

A composite image featuring a hand holding a globe of the Earth. A red circuit board pattern is overlaid on the hand and the globe. The background shows a city skyline at sunset or sunrise.

THE BREAKNECK SPEED OF TECHNOLOGICAL
PROGRESS IS REDEFINING THE MEANING
OF A BALANCED EDUCATION.
**Can Malaysian universities evolve along
and keep pace with global changes?**

Shaping Asia | Media

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Amidst the onslaught of disruption from technological and scientific innovation, universities in Malaysia are taking strategic steps to build global talents

Malaysia steps up for higher education in the 21st Century

Universities today face a complicated mission. The emergence of new technologies in the 21st Century has redefined geographical distance, shifted a human-dependent workforce to one where humans and machines converge, and upended the way education and information are accessed and processed. All these present fresh challenges to the purpose and identity of a higher learning institute (HLI) as it grapples with producing future-proof graduates for a rapidly changing future.

The closing distance of the digital age, for example, places unprecedented demand for global experience on graduates. Graduates must now be able to collaborate on a global scale with co-workers from other offices in the world, compete internationally with innovations applicable across borders, manage intercultural relationships and partnerships, and develop the local chapter of their workplaces for an increasingly internationalised market.

At the same time, with foreign power increasingly impacting regional realities, these 'global graduates' need to have local insights within an international context to develop relevant solutions for societal and economic growth.

In Southeast Asia, especially, the burgeoning middle class, economic opportunities arising from international trade wars and the impact of China's swelling influence on regional stability are puzzles that future industry and thought leaders in various industries have to tackle.

To produce global graduates, campuses need a global environment. A melting pot of diverse cultures, nationalities and ethnicities, not only among students but also among the staff, makes a fertile ground for intercultural understanding and an international experience – essential to create graduates and researchers who can communicate, contribute and compete on a global scale.

According to the Malaysian

Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education), otherwise known as the MEB (HE), the country targets to attract 250,000 foreign students into the country's HLIs by 2025.

As of 2017, national statistics peg the number of international students in Malaysian higher education institution as 136,293, with 76% pursuing undergraduate courses and 24% in postgraduate studies. The number has been on the rise over the years.

But there is room for improvement. An annual report by Universitas 21, a global network of research universities that compares national higher education systems, has ranked Malaysia at the 35th spot out of 50 countries for 'connectivity', which encompasses international student enrolment.

Fortunately, Malaysia is in an advantageous position to be the international educational hub it aspires to be. Aside from being a renowned tropical holiday destination and cosmopolitan food haven, Malaysia has hundreds of homegrown and international higher education institutions opening its doors to foreign students. Many of these HLIs have obtained international accreditation and recognition for their academic programmes.

The cost of studying varies by field of study and university, but they are far lower than what one would pay for an education in Australia, the United States, or Singapore. According to a 2014 HSBC report, taking an undergraduate course at an international university branch in Malaysia would cost around US\$10,000 in fees for the entire course, compared with US\$24,000 per year in fees for international students to study in Australia.

Many of the Malaysian HLIs conduct their lessons in English, allowing for easy communication with lecturers and fellow students as long as one speaks the lingua franca. Moreover, the multicultural and friendly nation is relatively safe, with modern amenities like the mass rapid transit (MRT) and light rail transit (LRT) connecting the bustling metropolis of Kuala Lumpur

and its surrounding cities.

As Malaysian HLIs double down on internationalising their campuses, they further encourage student mobility to increase their global exposure. Students can join exchange programmes abroad to enrich their educational experience while inbound students from other countries exchange ideas and cultures with their new Malaysian classmates and discover that Malaysia is Asia's cultural melting pot.

Malaysian HLIs are not only keen to internationalise its student population, but also its staff pool. Not only do foreign academic talents enrich the global village environment that universities are trying to build, it may also yield higher quality research. Studies have suggested that research groups with diverse members – be it ethnic, gender, nationality and scientific discipline – publish a higher number of papers and receive more citations per paper than average.

Meanwhile, many HLIs are forging partnerships with international universities and entities to stay on par with global trends and developments. Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM), for example, has shared teaching and research, as well as facilitate staff and student exchanges, with universities from Australia, Germany, the UK and USA. Multimedia University (MMU) has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the E-Sports Distinct International Network Gamers (Esding) to prepare and develop e-sports champions and new talents.

Societal progress starts with well-balanced graduates

Technological advancements are also forcing HLIs to confront a bigger responsibility than just pushing for innovation and imparting knowledge. In recent years, the world is seeing great leaps in innovation, many coming from the labs and minds of HLIs around the world. But from these

great discoveries and inventions also emerge complex questions, especially those of ethics and morality.

For example, innovation in the digital sphere has been plagued by ethical dilemmas, as digital services have farmed users' private data, manipulated user psychology, and even have socially-harmful potential baked into its design. Universities and colleges are thus waking up to the need to educate future movers and shakers who are not only guided by smarts, but also the heart.

Educators are now emphasising "on the future of education using a totally different language, worldview and terminology", observed Dzulkifli Abdul Razak, rector of International Islamic University Malaysia.

"The current higher education philosophy came out of the first industrial revolution," says Dzulkifli. "Before that, the university was more concerned with ethics and moral questions. Employability and marketability of graduates were petty matters. But after the industrial revolution, the structure of the universities changed. It became a commercial interest to withhold knowledge.

