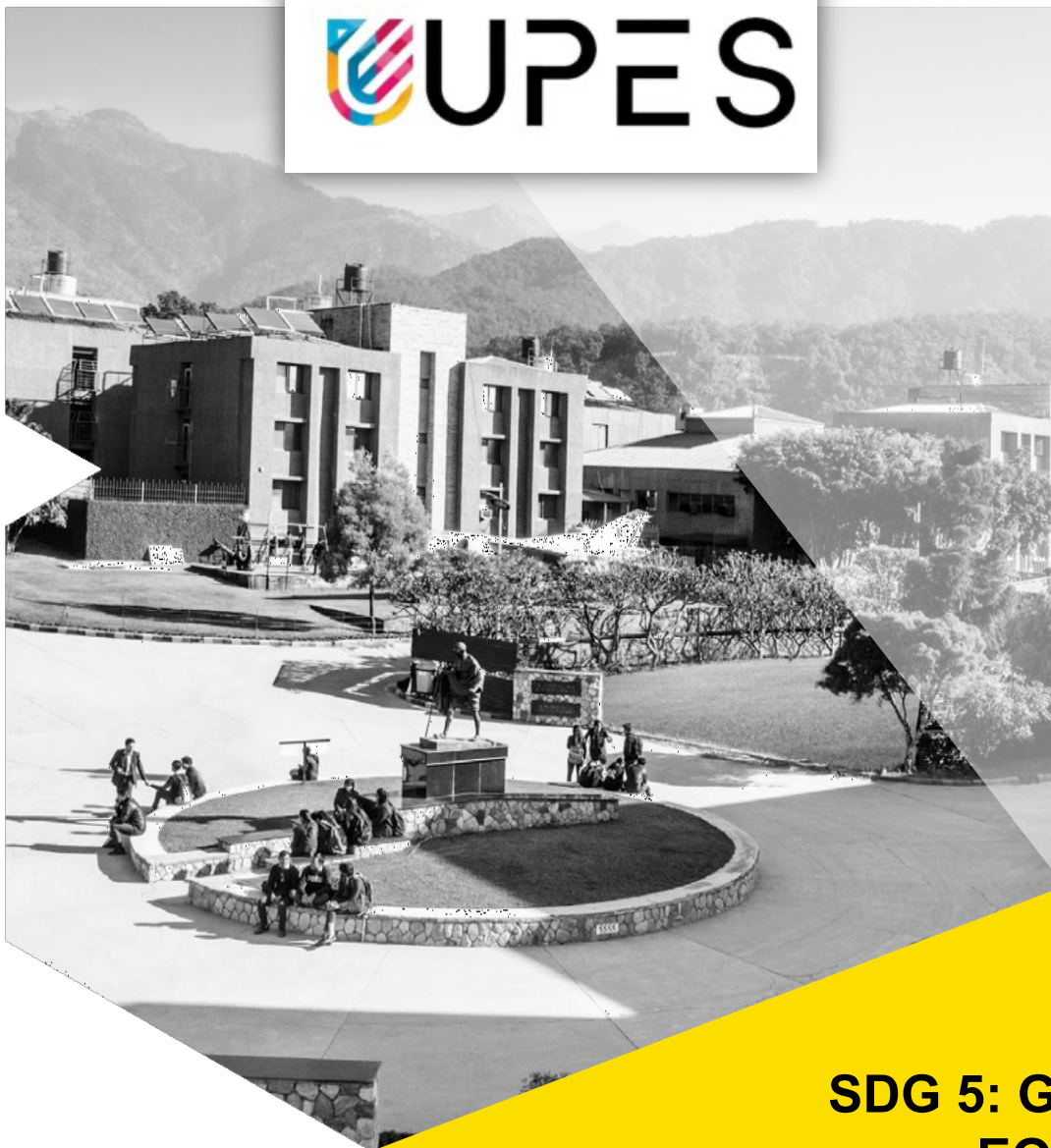




SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



**SDG 5: GENDER
EQUALITY**

2025

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5.6.5 Does your university as a body have childcare facilities for staff and faculty?

Childcare Facilities for UPES Staff and Faculty

Existence of On-Campus Childcare Facility

UPES provides an on-campus childcare facility for its employees. The university established a dedicated crèche/day-care center named “**Kilkari**”, which was inaugurated on Children’s Day 2017 [1]. This facility confirms the university’s affirmative answer to whether it has childcare support for staff and faculty. According to the UPES Annual Report, “*Kilkari – UPES’s own Crèche/Day Care Facility for children of all its employees was inaugurated [where] employees can leave their kids while they are at work in safe hands*” [1].

