-recognized and NAAC-accredited university, our eligibility criteria for admission



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is as per the stated guidelines. We do not have any management quota or reserved seats and therefore, all admissions are on merit basis. Apart from this, depending on the programme a student is interested in, we focus on their creativity level, interpersonal skills and aptitude. We have specific modules designed to help students hone their soft skills and build on their entrepreneurial capabilities once they join the campus.

Since UPES is a specialised university, can you throw light on the faculty that UPES has on board? What kind of a teacher-student ratio does the University maintain?

UPES has close to 600 faculty members with teacher-student ratio of 1:20. Our academic council constitutes of some of our most experienced faculty members and industry experts. This ensures that our curriculum, teaching methodologies are always up-to-date. UPES also recruits industry-fellows with vast practical industrial

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experience to impart their knowledge to the students. UPES runs Project Abhigyat under which faculty members go for summer internships to work in practical business environment. This makes their teaching and knowledge sharing more relevant.

Finally, since initiating social change and adequate job creation are the buzzwords in India right now, what role is the University playing in encouraging such spirit among the youth?

All students at UPES are encouraged to volunteer their time for social causes. We call it social internship. They can work on multiple social impact initiatives that UPES runs or work at NGOs, Anganwadi centres, old-age homes, orphanages, government hospitals etc. Additionally, UPES incubation cell focuses on sharpening entrepreneurial skills and capabilities in students and a lot of them have seen success with their entrepreneurial ventures. We also encourage ideation and innovation and provide financial assistance to student projects on a regular basis.

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