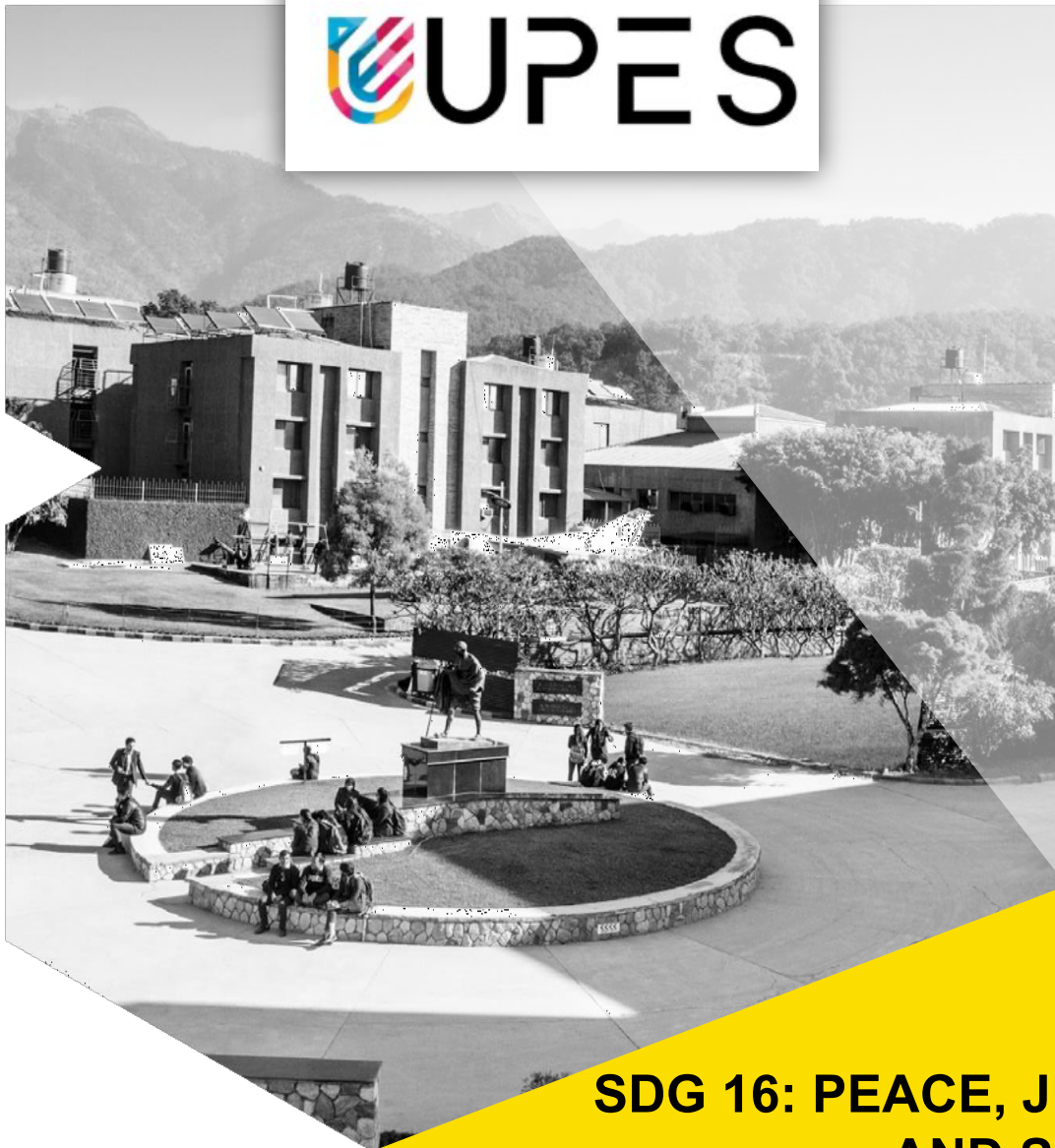




# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



**SDG 16: PEACE, JUSTICE  
AND STRONG  
INSTITUTIONS**

**2025**

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# SDG 16: PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

## SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions – UPES University Report

UPES University (Dehradun, India) is committed to advancing **SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions** through its academic programs, campus initiatives, community engagements, and governance policies. SDG 16 focuses on fostering peaceful, inclusive societies, providing access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable institutions. In line with these goals, UPES integrates justice and governance principles into its curriculum and operations, preparing students to become advocates for peace and justice [1]. The following report outlines UPES's contributions to SDG 16 across education, community outreach, partnerships, research, and institutional policies, as per Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings reporting standards.

