



Academic Freedom Policy

UPES

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Version 1.0

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1. Policy Statement

UPES is committed to fostering an academic environment in which faculty, researchers, and students are free to pursue knowledge, engage in teaching, conduct research, and express scholarly views without undue interference, censorship, or fear of institutional reprisal, subject to the professional standards, ethical obligations, and applicable laws that govern responsible academic conduct.

Academic freedom is fundamental to UPES's mission as a centre of higher learning and research. It enables the generation and dissemination of new knowledge, supports rigorous and independent inquiry, and underpins the University's credibility, quality of education, and standing among academic peers.

2. Purpose and Scope

This Policy sets out UPES's commitment to academic freedom and the responsibilities that accompany it. It applies to:

- All full-time, part-time, and visiting faculty across UPES's constituent schools;
- Postgraduate researchers, doctoral scholars, and research staff engaged in academic work;
- Students, in respect of their freedom to learn, question, and engage in reasoned academic discussion;
- Administrative decisions relating to curriculum design, research direction, publication, and classroom instruction.

3. Freedom in Research

Faculty and researchers at UPES are free to select research topics within their areas of expertise, to pursue investigations using appropriate scholarly methods, and to publish or present their findings, subject to institutional research ethics approval, applicable law, funding agreements, and standards of academic integrity. Research direction and findings shall not be dictated or suppressed on the basis of non-academic considerations, including commercial, political, or donor interests, except where legally or contractually required (e.g., confidentiality obligations under sponsored research agreements).

4. Freedom in Teaching

Faculty are entitled to exercise professional judgment in the design and delivery of courses within their areas of competence, in presenting and discussing material relevant to their subject, including material that may be controversial, and in evaluating student work fairly and on academic merit. This freedom is exercised within the framework of approved curricula, University academic regulations, and professional standards of pedagogy.

5. Freedom of Expression and Extramural Activity

Faculty, researchers, and students have the right to express their views, including on matters relating to University policy or matters of public interest, as members of the academic community and as citizens. Such expression should be exercised responsibly, with appropriate accuracy and restraint, and individuals should be mindful that they may be perceived as speaking on behalf of the University even when speaking in a personal capacity. UPES will not take adverse action against faculty, researchers, or students solely on the basis of the

lawful expression of academic or personal views, provided such expression does not violate University Codes of Conduct, applicable law, or the rights of others. Freedom of expression shall not contravene with the nation's interests and/ or national security.

6. Freedom to Learn

Students have the right to be taught in an environment that encourages open inquiry, critical thinking, and the free exchange of ideas, and to express reasoned dissent or alternative viewpoints in the course of academic study, without penalty to their academic evaluation, provided such expression is conducted respectfully and does not disrupt the learning environment of others.

7. Responsibilities Accompanying Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is exercised responsibly and is accompanied by corresponding obligations. Members of the UPES academic community are expected to:

- Maintain accuracy, honesty, and rigor in teaching, research, and publication, and to avoid academic misconduct including plagiarism and data fabrication;
- Respect the rights, dignity, and differing viewpoints of colleagues, students, and members of the public;
- Distinguish, where relevant, between statements made in a professional/institutional capacity and those made as a private individual;
- Comply with applicable law, University policies, research ethics requirements, and contractual obligations (including those arising from sponsored research or industry partnerships);
- Refrain from using academic freedom as a basis for harassment, discrimination, or conduct that violates University Codes of Conduct.

8. Institutional non-interference

UPES's administration, governance bodies, and management will not direct or pressure faculty regarding the substance of their teaching or research findings on the basis of non-academic considerations. Curricular and research decisions affecting academic freedom shall ordinarily be made through appropriate academic governance channels, including relevant Boards of Studies, Academic Council, and Departmental/School-level committees, with faculty participation.

10. Review

This Policy will be reviewed periodically, or sooner if required by changes in law, regulatory requirements (e.g., UGC guidelines), or University governance, and updated accordingly.

Registrar