Type of Facility and Services Provided

Kilkari is an on-site day-care centre (crèche) located on the UPES campus, providing supervised care and early-childhood engagement for young children. It is designed as a **safe, nurturing environment** with age-appropriate facilities. The university’s Self-Study Report describes it as a place “*where their children can grow in a safe and healthy environment.*” The creche is equipped with **CCTV cameras with live access for parents**, well-trained caregivers, and other necessary amenities to ensure children’s well-being [2]. The infrastructure and staffing were arranged to make children feel “at home,” with attention to **safety, security, emotional, social and physical development** needs [1]. In essence, the facility functions as a **full-day daycare** on campus, allowing employees to drop off their infants and toddlers while they work, confident that professional childcare and developmental activities are provided on-site.

Scope and Beneficiaries (Who Can Use the Facility)

The childcare facility is open to all UPES employees’ children, benefiting a wide range of personnel – academic faculty, administrative and support staff alike. University records emphasize that Kilkari is “*for children of all its employees*” [1]. This inclusive approach means **faculty members, researchers, administrative staff, and support staff** who are working parents can equally avail the creche services. By offering on-campus childcare, UPES directly supports **working mothers and fathers** in balancing their professional and parental roles. Moreover, the benefit is not limited to permanent staff alone; consistent with national guidelines, the intention is that **all categories of employees** (including contractual or temporary workers) with young children can access the facility [1]. This broad scope aligns with gender equity goals by encouraging participation of women in the workforce across all roles, and ensures that **childcare support is an institutional benefit rather than a privilege**.

It is noteworthy that in addition to its own employees, UPES has also extended childcare support as part of community initiatives. For example, under “**Project Samvedna**”, the university provides **daycare and education for the children of migrant construction workers** on campus [3]. This CSR

effort (while external to faculty/staff benefits) further underscores UPES's commitment to childcare support by ensuring those laborers' children receive care and a safe learning environment while their parents work [3]. Together, these measures show a comprehensive approach to childcare that touches both its internal community and society, reinforcing **SDG 5 (Gender Equality)** by supporting parents in various capacities.

Governance and Management of the Crèche

The on-campus crèche "Kilkari" is operated under the university's management as an internal facility. UPES explicitly calls it *"UPES's own Crèche/Day Care Facility,"* indicating it is institution-run [1]. The university's HR and administrative departments oversee its functioning, including staffing and maintenance. The staff at the daycare are **trained childcare providers**, and the facility maintains protocols for safety and hygiene as per standard childcare norms [1] [2]. Features like CCTV monitoring with live feed accessible to parents demonstrate a **transparent and secure operating model** [2].

In terms of partnership or external involvement, there is **no indication that the creche is outsourced to a third-party operator**; rather, it appears to be a dedicated service by the university for its community. All necessary resources (equipment, toys, learning materials, etc.) and personnel have been arranged by UPES to ensure the center meets quality standards. The governance structure likely involves **regular oversight by university administration** to ensure compliance with childcare regulations and to respond to parents' feedback. This internal management aligns the creche's operations with UPES's policies and culture, and allows the university to directly uphold high standards of care and security.

Related Parental Support Policies at UPES

Providing a daycare facility is part of a broader framework of **parent-friendly policies** at UPES, which contribute to both **SDG 5 (gender equality in the workplace)** and **SDG 8 (decent work conditions)**. Other supportive programs include:

- **Generous Maternity Leave:** UPES adheres to India's enhanced maternity benefit norms. Female employees are granted up to **26 weeks of paid maternity leave for the first two children**, consistent with the Maternity Benefit Act of 1961 (amended in 2017) [4]. This provision is formally detailed in the university's HR policies and ensures new mothers have sufficient time off with full pay [4]. For cases of miscarriage or medical complications, additional paid leave is provided (6 weeks for miscarriage, plus up to 1 month for illness related to pregnancy) [4], reflecting a compassionate approach to women's health.
- **Paternity Leave:** While Indian law mandates 15 days of paternity leave only for government employees, UPES acknowledges the importance of paternity leave for its staff as well. The university's documents reference the Central Civil Services rules – *"eligible male employees are entitled to 15 days [within six months of childbirth]"* – as a guiding framework [4]. In practice, UPES provides paternity leave to new fathers (the specific duration for UPES employees is informed by these standards) [4]. This support for fathers helps promote shared parental responsibilities and work-life balance.