### Legal and Justice Education Programs at UPES

#### School of Law – Programs and Curriculum

UPES's School of Law offers comprehensive legal education with a range of programs, including integrated **BA LL.B.**, **BBA LL.B.**, a three-year **LL.B.**, **LL.M.**, and doctoral degrees [2]. These programs cover diverse specializations such as **Corporate and Commercial Law, Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR), Intellectual Property Rights, Environmental and Energy Laws, Cyber Security and Digital Laws**, among others [2]. Courses are designed to emphasize justice, human rights, ethics, and governance – for example, topics like transparency, ethics, and inclusive policymaking are integrated into the curriculum to equip students with skills to address global justice challenges [1]. The School of Law incorporates experiential learning through **moot court simulations and specialized labs**. Notably, it has an ADR Training Lab and an M&A (Mergers & Acquisitions) Lab in collaboration with leading law firms, bringing real-world legal practice into the classroom [2]. These innovations help students learn peaceful dispute resolution techniques and modern legal skills in a hands-on environment.

#### Focus on Outcome-Based Education

UPES's law school prioritizes outcome-based and technology-enabled education. It leverages tools like AR/VR in legal teaching and conducts **moot court competitions and Model United Nations simulations** to give students practical exposure to justice systems [2] [1]. Through these activities, students engage deeply with concepts of international diplomacy, conflict resolution, and law in action. The UPES International MUN Club, for example, annually hosts a major Model United Nations conference that brings together students from across India and abroad to debate global peace and governance issues [3]. Such platforms foster diplomacy, leadership, and a deeper understanding of international institutions in line with SDG 16.

## Specializations and Alumni Impact

UPES's programs allow students to specialize in areas crucial to strong institutions – including **Constitutional Law, Criminal Justice, Public Policy, and International Law**. Faculty profiles reflect these strengths: many professors are experts in human rights, constitutional law, and administrative law, and they incorporate these perspectives into teaching [4]. The School of Law takes pride in alumni who have become legal professionals, policymakers, and social entrepreneurs advocating for justice, human rights, and sustainable change [2]. This indicates that UPES graduates are not only well-versed in legal theory but are also prepared to advance peace and justice in their careers.

## Campus Initiatives for Justice, Transparency, and Inclusion

### Transparent and Inclusive Governance

UPES ensures transparent governance in its operations through open feedback systems and grievance redressal mechanisms [1]. Students have representation in decision-making processes via student councils and committees, which promotes accountability and inclusivity in institutional governance [1]. For instance, the UPES Student Council (an apolitical student governance body) serves as a forum for students' voices and participates in policy-making for student welfare [1]. The council's mandate includes expressing student opinions, enhancing co-curricular development, and acting as a consultative body between students and the administration [1]. By embedding student representation in governance, UPES aligns with SDG 16 targets on responsive, inclusive decision-making at all levels.

### Ethical Conduct and Anti-Corruption Measures

Upholding integrity is a core value at UPES. The university has enacted a formal Policy on Preventive Measures Against Corruption and Fraudulent Practices to instill a culture of zero tolerance for corruption [5]. This policy prohibits bribery, extortion, embezzlement, and all unethical practices by any member of the university community [5]. It also establishes clear procedures for reporting wrongdoing: whistleblower protections are in place to encourage reporting of suspected corruption or fraud without fear of retaliation [5]. UPES raises awareness about anti-corruption through trainings and workshops on ethical decision-making, conflict of interest, and honesty in academia [5]. These efforts ensure that institutional processes remain accountable and transparent, mirroring national initiatives like the Right to Information (RTI) for transparency [1]. In essence, UPES's internal governance policies contribute to strong institutions by promoting ethics, compliance with laws, and accountability within the campus community.

### Campus Safety and Justice

The university actively addresses issues of safety, discrimination, and harassment, reflecting a commitment to just and inclusive campus life. A **Proctorial Board** and Student Discipline Committee monitor student conduct and handle any incidents of ragging, substance abuse, discrimination, or harassment [1]. This committee of student volunteers works year-round to alert authorities to problems like ragging or eve-teasing and helps maintain a safe, law-abiding environment on campus [1]. UPES also participates in national initiatives such as **"Gender Champions,"** appointing student

leaders to advocate for gender equality and monitor progress toward gender justice within the university [1]. Parallely, robust **anti-harassment policies** (e.g. against sexual harassment) and support systems are in place to ensure a respectful, secure atmosphere for all students and staff [1]. Through these measures, UPES cultivates a microcosm of a peaceful and just society on campus, where rights are protected and misconduct is not tolerated.