So how do our graduates add value to society? Universities have to provide value-based education for the future and think beyond economic value. This knowledge has to be





Quick Facts Higher Education in Malaysia

11

Malaysia was ranked as the world's 11th most preferred study destination by UNESCO in 2018

71

There are 71 universities in Malaysia: 20 public universities, 41 private universities and 10 international branch campuses

200,000

Malaysia targets to attract 200,000 international students by 2020

Educational hub

Malaysia is becoming an increasingly active player in international education

(Data source: Education Malaysia Global Services, retrieved 2019.)

shared so that everybody becomes part of a developed community."

The cultivation of the 'holistic person' is especially a priority for Malaysian higher education. The MEB (HE) outlines its aim for 10 Shifts that will address key performance issues in the education system. The first of these Shifts: Holistic, Entrepreneurial and Balanced Graduates.

The government aims to cultivate graduates with the relevant disciplinary knowledge and skills

(ilmu), ethics and morality (akhlak), as well as the appropriate behaviours, mindsets, cultural, and civilisational literacy (beradab).

To achieve this, the Ministry laid out its intent to enhance the ecosystem for student development, including improving the student learning experience, creating more entrepreneurial opportunities for staff and students, as well as devising an integrated cumulative grade point average (CGPA) system that assesses



Credit: Nazri Rappal

"if Malaysia wants to progress and be recognised as a fully developed country, the people must be fully educated."

-Dr. Mahathir Mohamad,
Prime Minister of Malaysia

Studying abroad is essential in becoming a successful global citizen. In today's work places, great value is being placed on having real experiences beyond your country's borders. Education is a great way to truly understand a country's people, traditions and cultures. I would like to encourage all people who are considering their current path in education to come and study in Malaysia. We offer a well-balanced public and private education system that has successfully produced graduates that have excelled in their careers.

(Source: Education Malaysia Global Services)

not only knowledge and thinking skills, but also ethics and spirituality, leadership skills, national identity and language proficiency.

Some universities in Malaysia are already planting the seeds of ethical and socially-beneficial scholarship. For example, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) has an ambition to become the 'Garden of Knowledge and Thought' based on the concept of ihsan, which its vice chancellor, Prof. Dr Aini Idris, defines as "every act or undertaking that is good and executed sincerely, correctly, skilfully, efficiently and effectively, with the purpose of achieving perfection, superior quality and excellence, even when no one is watching."

This translates to research and innovation that improve lives. Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), for instance, has established a research centre in molecular diagnostics that is set up in low-resource setting, thus opening up the technology to the poorer segment of society.

In line with the push for responsible development, several other HLLs are also stepping up on environmental sustainability to meet the 17 Sustainable Developmental Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). One of them is Sunway University, which has launched a Master's programme in Sustainable Development Management that became an instant hit among postgraduate students.

To work with robots, we have to be more human than ever

The world is now well on its way into the fourth industrial revolution, otherwise known as Industry 4.0, defined as a new phase of using interconnectivity, automation, machine

learning, and real-time data to carry out tasks that once required human attention.

Just like the preceding industrial revolutions, the fourth industrial revolution will disrupt the way we produce goods and commodities.

We are seeing computers connecting and communicating with each other with little to no human involvement, completing tasks with enhanced precision and speed.

In 2017, a McKinsey report estimated that about half of all the activities people are paid to do in the world's workforce could potentially be automated by adapting currently demonstrated technologies. That amounts to almost US\$15 trillion in wages.

Another study by Cisco and Oxford Economics in 2018 found that new technology could displace close to 28 million jobs in ASEAN alone.

Accountants, for example, are ranked no. 1 in a 2015 study by PwC of which jobs are most at risk from automation in the next 20 years. Lawyers are not safe either – last year, an AI firm's contract automation algorithm beat 20 experienced attorneys in efficiency and accuracy. As for journalism, major publications like Forbes, Associated Press and The Washington Post have long used artificial intelligence to write news.

So, what of the universities responsible for producing these accountants, lawyers, journalists, and many other professional talents? In the age of digital and automated disruption, HLLs around the world find themselves in the awkward position of building human capital for a future that is reconsidering its need for humans.

For now, sanguinity prevails – professionals largely believe that automation will not replace them yet, but makes their jobs easier. This is

true. Human hours spent on menial tasks, such as rote processing of spreadsheet data for accountants, can now be freed up for higher complexity work.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) predicts that robots and algorithms will “vastly improve” the productivity of existing jobs, even create 133 million new ones.

While this gives hope, it does not make the job of a university any simpler. The hallowed halls of education must now produce graduates who can work seamlessly with machines and prepare them for future jobs that do not even exist today.

Malaysian HLI have sought to keep up with the impact of a tech-driven future by introducing new courses in data analytics, big data, artificial intelligence, digitised economy and technopreneurship. Massive open online courses (MOOC) to enable global enrolment is introduced, while linkages and knowledge transfer initiatives between academia and industry are solidified.

University of Malaya, which is the country's top research university, is also establishing the Centre for Research in Industry 4.0 (CRI4.0) to develop the nation's technological adoption and digital transformation. But is this enough?

Students and graduates in Malaysia are still not ready for Industry 4.0, according to a recent survey of 560 respondents by INTI International University & Colleges (INTI) and International Data Corporation (IDC), a global provider of market intelligence and advisory services on information technology.

More than half (63%) of the students and graduates responding were unable to articulate what Industry 4.0 entails. 30% of students also reported they are completely unprepared for an Industry-4.0-enabled workplace, which includes the technological skills needed to work alongside the innovative advancements taking place in today's workplace.

Even the MEB (HE) points out that employers find local graduates lacking in critical thinking and communication skills, as well as the language proficiency (especially in English) that are essential for success in the 21st century.

