

UPES delivers on its nation-building promise through education for the Armed Forces

EDUCATION is important to any country's social, economic and cultural development. The role of education is very important in the all-round development of the society. The Indian education system is one of the largest education systems in the world.

In a bold move that aligns higher education with national service, UPES, a leading multidisciplinary university based in Dehradun, has cemented strategic partnerships with all three wings of India's Armed Forces, the Indian Army, the Indian Air Force, and the Indian Navy. These landmark collaborations reaffirm the university's enduring commitment to nation-building, equipping defence personnel and their families with quality education, relevant skills, and meaningful academic support.

At the core of these collaborations lies a shared purpose, to empower those who protect the nation with academic and professional growth. Through Memoranda of Understanding signed with the Indian Army, Indian Navy, and Indian Air Force, UPES has launched a range of initiatives that address the educational aspirations of serving personnel, veterans, and their families. The university offers up to 30% merit-based scholarships on undergraduate and post-graduate on-campus programs, reserved seats in high-demand courses such as BTech, BBA, MBA, LLB, and BA (Hons), and exclusive access to part-time Ph.D. programs aligned with defence priorities.

Acknowledging the unique circumstances of military life, UPES extends its digital learning platform, UPES Online, to the defence community, enabling Army, Navy, and Air Force personnel and their families to pursue online programs including MBA, BBA, BCA, Post Graduate Certificate Programs (PGCPs), and certificate courses. These learners benefit from a 20% tuition fee waiver, a 5% relaxation in eligibility criteria, and the flexibility of live weekend classes, recorded sessions, online examinations, and tech-enabled



delivery. For those with relevant work experience, project work requirements may be waived and replaced with a viva-based assessment.

The university's collaboration with the armed forces also opens up specialised part-time Ph.D. programs for research-oriented defence professionals in domains such as Aviation, Aeronautics, Engineering, Logistics, Management, Legal Studies, and Science & Technology. These programs support the evolving operational and strategic goals of the defence services. UPES facilitates these pursuits with access to an e-library, local hospitality during academic visits, and 50% scholarship on tuition fees for officers enrolled in Ph.D. programs.

Beyond programs and policies, UPES honours the spirit of service through initiatives that celebrate courage and commitment. One such initiative is an annual cricket tournament organised by UPES that commemorates the sacrifices of India's Bravehearts and their families. More than a sporting event, it serves as a tribute, a gathering that brings together students, faculty, and defence families in shared remembrance and gratitude.

Adding to this ethos is the inspiring story of

them in their personal and professional journeys with care, innovation, and purpose." Mr. Bharat Kharbanda, Member, Board of Governors, UPES, added, "Our vision is to make education a catalyst for empowerment. These partnerships with the Indian Armed Forces stand as proof that education, when aligned with real-world needs, can drive lasting impact, for individuals and for the nation."

UPES's association with the Indian Armed Forces reflects its belief in education as a strategic

lever for nation-building. Whether through research that contributes to national security, upskilling initiatives for defence professionals, or accessible learning opportunities for their families, UPES continues to enable pathways that shape futures and strengthen the country's collective resilience. The university's model, built on academic excellence, flexibility, empathy, and relevance, offers a compelling blueprint for how higher education can support those who serve.

Sugandh Agarwal, a UPES alumna who secured an All India Rank 2 in the order of merit in Computer Science Engineering for the Technical Graduate Course (TGC-132) entry of the Indian Army. Sugandh joined UPES School of Computer Science in 2016 to pursue B.Tech in Computer Science and Engineering with a specialisation in Business Analytics and Optimization. The course offered deep insights into data mining and predictive analytics, equipping him with tools to understand and align organisational operations with industry needs. While at UPES, Sugandh actively participated in student clubs and competitions and rose through the ranks to become Chairman of the Computing Machinery Student Chapter in his final year. His journey reflects the transformational impact of a supportive academic environment, dedicated mentorship, and a commitment to excellence, values that UPES continues to instil in its students.

Commenting on these initiatives, Dr. Sunil Rai, President, UPES, said, "This is more than a series of MoUs; it is a tribute. A tribute to courage, to commitment, and to the enduring spirit of service. At UPES, we are proud to open our academic ecosystem to the defence community, supporting