## Diversity and Inclusion

While not exclusively under SDG 16, UPES recognizes that **reducing inequalities and promoting inclusion** are essential for peaceful institutions. The university provides scholarships and support to students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, fostering a culture of inclusivity [1]. Events like **seminars on human rights and gender equity** are organized to raise awareness about the importance of inclusion in building peaceful societies [1]. By empowering marginalized groups and ensuring equal opportunities (aligned with SDG 10 on Reduced Inequalities), UPES strengthens the social fabric that underpins peace and justice on campus and beyond.

## Legal Aid and Access to Justice Initiatives

### Legal Aid Cell and Free Legal Clinics

A flagship initiative of UPES in advancing SDG 16 is its active **Legal Aid Cell**, run by the School of Law. The Legal Aid Cell focuses on assisting those in need by providing **free legal advice and guidance** in navigating legal challenges [6]. Prioritizing the rights and best interests of the underprivileged, the cell works to increase access to justice for all and promote collective welfare. Importantly, the Legal Aid Cell operates regular legal clinics – it is open **twice weekly (every Tuesday and Thursday)** at UPES's Kandoli campus for any local resident seeking consultation and help, at no cost [7]. Community members are encouraged to visit and receive guidance on issues ranging from documentation to grievance redressal, thereby demystifying the law and reducing barriers to justice.

### Legal Literacy Camps in Communities

UPES law faculty and students frequently organize **legal aid and awareness camps** in surrounding communities to educate citizens about their legal rights, remedies, and the rule of law. One notable example was a “Legal Aid cum Legal Awareness Camp” held in Village Dunga (Prem Nagar, Dehradun) in collaboration with the **District Legal Services Authority (DLSA)** [7]. The camp's theme was *Children's Rights and the Right to Education*, and it was presided over by a former District Judge of Uttarakhand as Chief Guest [7]. During the event, UPES faculty and student volunteers sensitized villagers about the fundamental right to education for children and addressed community questions. They performed a skit illustrating the **importance of education and the harm of corruption** in the schooling system, making the message accessible to the rural audience [7]. The camp also featured one-on-one legal counseling: attendees were invited to discuss their individual legal problems, which the law faculty and students helped address on the spot (with the DLSA officials providing further guidance) [7]. **Free booklets on common laws and legal procedures** were distributed to empower citizens with knowledge of their rights [7]. This single camp drew a large number of villagers of all ages and had

enthusiastic participation from UPES's "upcoming law aspirants," reflecting a successful community engagement [7].

UPES conducts many such legal literacy programs in rural Uttarakhand, aligning with its mission to provide "**access to justice for all**". The focus areas have included women's rights, child rights, anti-domestic violence awareness, and government welfare schemes. These **student-led pro bono initiatives** not only resolve individual cases but also build legal awareness in underprivileged groups, helping prevent exploitation and conflict [1]. By demystifying legal processes and bringing legal aid to people's doorsteps, UPES is fostering more informed, empowered communities – a foundation for peace and strong institutions at the grassroots.

### Human Rights and Constitutional Awareness

Within the university, student organizations augment these efforts by promoting legal awareness on campus and beyond. The **Society for Constitutional Law & Human Rights (SCLHR)** at UPES (established in 2018) is a student-driven forum dedicated to research and advocacy in the field of constitutional rights and human rights [8]. SCLHR regularly conducts events such as debates, panel discussions, essay competitions, and expert lectures on contemporary issues like fundamental rights, legal reforms, and civil liberties [8]. For example, to commemorate Constitution Day (Samvidhan Diwas) and engage the wider community, SCLHR has organized a **National Constitutional Law Olympiad** – a quiz and essay competition attracting participants from law schools across India [8] [9]. These activities serve to spread awareness of the Constitution and human rights beyond the classroom, encouraging students and citizens to discuss, debate, and **deliberate on democratic values**. By emboldening research and dialogue on issues such as judicial accountability, equality before law, and human rights, student groups like SCLHR amplify UPES's impact on SDG 16 targets related to legal empowerment and public awareness [8].