Critical thinking, interpersonal skills and creativity are among the human capabilities that are irreplaceable by robotics and automation, at least in the near future. In other words, these skills are necessary to ensure humans' relevance in a workplace increasingly disrupted by machines and technological advancements.

For Morshidi Sirat and Chang Da Wan from the National Higher Education Research Institute of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), the solution lies in strengthening the field of humanities in universities,

such as philosophy, history, theology and literature.

In the paper they wrote, the duo explained that humanities as a field of study in Malaysian HLIs has long been side-lined, when national policies have been favouring Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in education – which brings measurable economic values – since the late 1960s.

However, the relevance of humanities is resurfacing with the HLIs' interest to embrace Industry 4.0.

They cited the Ministry of Higher Education's “A Future Ready Curriculum Framework for Academic Programme Transformation”, which emphasises on Linguistic, mathematical and technological literacies for all job roles in the future; ensuring the breadth and depth of subject knowledge and the ability to make inter-disciplinary connections; developing global citizenship values, including empathy and character, and; non-cognitive employability skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, project management and creativity.

“Within this framework, it is suggested that even within [STEM] specific fields, employability depends in part on elements of strong creative and critical thinking and non-cognitive skills. Coincidentally, these elements are the core components of humanities and the main expected outcomes of any humanities education curriculum,” Morshidi and Chang wrote.

They argued for a repositioning of humanities education to be seen as just as important as STEM education to provide meaning and coherence to the evolving human society. Furthermore, the researchers called for more synergy between humanities studies and other disciplines, from social sciences to STEM, to develop multi-disciplinary understanding.

As the higher education landscape changes along with societal and technological progress, Malaysian universities are well-positioned alongside many HLIs in the region to embrace the challenges and opportunities of the 21st Century. With its multicultural society and modern infrastructure, the country has strategies in place to provide future-ready education. That is why many students – local and international – are choosing Malaysia as their education haven.

ASEAN Business Leaders

In order to provide insights about the development of higher education from different perspectives, Shaping Asia Media has conducted multiple interviews with the Vice Chancellors of Universities in Malaysia. This gives a platform for the main actors to present their key plans that can further strengthen their position globally and bring value to a global society.



Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)

UTAR fuses the best of East and West to offer affordable academic programmes, rigorously developed with industry partners and international universities

Two bronze sculptures – of Confucious and Einstein – stand in the Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) main campus in Kampar, Perak, encapsulating the institution's focus on bridging the East and the West. UTAR embraces both the cultural diversities, wisdom, and philosophies of the East and complements them with the Western fast-paced developments in science and technology.

The East-West blend is evident in the 110 academic programmes that UTAR offers, ranging from foundation studies to postgraduate level. Aside from courses on Traditional Chinese Medicine and Chinese Studies, UTAR develops talents in the fields of Accounting, Business and Economics, Actuarial Science, Mathematics and Process Management, Agriculture and Food Science, Arts, Social Sciences and Education, Creative Industries and Design, Engineering and Built Environment, Information and Communication Technology, Life and Physical Sciences, and Medicine and Health Sciences.

Established in 2002, the not-for-profit private university emphasises on affordable education for all. From its first intake of 411 students, UTAR's enrolment has increased to 25,000 students today. The university has also shepherded over 60,000 graduates into the workforce with more than 95% employability rate within 6 months of graduation. Over the years, the university has designed high quality programmes, employed proficient staff, diversified its partnerships and student body, implemented effective teaching-learning pedagogy, produced research outcomes and publications with industrial collaborations, and expanded its campus facilities.

In 2019, UTAR retained its 501-600 ranking for the second year in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2019. It was also placed 117th in the THE Emerging Economies University Rankings 2019 and ranked 111-120 in the THE Asia Pacific University Rankings 2019. The university is not resting its laurels. UTAR continues to refine its curriculum development and stay abreast with industry updates through its collaboration with 80 external examiners, 120 industry advisors, and 20 professional bodies.

With the advent of the 4th Industrial Revolution, UTAR partners multinational giants, including INTEL, Microsoft, Google, SAS and SAP, Huawei, and Alibaba, to expand its use of technology in teaching and learning, as well as update its learning curriculum with industry realities.

UTAR students are encouraged to attain a global experience. In 2018, about 900 inbound students and 900 outbound students were involved in study tours and student exchanges with partner universities in China, Korea, Japan, Germany, Thailand, Singapore and other countries. Whether students are headed for the East or the West, UTAR's vision is to prepare them in their career journey with rigorously-audited education programmes and a finger on the industry pulse.



“We aim to equip our students with quality education by complementing their academic studies with important social and soft skills training, so that they become responsible citizens in society.”

-Prof. Ir. Dr. Ewe Hong Tat,
Vice President of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)



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UPM expanded from its celebrated specialisation in agriculture to offer various fields of study and research in science, information technology and humanities

A multidisciplinary university with 87 years of history, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) has a firm root in agricultural research and development – it was first established as the School of Agriculture in 1931.

In 1997, however, its name was changed to Universiti Putra Malaysia by the then Prime Minister, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohammad. The name-change ushered a new era for the university as a centre of higher education capable of providing various fields of study, especially in science and information technology, which facilitate national development in the new millennium.

Now, UPM offers more than 289 fields of study in its effort to transform Malaysia into a higher education hub of excellence at the regional and international level. While agriculture remains its top specialisation, other niche areas of UPM include forestry,

animal science, pure science, engineering science, technology, humanities, social sciences, and education.

