

United International University (UIU)

Annual Sustainability Report 2024

Focus SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Introduction

United International University (UIU) is committed to fostering a thriving, equitable, and ethical workplace environment. Our institutional strategy is directly aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, which promotes sustained economic expansion, high productivity, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.

Throughout 2024, UIU prioritized the development and enforcement of comprehensive policies aimed at protecting employee rights, ensuring pay equity, eradicating illicit labor practices, and cultivating an inclusive atmosphere for all faculty, staff, and third-party personnel. These initiatives reaffirm UIU's commitment to institutional integrity and its role in building a resilient, sustainable, and inclusive economy.

1. Employment Practices and Non-Discrimination

UIU maintains robust policies to ensure fair and transparent employment throughout the organization.

1.1. Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity

UIU firmly upholds the principle of non-discrimination in all employment procedures, including hiring, compensation, and promotion. The policy explicitly ensures equal opportunities regardless of gender, religion, race, ethnic minority, physical disability, or age. Furthermore, UIU is committed to providing reasonable job accommodations for individuals with disabilities who are capable of performing the essential functions of their position.

1.2. Employee Grievance and Appeal Process

A clear, three-step formal grievance mechanism is in place for employees to appeal decisions regarding their rights, working conditions, or compensation. This structured process—involving the immediate Superior, the Head of Department/Director/Dean, and finally the Human Resources Department—is designed to manage disputes promptly and equitably, fostering workplace harmony and ensuring accountability.

2. Ethical Labor and Outsourcing Compliance

UIU enforces strict standards to eliminate unethical labor practices both on campus and within its supply chain.

2.1. Policy on Modern Slavery and Child Labour

UIU maintains a strong commitment against forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking, and childlabour. The minimum age for regular employment is set at 18 years, ensuring compliance with both national laws and international ethical standards. This commitment supports global efforts to end all forms of exploitation.

2.2. Equivalent Rights for Outsourced Workers

When utilizing outsourced organizations or personnel, UIU mandates that these third-party workers are guaranteed adequate safety, security, and reasonable working conditions while on campus. Due diligence is performed on associates and third parties to ensure they uphold the University's code of conduct and principles of integrity, ensuring equivalent rights are maintained across the workforce.

3. Fair Compensation and Pay Equity

UIU is dedicated to maintaining equitable and sufficient compensation to attract and retain high-quality employees.

3.1. Pay Scale Structure and Equity

The University operates with a formal pay scale, approved by the Board of Trustees (BoT), which outlines classifications based on authority and responsibility. This structure is designed to be uniformly applied and free from discrimination or inequality based on gender, ethnicity, or other factors. The BoT regularly reviews economic changes to ensure UIU's compensation package remains competitive and sufficient within the education sector.

3.2. Compensation Tracking

The commitment to non-discriminatory compensation forms the foundation of pay scale equity. While policy commitment is achieved, the systematic tracking and measurement of gender pay gaps (as outlined in THE Impact 8.2.7) is a crucial next step identified for development in 2025.

3.3. Employee Welfare and Benefits

Permanent employees have access to robust welfare benefits, including a provident fund, gratuity, and group insurance. UIU also maintains a Staff Welfare Fund, used to finance medical and other emergencies, and offers interest-free loans against the provident fund balance, prioritizing employee well-being.

4. Governance, Anti-Corruption, and Integrity

UIU enforces a Zero Tolerance stance against all types of bribery and corruption as detailed in its Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy.

- Prohibition of Illicit Payments: The policy strictly forbids offering, promising, or giving bribes, facilitation payments, or kickbacks, and similarly prohibits soliciting or receiving them.
- Gifts and Hospitality: The University operates under a "NO GIFT" Policy with limited exceptions, to prevent conflicts of interest and maintain integrity in business interactions.
- Transparency and Training: Employees receive mandatory training on anti-corruption, and all related expenditures (Gifts, Entertainment, Hospitality) are rigorously documented and reviewed by Management.

5. Progress Toward SDG 8 Targets

The following table summarizes UIU's policy status and commitment against key THE Impact indicators for SDG 8.

SDG 8 Target

UIU Policy Achievement

Status

8.2.3

Policy on ending discrimination

Upholds the principle of non-discrimination in hiring, promotion, and working conditions.

☒ Achieved

8.2.4

Policy commitment against modern slavery/childlabour

Explicitly forbids modern slavery, forced labour, and childlabour (minimum age 18).

☒ Achieved

8.2.5

Equivalent rights for outsourcing

Ensures adequate safety and working conditions for third-party workers on campus.

☒ Achieved

8.2.6

Policy on pay scale/equity

Established non-discriminatory, formal pay scale overseen by the Board of Trustees.

☒ Achieved

8.2.8

Employment practice appeal process

Formal, three-step grievance and appeal mechanism is operational for rights and pay disputes.

☒ Achieved

8.2.7

Tracking pay scale for gender equity

Commitment achieved; systematic measurement and reporting of gender pay gaps required.

☐ In Progress

8.2.1

Employment practice living wage

Commitment to sufficient and competitive compensation; specific "living wage" definition compliance needs verification.

☐ In Progress

8.5.1

Proportion of employees on secure contracts

Policy supports long-term employment benefits (Provident Fund/Gratuity); quantitative data tracking is required.

☐ DataCollectionNeeded

8.4.1

Proportion of students taking work placements

Commitment to support student development; quantitative data tracking is required.

☐ DataCollectionNeeded

Conclusion

UIU's efforts toward SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth demonstrate a strong commitment to institutional integrity and employee well-being. By codifying ethical governance and ensuring comprehensive protection for worker rights, the University has achieved foundational compliance with key UN and THE Impact standards. Moving forward, the focus will shift from policy establishment to transparent, quantitative measurement and reporting to fully demonstrate our progress toward a truly equitable and sustainable workplace.