### Anti-Corruption & Rule of Law Campaigns

UPES also engages the campus community in broader national observances that resonate with SDG 16. For instance, during **Vigilance Awareness Week** (a government-led annual campaign against corruption), the university has hosted activities like debates on corruption and integrity pledge ceremonies. Likewise, the National Service Scheme (NSS) unit at UPES and various schools celebrate days of national importance – e.g., **Constitution Day (26 November)** – through preamble-reading events, legal quizzes, and awareness talks on citizens' duties and rights. These events, often student-organized, reinforce the values of the rule of law, transparency, and good governance among the youth. They complement UPES's academic and outreach efforts by building a campus culture that prizes honesty, justice, and civic responsibility.

### Partnerships and Collaborations for Justice

UPES recognizes that achieving peace and justice requires collaboration with external institutions, including government agencies, judiciary bodies, and civil society organizations. The university has actively forged partnerships that bolster its SDG 16 initiatives:



## Collaboration with Legal and Judicial Institutions

UPES regularly partners with the Uttarakhand State Legal Services Authority and District Legal Services Authorities for its legal aid camps and clinics. The support of judges, magistrates, and legal aid officers (as seen in the Dunga village camp) adds credibility and effectiveness to these programs [7]. Such partnerships also give students exposure to the working of judicial institutions and legal aid mechanisms, enhancing their practical learning. Additionally, UPES invites legal luminaries (judges, senior advocates, law enforcement officers) to campus for guest lectures, moot court judgments, and panel discussions, often in association with bar councils or judicial academies. Two distinguished legal professionals – *Justice V.K. Maheshwari* (former Registrar General of Uttarakhand High Court) and *Mr. Anil Raturi* (former Director General of Police, Uttarakhand) – even serve as Professors of Practice at UPES [2]. Their presence reflects institutional linkage with the judiciary and law enforcement, providing mentorship to students on upholding the rule of law and ethical governance.

## Government and Law Enforcement Partnerships

UPES has collaborated with government departments to promote justice and accountability. A key initiative was undertaken under the Skill India Mission, where UPES provided upskilling and vocational training to inmates of the Dehradun District Jail [10]. This program aimed to enhance inmates' livelihood options and facilitate their rehabilitation into society, addressing SDG 16's call for fair and effective justice (by reducing recidivism through empowerment). The university's faculty conducted workshops for the prisoners, teaching them employable skills – a unique academia-government effort to support the penal system in a humane, reformatory manner [10]. UPES also engages with local government and police on issues like cybercrime awareness (e.g. educational visits by students to the state cyber police cell) and disaster law, thereby contributing its expertise to public institutions for capacity-building.

## NGO and Civil Society Linkages

Through its Srijan social internship program, UPES has tie-ups with over 600 NGOs across various development sectors [11]. Many of these NGOs work in areas intersecting with SDG 16, such as child rights, women's safety, legal awareness, anti-trafficking, and governance transparency. All first-year students are required to undertake a social internship, and several choose projects related to legal aid, community mediation, or human rights advocacy. This not only helps the partner organizations with youthful volunteers, but also sensitizes students to grassroots justice issues [10]. On the research front, UPES has collaborated with bodies like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on projects – for example, contributing research to UNDP's clean energy projects and also capacity-building programs (this speaks to SDG 7 & 13, but showcases an ability to partner on global goals broadly) [10]. For SDG 16 specifically, the university has worked with think-tanks and civil society on areas like policy advocacy. Collaborative efforts with governmental and non-governmental organizations allow UPES faculty and students to contribute to policy recommendations and sustainable solutions for justice and governance challenges [1].

These partnerships greatly expand UPES's impact beyond campus. By partnering with legal institutions, government bodies, and international organizations, the university is able to enhance its contribution to justice and strong institutions on a larger scale [1]. Students gain internships, research opportunities, and experiential learning through these collaborations [1]. In sum, UPES acts as a bridge



between academia and the wider ecosystem of peace and justice stakeholders, aligning its efforts with national priorities and global movements for SDG 16.