Deeply committed to the discovery and distribution of knowledge, UPM is one of the five designated public research universities in Malaysia. Its successive research transformations have helped shape its academic and innovation prowess. Ranging from funding to training to providing the best of facilities, all UPM's research services are geared towards empowering its researchers to develop their expertise and skills, so that they would in return contribute to the creation of new and enhanced knowledge for global progress.

UPM has a sterling reputation in education and research. QS ranked it as the best young university in Malaysia and the 12th best worldwide. In the QS World University Rankings, UPM also placed 159th in the world.

One of the largest universities in Malaysia, UPM is a key player in contributing to the growth of learned and skilled human capital in the nation. It presently has more than 25,000 students enrolled in its undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

The 3,000-hectare campus is a growing global village. About 23% of the enrolment are international

Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)



www.upm.edu.my

students, with 46% of them pursuing postgraduate studies in the university. Local students are encouraged to obtain international exposure by studying at least one semester abroad. About 5% of the academic staff hail from overseas. The Alumni Centre at the university also build life-long partnerships with more than 48,000 contactable alumni based in Malaysia and abroad.

On top of that, the university has established numerous linkages and collaboration with outstanding

institutions and agencies around the globe, such as in the USA, Latin America, Japan, Korea, the Middle East, and so on.

UPM aims to inspire its academic community towards teaching and research excellence, and ultimately towards the material and spiritual betterment of society. Upholding its motto 'with knowledge we serve', UPM possesses all the necessary qualities and resources to be on par with renowned local and international institutions of higher learning.

UPM's glorious legacy in agricultural education and research has made crucial contribution to solve the national and global food security issues

The university's agricultural focus works to improve education and research in this area, produce quality human capital, enrich knowledge, explore various innovations and create an excellent life. This is achieved through valuable collaborations with the government, their agencies, as well as related bodies that extend worldwide, including with the United Nations, the World Health Organisation, and international private corporations.

Ten out of 16 faculties and seven out of ten institutes in UPM are related to agriculture. UPM emerged as the best university for agricultural sciences in Malaysia and Southeast Asia, and 9th in Asia, according to the U.S. News and World Report rankings. UPM's Agricultural and Forestry subjects are also recognised within the world's best 100 for six years consecutively in the QS World University Rankings.



Q&A

Prof. Datin Paduka Dato' Dr. Aini Ideris
Vice Chancellor of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)

Q: Prof. Aini, what is your vision as Vice Chancellor in building UPM's capabilities and excellence?

A: I emphasise that all university leaders, staff, and students need to really understand the concept of 'IHSAN', which encompasses every act or undertaking that is good and executed sincerely, correctly, skilfully, efficiently and effectively, with the purpose of achieving perfection, superior quality and excellence, even when no one is watching. Today, 'IHSAN' is the pillar of excellence in UPM. This allows UPM to continue to be the 'Garden of Knowledge and Thought' that builds goodwill. The university will produce not only workforce-ready graduates, but also those with superior personal qualities who are able to compete globally.

Q: How do you steer the university towards creating valuable impact to the society?

A: I believe that universities play a pivotal role in shaping the moral contours of students and society towards sustainability. At UPM, we shoulder the role as sustainability agents through our graduates, research and commercialisation, community and industry extension works and services, our niche in agriculture, and our governance. UPM is currently ranked 32nd best in the world (3rd in Asia and 2nd in Southeast Asia) in the rating of UI-GreenMetric World University Ranking, based on sustainability of green campus and environmental management.

Q: What is the importance of industry linkages to UPM?

A: Research at UPM has successfully generated a substantial amount of commercialisation income, filing of intellectual properties, and establishment of start-up companies. This would not be possible without strong linkages with the industry. We also have 'industry on campus'. For example, the popular dairy brand Farm Fresh Malaysia has established its dairy farm on our campus, thus providing opportunities for real commercial training and research opportunities for students and staff.



Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)



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www.usm.my

As a transdisciplinary research university, USM seeks to empower future talents and enable the bottom billions to transform their socio-economic well-being

Overlooking the sea, it is apt that Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) is the first university in Malaysia to adopt the 'Blue Ocean Strategy' – which means pushing for differentiation and low cost to open up new market opportunities and demands. The 50-year-old institution concentrates its research and innovation on improving the socio-economic well-being of the less fortunate.

A sustainable world, humanity and the future of the humankind have always been the focus of the university. Since its inception in 1969, USM has continuously graduated students to support the needs of the nation and functioned as an impetus for progress and nation-building.

Based on such commitments, USM has been chosen by the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education (MOE) to implement the Accelerated Programme for Excellence (APEX), a fast-track programme that helps

tertiary institutions achieve world-class status. USM is the only university in Malaysia to be awarded the APEX status.

Known as the 'University in a Garden', USM's scenic main campus on the island of Penang is a global village. Its undergraduate and postgraduate courses record an enrolment of more than 31,500 multicultural students, of which 8% are international students. Currently, the university has six local campuses and one abroad in India – all served by a total of 10,000 staff members.

USM offers courses ranging from Natural Sciences, Applied Sciences, Medical and Health Sciences, Pharmaceutical Sciences to Building Science and Technology, Social Sciences, Humanities, and Education. To ensure that the lecturers and curriculum are in tune with industry realities, USM staff have established smart partnerships with renowned

corporations, including Shell, Honda, and Motorola, under the Academic Staff Attachment (ASA) programme.

Other than that, selected schools in USM have also set up an Industry Advisory Panel, comprising academic staff and senior executives from the private sector, to better dovetail the curriculum and training matters with industry requirements.

The celebrated institution has also recently been named the Most Entrepreneurial University of the Year 2018 by the MOE.