- **Flexible Work Options:** UPES policy allows certain flexible arrangements for new parents. For instance, **work-from-home** can be considered in cases where an employee, post childbirth, has limited mobility but is capable of working [4]. This enables new mothers (or fathers) to transition back to work more comfortably when needed. Additionally, **nursing breaks** are guaranteed for breastfeeding mothers upon return to work – women are allowed two breaks during the workday to nurse their infant until the child is 15 months old [4]. These measures ensure that returning mothers can continue childcare (e.g. breastfeeding) while maintaining their work schedule.
- **Additional Family-Friendly Supports:** The university fosters a family-friendly environment through programs like the **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** (branded “Main Hoon Na”) for emotional and mental well-being [1], which, while not specific to parenting, helps employees manage stress and personal challenges. There are also initiatives such as “**Navrachna**” for overall employee wellness (including counseling and fitness competitions) [2]. Moreover, UPES offers **fee concessions for employees’ children** who enroll as students at the university (75% tuition fee waiver for the first year) [2]. Together with the daycare, these programs create a supportive work culture where employees with families feel valued and accommodated.

Alignment with National Regulations and SDG Goals

UPES’s childcare facility and related policies are well-aligned with **national regulations and quality standards**, which underscores the university’s commitment to SDG 5 and SDG 8 targets:

- **Compliance with Legal Mandates:** The introduction of the creche at UPES closely followed the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017, a national law that mandates onsite childcare for organizations with 50 or more employees [5]. This law requires every such establishment to provide a crèche facility either at the workplace or within a prescribed nearby distance. UPES has complied proactively – the creation of Kilkari in 2017 directly fulfills this legal requirement, ensuring the university meets its obligations to support working parents. An official UGC notice in 2024 reiterated that all higher education institutions must implement the National Guidelines for creches under this Act [6]. UPES’s existing daycare facility exemplifies such compliance, showing that the university has been ahead of or in step with regulatory expectations. Not only does the creche serve faculty and staff, but per guidelines it is available for all categories of workers’ children (ages 6 months to 6 years), including contract or support staff, reflecting the inclusivity envisioned by the law [5].
- **Alignment with UGC and NAAC Expectations:** In March 2024, the University Grants Commission (UGC) issued detailed “*National Minimum Standards and Protocol for Creches*” and urged all universities to institute quality childcare support [5] [6]. UPES’s childcare program aligns with these standards by providing a secure, nurturing, and accessible facility for employees’ children. The objectives cited by UGC – such as enabling women to pursue careers, providing safe childcare, and boosting female workforce participation [6] – are clearly reflected in UPES’s initiatives. Furthermore, accreditation bodies like NAAC emphasize gender equity and employee welfare as part of their assessment criteria. In UPES’s NAAC Self-Study Report, the creche (Kilkari) is highlighted as a best practice for employee support, with details of its features (e.g. CCTV monitoring and trained caretakers) and its positive impact on staff well-being [2]. This indicates that the university’s childcare facility is not only a service to

employees but also a point of distinction in quality evaluations, resonating with SDG 5's call for gender-inclusive policies.

- Contribution to SDG 5 (Gender Equality): By providing childcare and supportive parental leave, UPES directly tackles barriers that often impede women's career advancement. The availability of an on-campus daycare helps female faculty and staff return to work after childbirth, knowing their infants are nearby and cared for. This is a concrete step toward creating equal opportunities in the workplace. The policy of allowing nursing breaks and flexible hours further ensures that motherhood does not become a professional setback, thereby promoting gender equality in line with SDG 5. In addition, by acknowledging paternity leave, the university encourages shared parenting roles, which helps shift cultural norms toward equality at home and work.
- Contribution to SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth): Childcare support is also a facet of decent work conditions. UPES's measures improve the work-life balance for employees, reduce stress related to childcare, and likely improve staff retention and productivity – all indicators of a fair and supportive workplace. The creche and associated benefits enable more women to remain in the workforce (contributing to higher labor participation), which aligns with SDG 8's emphasis on inclusive economic growth and productive employment. Moreover, by institutionalizing such support, UPES exemplifies how organizations can invest in human capital and create conditions for employees to thrive. The UGC has noted that *"institutionalization of care services is crucial for enhancing female labour force participation"* [6] – UPES's childcare facility is a living example of this principle. It not only provides direct childcare jobs (caregiver roles, which align with new job opportunities for women as noted in national objectives [6]) but also indirectly boosts the performance and morale of its workforce, contributing to sustainable economic growth at the institutional level.

In summary, University of Petroleum and Energy Studies (UPES) offers a well-structured childcare support system for its staff and faculty. The on-campus Kilkari day-care center stands as evidence of UPES's commitment to supporting working parents, fulfilling indicator 5.6.3 under SDG 5 (Gender Equality) by providing accessible childcare. This facility, combined with robust maternity leave, consideration of paternity leave, and flexible work policies, creates an enabling environment for employees with young children. Such efforts are transparently documented (via official reports and policies) and align with both national mandates and global best practices. By doing so, UPES not only meets compliance requirements but also advances the goals of THE Impact Rankings under SDG 5 and SDG 8 – promoting gender equality in the workplace and ensuring decent work and economic growth through inclusive, family-friendly policies.

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