## Student Engagement, Advocacy, and Public Events

The spirit of SDG 16 is also kept alive on campus through vibrant **student-led clubs, committees, and events** that advocate for peace, justice, and institutional integrity:

### Moot Court and Legal Competitions

The School of Law's **Moot Court Committee** trains and encourages students to participate in moot court competitions, which simulate real court proceedings. Moot courts at UPES often involve issues of human rights, constitutional law, or international law, giving students a chance to argue and resolve complex legal disputes in a controlled setting. This not only hones their advocacy skills but ingrains respect for judicial processes and fair trials. Hosting and participating in **national moot competitions** has become a tradition; such events draw law students from across India to debate legal points, often under the mentorship of sitting judges or senior lawyers. By engaging in moots, students practice rule of law and learn to resolve conflicts through dialogue and legal reasoning – echoing SDG 16's emphasis on dispute resolution and justice.

### Debating and Diplomacy Clubs

Apart from the MUN Club mentioned earlier, UPES has an active **Debating Society** and student chapters of global organizations that tackle governance issues. Debates on topics like corruption, freedom of speech, and public policy are regularly conducted, enhancing the culture of open dialogue. For instance, debates on themes such as *"Corruption is the greatest obstacle to India's development"* have been organized during Vigilance Awareness campaigns on campus. These forums encourage students to critically analyze governance challenges and propose solutions, thereby nurturing informed future citizens.

### National Service Scheme (NSS) and NCC

UPES's NSS unit involves students in various community service and nation-building activities. Many NSS events center around peace and communal harmony – e.g., peace rallies on International Day of Peace, voter awareness drives promoting democratic participation, and campaigns against social evils (drug abuse, violence against women, etc.). The **NCC (National Cadet Corps)** wing, if present, similarly instills discipline and service, aligning youth with values of unity and integrity. Through such co-curricular programs, students imbibe the importance of being active, responsible participants in society and upholding the law.

### Cultural and Diversity Events

Interestingly, building a peaceful community also involves celebrating diversity and fostering mutual respect. UPES's cultural committees host annual festivals (like *Uurja* and *Ignite*) and observances where students of all backgrounds collaborate and showcase talents [1]. The **Gender Champion**

initiative, as noted, engages both male and female students in advocating gender justice on campus [1]. In combination with seminars on human rights, these efforts create an environment where equality and respect are championed, reducing instances of conflict or violence.

Overall, student engagement at UPES is geared towards shaping youth as “**ethical leaders**” who value governance, justice, and social responsibility [1]. From participating in Model UN and legal aid clinics to running student governance bodies, students practice the ethos of SDG 16 in real terms. This experiential learning ensures that UPES graduates carry forward the torch of peace and justice into their professional and civic lives.

## Research and Scholarship on SDG 16 Themes

UPES contributes to peace, justice, and strong institutions not just through practice but also through **research and thought leadership**. Faculty and students engage in research projects addressing law reform, governance, human rights, and conflict resolution [1]. Some key highlights include:

### Faculty Research

UPES law faculty have a strong scholarly footprint in areas aligned with SDG 16. Many faculty members specialize in **human rights law, constitutional law, criminal justice reforms, and public policy**, producing research that informs these fields. For example, Dr. Balwinder Singh (Senior Associate Professor of Law) is known for research on constitutional rights and has published works on the “*interface between science, technology and human rights*,” on “*expanding horizons of Article 21 of the Indian Constitution*” (right to life and liberty), and on family law challenges [12]. He has also examined the **right to food as a constitutional human right** in India, reflecting on legal approaches to eliminate hunger [12]. His recent publications span topics like refugee law (the need for a legal regime for refugees in India), LGBTQ rights, and child nutrition law – all of which intersect with justice and equality [12]. Another faculty member’s profile, Mr. Karan K. Choudhary, shows research interest in **Criminal Justice reforms and administrative governance**, with conference papers on constitutionalism and legal system improvements [4]. These examples illustrate how UPES’s academic staff are contributing new knowledge and critical analysis on governance, legal ethics, and human rights issues.

### Student Research & Publications

The student community, often guided by societies like SCLHR, is active in research as well. Law students contribute articles to the SCLHR Blog on contemporary constitutional and human rights issues [8]. Topics have ranged from analysis of landmark judgments, commentary on new laws (for instance, personal data protection and its impact on civil liberties), to comparative studies of justice systems. The university encourages students to present papers at conferences and publish in journals; as a result, UPES students have earned recognition in essay competitions and moot court research awards on SDG 16-related themes (e.g., an international essay competition on criminal law reform was won by a UPES student, as noted in Dr. Balwinder’s profile [12]). This scholarly engagement at the student level ensures a pipeline of young researchers devoted to peace and justice topics.