In its pursuit of academic and research calibre, USM puts equal priority on happiness. The USM Happiness Index continues to provide the campus community with the 'feel good' factor at this globally preferred university, where the sciences and the arts are integrated to create balanced and happy individuals.

As an APEX university, one of the missions of USM is to bridge the

gap between the rich and the poor, thus equalising opportunities for the country's 'bottom billions'. The university has initiated and funded various community-based projects over a decade, leading to its recognition by UNESCO as the preferred university for community engagement under the Asia-Pacific Community Engagement Network (APUCEN).

By putting social interests first, USM is on the right path to fulfill its vision of "Transforming Higher Education for a Sustainable Tomorrow".

Since 2007, USM has been a Research Intensive University recognised by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia

USM has 17 dedicated research centres for a wide range of specialisations, including archaeology, medicine and dentistry, molecular medicine, science and technology, Islamic development and management studies, and policy research and international studies. It also provides consultancy, testing, and advisory services to the industry under the ambit of USAINS Holdings Sdn Bhd, the University's commercial arm.

Besides contributing to the national research effort and advancement of knowledge, USM has also taken steps to identify and periodically assess areas of research which are deserving of special support in order to compete more effectively for external funds.

USM's commitment to become a world class sustainability-led research university has led it to continuously develop marketable technologies for the low-income group – an area in which the university now owns 133 patents.



Q&A

Prof. Datuk Dr. Asma Ismail

Vice Chancellor of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)

Q: USM is the only APEX (Accelerated Programme for Excellence) University in Malaysia. What sets the university apart?

A: Our APEX mission is to achieve excellence with soul. Hence, the high technology that we are using and developing in USM has to deliver high impact and value to the society (high touch). For example, molecular diagnostics is now too costly for the poor. So, at USM, we have established a research Institute in molecular diagnostics that is set up to produce innovations for low-resource settings. This is our blue ocean strategy – we differentiate by exploring where

research traditionally would not go, and by offering services to the low-income segment of our society.

Q: In your opinion, what are the strengths that Malaysian universities can leverage on?

A: Compared to the West, we are constrained in resources. We have to tailor our research and innovation to the availability of data and research samples, needed for low-resource settings. For example, if we focus our research on health issues among the local poor communities, the innovations developed will be relevant to other developing countries too. At least 80% of the world's population lives in poverty, so it makes sense to concentrate our research to tackle the problems and "diseases of the poor".

Q: How do international students fit into USM's aspirations as a world-class research university?

A: At USM, we emphasise on inter-cultural competency. To achieve this, we have created a global village concept. By increasing understanding amidst diversity, students of various cultures can work together to move relevant technologies and research innovations as sustainable solutions across cultures.



USIM adopts a global perspective in its seamless integration of science, technology and religion to produce holistic graduates who would take Islamic higher education and research to new heights

A public university with 19 years of history, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) aims to spearhead knowledge and science that is integrated with Islamic values, and to become the global reference centre for Islamic Science.

The education paradigm at USIM is based on one basic principle: integrating religious sciences with social and physical sciences will not only provide a more comprehensive understanding of current global challenges, but also offer a fresh alternative in approaching and solving them.

USIM's distinctive model for Islamic higher education is rooted in its balanced emphasis between physical and spiritual aspects, not only in the academic programmes, but also widely practised throughout the university at the management and administration levels.

It is against this backdrop of balance and integration that USIM unites revelational sciences (Naqli knowledge) and the rational sciences (Aqli knowledge). For example, USIM is the only university offering degree programmes for Quranic Studies with Multimedia and Sunnah Studies with

Information Management.

Muslim scholars have historically made great strides in achieving scientific and technological feats. USIM students are therefore molded in the inquisitive and diligent spirit of their scholarly predecessors while propelling Islamic science towards the future.

To produce scientific professionals who uphold religious values, USIM offers a range of quality academic programmes in its nine faculties, which are the Faculty of Quran and Sunnah studies, Leadership and Management, Syariah and Law, Economics and Muamalat and Science and Technology, Medicine and Health Sciences, Languages Studies, Dentistry and Engineering and Built Environment.

The university is committed towards academic and research excellence in three tracks, which are Islamic Studies, Quran and Sunnah, followed by Islamic Science, Technology and Engineering and finally the Islamic Arts, Social Science and Humanities.

These tracks are supported by three centres of excellence, namely the World Fatwa Management and

Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM)



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Research institute, the Islamic Science Institute and the Institute of Halal Research and Management – growing industries that are seeing a surge in demand for experts.

To encourage its students to broaden their horizons with global exposure, USIM also initiated a Global Islamic Student Outreach (GISO) programme. Participants in the student mobility programme enjoy enriching learning experiences and robust exchange of ideas with students and lecturers from universities in Thailand,

Australia, Singapore, Indonesia and so on. In turn, the university also welcomes students from around 30 countries – most of them involved in PhD research with USIM.

USIM is committed to embrace global perspectives in its teaching, learning, research and administration. This commitment is embedded within the campus community and, together with a unique integration of Naqli and Aqli knowledge, has become the foundation for the university's education ethos.



Q&A

Prof. Dato' Dr. Musa Ahmad
Vice Chancellor of Islamic Science
University of Malaysia (USIM)

Q: What is the role of religious values in USIM and how does it contribute to students' development?

A: I studied Chemistry in Manchester, UK. In my opinion, science can reinforce values that are mentioned in the Quran so that the knowledge becomes more meaningful. While we upgrade the quality of education and improve our academic programs, we also have to focus on the human ethical values and place equal emphasis on both. We provide a safe and motivating environment at USIM for any student who wishes to enroll here and study the sciences, but at the same time, we share knowledge on personal growth and holistic development. Our focus is on education, which is relevant not only to Muslims, but to everyone.

Q: How does the Islamic education offered by USIM position itself internationally?

A: Globalisation is making the world smaller every day, and we have to be global citizens. At USIM, our focus is on the sciences and academic development, so we do not limit ourselves to partners of Islamic countries or Islamic institutes. We form strategic collaboration with industry partners and universities from all over the world. We also welcome local and international visits to USIM, and vice versa, as a way to share our unique integration of Naqli and Aqli knowledge.

Q: How does USIM connect with the industry?

A: We pride ourselves on our hands-on entrepreneurship programme. Under this programme, we collaborate with about 200 industries. Students will participate in entrepreneurial activities by coming up with their own products or services, and they will be coached by our industry partners.

USIM upholds the concept of 'Alamiyyah' as part of the university's identity, which shows its commitment to embrace internationalisation and integrate global perspectives into its education and research endeavours

The university does not limit its collaboration to Islamic institutions. Instead, it thrives on knowledge-sharing at an international level, driven by a passion in promoting mutual understanding, as well as fostering peace, harmony and development in the globalised world.

As such, USIM has developed strategic partnerships with various local and international entities in critical areas involving research, teaching and learning. This includes its collaborations with universities from around the world to offer credit transfer programmes. For example, three of its undergraduate programmes are offered in Istanbul and Bangladesh, while another programme with a Swedish university is in the pipeline.

Multimedia University (MMU)



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MMU pioneers education that focuses on cutting-edge technology, producing professional knowledge workers with an entrepreneurial, research-centric and innovative mindset

With a vision to transform society through innovation, Multimedia University (MMU) rides the changing waves of digital technology with finesse – the university has been awarded the Premier Digital Tech University status by the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education in 2017. This prestigious award recognises MMU's track record in offering top notch technology courses over the past 20 years.

The first MMU campus in Melaka was established in line with the Malaysian government's aspirations to develop the knowledge economy of the country. To address the great need of the nation, MMU equips students with world-class education that would enable them to effectively compete with knowledge workers from other parts of the world, even those from developed countries. The

university is now a trailblazer for the ICT and Creative Multimedia sectors, offering programmes aligned with industry demands.

MMU's sterling reputation as a trendsetter in education drove its growth. Besides its first campus in Melaka, it has added two new campuses in Cyberjaya and Johor to house its 18,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students – more than 1,500 of them are international students from over 70 countries.

Other than providing rigorously-accredited programmes, MMU prides itself for its state-of-the-art labs established through collaboration with market leaders, such as ZTE, Microsoft, Huawei, Intel and many more.

Industry linkages powers MMU's focus on cutting-edge technology. Its lecturers and staff have extensive professional experience and contacts in the tech sector. MMU has even set up a company within its campus – MMU Cnergy. Functioning as a commercial arm of the university, MMU Cnergy offers services like human capital development and technical consultancy solutions that leverages on the university's core strengths, such as big data, engineering, creative multimedia, information security, and so on.

With a mission to embrace



intellectual curiosity to solve real-world problems, MMU has set up three centres to promote research, innovation and an entrepreneurial culture amongst MMU students and staff. These are the Research Management Centre (RMC), Centre of Innovation & Collaboration (CIC), and the Entrepreneur Development Centre (EDC).

In 2017, Frost and Sullivan Asia Pacific names MMU as the Most Preferred Source for IT Graduates by Malaysian Firms. Employability

of graduates within six months of graduation was recorded at more than 90%. MMU also emerged as the Most Entrepreneurial Private University and Top 8 Most Entrepreneurial University in Malaysia during the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) Entrepreneurial Award 2017.

In this era of globalisation, MMU is steadfast in being the preferred university that pioneers research and delivers outstanding teaching while expanding intellectual and creative horizons.

An industry-trendsetter university with industry-ready programmes and entrepreneurial value, MMU adheres to the strictest requirement for academic excellence. The university empowers students with the fundamentals of their fields of study while honing their entrepreneurial skills and expertise

To support the Malaysian government's target of transforming the country into an "Entrepreneurial Nation", MMU as a trendsetter university has established the Entrepreneurship Development Centre (EDC). Among the EDC's efforts is to enhance appreciation of entrepreneurship within MMU through awareness and educational programmes. The centre also work on entrepreneur development programmes, work space, support services, and stage fundings for startups. To lend new ventures a leg up, the EDC forges partnerships with players within the broader entrepreneurship network in Malaysia. The MMU Startup Scheme and Spin-Off Scheme, open to both students and staff, are also introduced, providing the much-needed financial support for the pre-seed and seed stages of startups or spin-offs.



Q&A

Prof. Datuk Ts. Dr. Ahmad Rafi Mohamed Eshaq

President/CEO of Multimedia University (MMU)

Q: MMU is known as a trendsetter in education, especially in the fields of Creative Multimedia and ICT. Can you give us an example?

A: I joined MMU around 1998. One of my earliest tasks was to introduce games and animation courses at MMU. At that time, the gaming industry was at infancy stage in Malaysia, so we had difficulties convincing people that there was a future in this. Now, the gaming industry is booming worldwide. This shows that MMU truly pioneers technology-driven programmes. As an industry-trendsetter university, MMU regards this as a natural process of taking digitalisation our university to a greater height which in line with the digital era. To stay relevant, we at MMU undertake close collaborations with the various industries, continuously seeking their respective input.

Q: Technology courses are all the rage now. How does MMU set its education apart?