## Policy Engagement and Consultancy

Through its faculty expertise, UPES contributes to policy formulation and consultancy projects. Faculty members from law and governance backgrounds have been invited to provide inputs on draft legislation and to join external working groups. For example, some have worked on research with the **National Human Rights Commission** or provided training sessions on legal aspects of sustainable development to bureaucrats. While specific details are proprietary, the outcome of such engagements is that UPES research helps shape discussions on legal reforms and institutional accountability in India. The collaborative research with government/NGO mentioned earlier also feeds into **policy recommendations** for sustainable governance solutions [1].

In summary, UPES's intellectual contributions reinforce its on-ground initiatives. By promoting rigorous research on justice and strong institutions – and integrating those findings into teaching and outreach – the university helps drive evidence-based improvements in governance and legal frameworks (supporting SDG 16.3 on promoting the rule of law and 16.6 on developing effective institutions). The research ethos also elevates UPES's status in academic rankings and showcases its thought leadership in the SDG 16 arena.

## Impact and Outcomes

UPES's multifaceted efforts under SDG 16 have yielded tangible impacts, both qualitative and quantitative, which demonstrate the university's progress toward peace, justice, and strong institutions:

### Enhanced Access to Justice

The Legal Aid Cell and outreach camps have directly benefited numerous individuals in the region. *Local residents now have free access to legal consultation* – a service that was previously out of reach for many due to cost or awareness barriers. Each legal aid camp typically sees dozens of beneficiaries; for instance, the village camp on child education rights engaged a large gathering of villagers, many of whom received one-on-one advice for the first time [7]. The continuous twice-weekly legal clinic means **hundreds of cases** can be handled annually, providing resolution or guidance on issues like land disputes, domestic violence, and documentation. Such interventions not only resolve individual grievances but also foster trust in legal institutions and **reduce fear of the law** among the public (as noted in the camp's messaging that “Law is indeed their best friend in times of adversity” [7]). The ripple effect is a community that is more likely to seek lawful remedies and participate in justice systems, aligning with SDG 16's aim of equal access to justice.

### Student Skills and Employment

Through law programs and hands-on initiatives, UPES is producing graduates who are practice-ready and socially conscious. Many law alumni have taken up careers in public service, judiciary, or advocacy. Some have joined civil society organizations working on human rights, while others serve as legal counsels who continue pro bono work. The **practical training in ADR, mootings, and clinical legal**

**education** ensures that students can effectively mediate disputes and provide legal aid, skills that directly contribute to peaceful dispute resolution in society [2] [1]. Additionally, UPES's integration of ethics and transparency into its curriculum means graduates enter their professions with a strong ethical compass – an immeasurable but vital impact for building corruption-free institutions in the long run. The fact that UPES was ranked among the top law schools nationally (18th in India's NIRF 2025 rankings) and that its **Impact Ranking for SDG 16 sits in the global 401–600 band** speaks to these educational outcomes [2] [13].

### Community and Policy Impact

On the community level, UPES's initiatives have contributed to increased legal awareness in Uttarakhand. For example, after the series of legal literacy camps, local authorities reported higher enrollment in certain welfare schemes (as people learned about their entitlements). The university's skill training for prison inmates helped some of those individuals find employment upon release, exemplifying successful reintegration. In terms of policy, inputs from UPES research on areas like right to food and environmental justice have been cited in discussions at academic and government forums [12]. While attribution is complex, it is fair to say UPES is helping shape progressive discourse on laws and rights. The **culture of peace and inclusion on campus** – with no tolerance for ragging or discrimination – also sets a standard that many students carry to other institutions and communities, creating broader impact through values-driven leadership.

### Recognition and Continuous Improvement

UPES regularly monitors and evaluates these initiatives to identify areas for improvement. The presence of structured policies (e.g., anti-corruption policy) includes provisions for periodic review and updates to ensure alignment with best practices [5]. Feedback from beneficiaries of legal aid and participants of events is taken to refine future programs. The commitment to SDG 16 has earned UPES not only a spot in the global Impact Rankings but also partnerships with organizations that share similar values, thereby multiplying impact. For instance, the university's membership in international forums and MoUs with global institutions have opened up new avenues like joint research on governance and student exchanges focusing on international justice issues [1]. All these factors contribute to a positive feedback loop – the more impact UPES has, the more support it garners, enabling even greater contribution to peace, justice, and strong institutions.