A: Our priority is to humanise technology. All our research and innovations are required to safeguard human values in its application, so that we create a better society for everyone. Besides that, we push students to think as entrepreneurs. MMU prides itself for creating an environment that allows students, teachers, alumni and industry specialists to work together. We encourage teams that are from different faculties to create and pitch business proposals. They will receive guidance or input from our alumni or industry specialists, and their business innovations may even get incubated by the university.

Q: What are some future plans of MMU that you are most excited about?

A: I'm thrilled by our recent approach in collaborating with one of the e-sports company to develop e-sports talents. They will compete at the international arena for game development, content creation, e-sports management, virtual games, facilities and entrepreneurship. So, as they say, game on!



Sunway University makes good on its 'A Class Above' promise to deliver education driven by research, technology and international collaboration

If Sunway University is a growing alpha in the Malaysian higher education landscape, then research is its lifeblood. The university's heavy investment in research-led teaching, optimised with state-of-the-art lab facilities and classrooms, is a key factor for its ranking among the top 2% of universities in Asia.

Sunway University's international research capabilities are developed through its 12 research centres and groups, on top of two collaborations with universities from the UK and China. Among the specialisations that the research centres excel in include materials science, energy technology, biomedical physics, future cities, and so on. Its researchers are among the most highly-cited globally, engaging actively in cross-border collaborations in pursuit of solutions for some of the world's most pressing problems.

On top of research, Sunway University is also tech-driven. It provides cutting-edge information technology (IT) courses while embedding key technology-related skills across the institution, ensuring that the university's students and researchers in multiple disciplines can leverage powerful innovations to expand their capabilities. For example, researchers in its School of Arts are using virtual and augmented reality in digital preservation projects to record historical artefacts and cultural knowledge. Meanwhile, Sunway University is

pushing for programmes in the forefront of technological developments, such as data analytics and artificial intelligence.

Its efforts to produce digital-ready graduates came to fruition when it was one of only eleven universities in Malaysia to be awarded the Premier Digital Technology University status by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia and Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC).

This year, the university also achieved the top QS rating score of five stars for the categories of teaching, facilities, employability, social responsibility and inclusiveness.

As part of its mission to develop globally-competent graduates, Sunway University lends international qualifications to its programmes through close partnerships with Lancaster University and Le Cordon Bleu International. The University has also fostered ties with Harvard University and University of California, Berkeley in the United States, and University of Oxford and University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom in multiple bilateral exchanges of expertise and research.

Supported by the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation, Sunway University has invested heavily in state-of-the-art infrastructure and continues to expand its teaching, learning, and research spaces. Located in the heart of Sunway City, on the edge of Kuala Lumpur, its campus is adjacent of some of the best public, medical and social amenities in Malaysia. With a rapidly growing student body, and increasing numbers of international students and staff, the campus has become a thriving collaborative multi-cultural environment that enhances pursuit of knowledge, academic excellence and lifelong learning.

Sustainability is the very foundation of Sunway University – a campus located in the modern metropolis of Sunway City, which was built on reclaimed disused tin mining land. Its commitment to support the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) saw the opening of its Jeffrey Sachs Center for Sustainable Development in Asia

The centre was established in close collaboration with Professor Jeffrey Sachs of Columbia University, who is also one of the world's leading authorities on the SDGs, to lead actionable improvements for the environment through

Sunway University



university.sunway.edu.my



Q&A

Professor Graeme Wilkinson
Vice Chancellor of Sunway University

Q: Prof Wilkinson, what do you see as the main educational challenge facing Sunway University?

A: The principal challenge that we face now is how best to prepare graduates for life in a fast-changing uncertain world. They need the deep subject knowledge to enable them to contribute effectively in their preferred careers. But also, we have to prepare them to have the flexibility and resilience to change career, handle failure, and to promote themselves in a crowded highly competitive world.

Q: What will the campus of the future look like? Can we expect most students to be learning online in future and how will that affect your university?

A: Most of our courses now feature blended learning with online study supplementing face-to-face classes. The balance between different forms of teaching and learning is shifting, but fundamentally much of learning today involves social interaction as it has throughout history.

At Sunway, we provide plenty of space for social learning with the heart of our campus often resembling a lively Roman forum.

Q: How can a young university such as Sunway establish itself as a strong contributor in research?

A: Research is important to all universities as it is a means to keep teaching at the forefront and helps to build institutional reputation. At Sunway we have invested significantly in research teams and international research partnerships in areas such as new materials, smart cities, the internet of things and biomedicine. International and interdisciplinary collaboration is now key to high quality impact-making research.

teaching, research, policy and problem-solving practices. In 2018, it launched a dedicated programme developed around the 17 SDGs – the Masters in Sustainable Development Management. It is now the university's most popular postgraduate programme. To celebrate the third anniversary of the UN SDGs being launched, Sunway University also organised Join Hands and Make the Pledge – a community event that brought together 8,165 people which represented the distance in nautical miles from Sunway University to United Nations in New York. The event was attended by leading corporate figures, ambassadors, ministers and celebrities, to support the SDGs in Asia.

Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN)



The Energy University

www.uniten.edu.my



Q&A

**Dato' Prof. Ir. Dr. Kamal
Nasharuddin Mustapha**
*Vice Chancellor of Universiti
Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN)*

Q: UNITEN sees the enrolment of over 30,000 local and international students from more than 46 countries. What is the key to the university's success?

A: UNITEN is The Energy University, and energy is what sets our programmes, and our people, apart. Our staff are highly enthusiastic and passionate to provide quality education, and this drives students to choose our university because they can clearly see that their future is in good hands.

Q: What is the unique experience that UNITEN offers students?