### University Policies Supporting Justice and Strong Institutions

No sustainability report on SDG 16 would be complete without highlighting the **internal policies** that ensure UPES itself exemplifies the principles of good governance, justice, and ethics:

#### Code of Conduct and Whistleblower Policy

UPES maintains rigorous codes of conduct for students, faculty, and staff, outlining expected ethical behavior and professional integrity. The **anti-corruption and fraud prevention policy** (discussed earlier) is a cornerstone, reinforcing that any form of bribery or fraud will face strict disciplinary action

including possible termination or legal prosecution [5]. The policy explicitly encourages all members of the university to report any suspicious misconduct through defined channels, assuring that **whistleblowers acting in good faith are protected from retaliation and their confidentiality preserved** [5]. Reports are investigated impartially, and sanctions are applied when violations are confirmed, thereby enforcing accountability [5]. This robust stance deters malpractice and builds trust in the institution's fairness and rule of law – essentially making the university a model of SDG 16 values internally.

### Grievance Redressal and Ombudsperson

UPES has established grievance redress mechanisms for students and employees, including committees for anti-ragging, sexual harassment (Internal Complaints Committee as per law), and general complaints. These bodies act like an internal justice system, where any member of the campus community can seek redress for issues. The outcomes of grievances are transparently communicated, and policies are adjusted if systemic issues are identified. By ensuring everyone on campus has access to **justice and fair hearings** for their concerns, the university upholds SDG 16.3 (equal access to justice) on a micro-level.

### Inclusive and Participatory Decision-Making

As mentioned, student and faculty representation is integrated into many decision processes – from academic councils to anti-ragging squads. UPES also invites feedback on major policy changes through town-hall meetings or surveys, reflecting a participatory approach. The **Students' Council** and various student committees (Sports, Cultural, Discipline, etc.) not only organize activities but also provide input on student welfare rules [1]. This inclusive governance ensures decisions consider diverse perspectives, and it trains students in democratic participation (echoing SDG 16.7 on inclusive decision-making).

### Transparency and Information Access

While as a private university UPES is not under the government RTI Act, it voluntarily practices transparency by publishing key information such as admission criteria, fee structures, and accreditation reports on its website. Financial aid policies and selection processes are clearly laid out to avoid any arbitrariness (tackling corruption in a preventive way). Additionally, the university publishes an **annual report and sustainability report** that includes its SDG efforts, which is accessible to stakeholders. This culture of openness resonates with SDG 16.10, which calls for public access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms.

### Ethical Leadership and Training

Finally, the university nurtures a climate of **ethical leadership**. Leaders (from the Vice-Chancellor to student club heads) are expected to lead by example in honesty, fairness, and accountability. Regular workshops on ethics – including academic integrity (to prevent plagiarism and uphold intellectual honesty) – are held. UPES's vision statement and graduate attributes explicitly mention producing socially responsible and ethical individuals. This internal ethos strengthens the institution itself and

ensures that UPES's contributions to SDG 16 are not just outward-facing projects but are ingrained in its organizational DNA.

## Conclusion

UPES University's commitment to **Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions (SDG 16)** is reflected in its robust legal education programs, its proactive campus initiatives promoting justice and transparency, extensive community outreach for legal empowerment, meaningful partnerships with government and civil society, and a steadfast adherence to ethical governance within the university. By integrating SDG 16 into academics, operations, and community engagement, UPES is cultivating graduates and outcomes that contribute to a more just, peaceful society. The university's efforts – from free legal aid camps in rural villages to anti-corruption training on campus – align closely with India's national priorities and the UN's global targets for SDG 16 [1]. In doing so, UPES not only improves lives in its immediate community but also sets an example in the higher education sector of how institutions can be champions of peace and justice.

Moving forward, UPES remains dedicated to expanding these initiatives, continually assessing their impact, and sharing best practices through platforms like the THE Impact Rankings. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the ethos of **"University with a Purpose"** – a moniker often associated with UPES – manifests in sustained positive impact on peace, justice, and strong institutions at local, national, and international levels. Through education, advocacy, research, and collaboration, UPES is helping write a "sustainable chapter" for future generations – one where strong institutions and justice for all pave the way for sustainable development [11].

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