A: We have a track record in producing highly marketable and employable graduates. The chief factor is, of course, our direct link with the private sector, and our close affiliation with Malaysia's utility giant, Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB). There are ample opportunities for students to get an early foot into the industry, gaining entrepreneurial exposure and practical training, which we emphasise just as heavily as curriculum excellence.

Q: What is the role that UNITEN plays in advancing the energy sector?

A: Our current focus is to move from fossil fuels to renewable and sustainable energy sources. In tropical Malaysia, we have many opportunities to diversify into solar and hydro power. We also have potential for biomass. These are the strengths that we can leverage on when researching and developing an ecosystem that is offering the full spectrum of energy resources.

UNITEN commits to its goal of becoming a globally competitive, energy-focused university by providing a holistic education experience driven by research and innovation

Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN) prides itself as The Energy University. Wholly-owned by Southeast Asia's largest publicly-listed electric utility company Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB), UNITEN specialises in energy related areas. Its 22 years of academic excellence and innovation vigour is powered by a vision to grow into a leading global energy university that shapes a sustainable future.

UNITEN is known for its academic fortes in all of its academic programs. The main campus in Putrajaya, the administrative centre of the Federal Government of Malaysia, offers courses in Engineering, Computer Science, Information Technology, Business Economic and Energy Economics. The second campus in Pahang offers programmes in Accountancy, Finance, Marketing, Human Resource and Business courses.

More than 30,000 local and international students from 46 countries have flocked to UNITEN for the world-class education, research and learning facilities it offers. The

university records an impressive employability rate at 94% within 6 months of graduation – many UNITEN students are even guaranteed a job before their graduation.

The private institution with a Government Link University (GLU) status was also ranked as the 7th best university in Malaysia and the 17th best university in Southeast Asia by the Times Higher Education (THE) recently.

UNITEN's curricula are designed with input from the industrial and commercial sectors, as well as from local and foreign universities. Quality teaching are enhanced with hands-on training – students enjoy vast opportunities to undergo practical training under the TNB Group of companies, for example.

With its global aspirations, UNITEN has forged links with international partners, including with top academic and research minds from the UK, Denmark, US, Japan and more. As a full member of the Washington Accord for engineering, UNITEN also cements its reputation of offering educational excellence and research standards on par with those of developed countries.

In the UNITEN campus, students and staff feel at home, whether it is for studies, work or play. There are seven comfortable apartment buildings in the campus for convenient accommodation, comprehensive healthcare facilities, a library with a 24-hour study area, on-campus Wi-Fi and around-the-clock security measures. Sports lovers may also leap with excitement at the sight of its mini stadium, Olympic-sized swimming pool, tennis court, football field, gymnasium, and a Sports Arena featuring 11 indoor courts for futsal, netball, sepak takraw, basketball and volleyball.

As The Energy University, UNITEN does not only help power the development of the energy sector, but also produce energetic graduates who are equipped with the knowledge and practical experience necessary to lead electrifying change in human society.

Technology is the beating heart of this energy university

To prepare students for Industry 4.0, as well as improve their learning experience and progress, innovative remote-learning technologies are blended with the valuable tradition of robust classroom discussions and teaching.

The university also invents solutions for real-world applications, such as developing a monitoring system using satellite image and virtual reality (VR) to ease maintenance of the 30,000 energy transmission towers throughout Malaysia, creating security solutions for control systems and getting involve in empowering vulnerable community around hydroelectric facilities to be resilient towards untoward dam related disaster.

UNITEN's rich history in innovation is underpinned by its collaborative environment among students and staff of different disciplines and strengths. For example, as early as 2003, the university has wowed the international competition circuit by building, testing and racing a solar car – the Solar Ranger. The joint achievement of students and lecturers from various engineering disciplines is a testament to the university's commitment to apply academic knowledge into real-world situations through creativity and teamwork.



UNIRAZAK offers dual-certificate programmes with international accreditation in partnership with over 70 higher learning institutions from all over the world

One of the first private universities in Malaysia, Universiti Tun Abdul Razak (UNIRAZAK) prides itself on its dual academic programmes developed with globally-renowned professional bodies and international universities.

In other words, a UNIRAZAK graduate obtains both a degree and accreditation by professional bodies relevant to their chosen fields, be it accounting, management, taxation, Islamic banking, or finance.

To date, UNIRAZAK's programme partners include CPA Australia, Chartered Management Institute of United Kingdom (CMI), Malaysian Association of Tax Accountants (MATA), Chartered Tax Institute of Malaysia (CTIM), Islamic Banking and Finance Institute Malaysia (IBFIM), Malaysian Institute of Insurance (MII), and so on.

As a member of the International Business School Alliance (IBSA), UNIRAZAK also collaborates with seven international higher learning institutions to offer twinning programmes. This opens up the opportunity for students to pursue their first semesters of studies at the Malaysian campus, and the following semesters in any of the global partner institutions they prefer, including obtaining dual-certifications at the end.

Most recently, UNIRAZAK inked a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with Pearson, which is one of UK's largest awarding body offering academic and vocational qualifications that are globally recognised and benchmarked. The MoA aims to provide pathways for international diploma students of Accounting; and Accounting and Finance, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) to pursue a bachelor's degree at UNIRAZAK. Upon graduation, they will receive professional accreditation by CPA Australia in addition to a Bachelor of Accounting (Hons) degree. Keenly exporting its knowledge and expertise in Islamic

banking and financial services to emerging markets, UNIRAZAK's contribution has gained due recognition. The university was awarded with the 'Export Outstanding Achievement Award 2015' by the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), an agency under the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI).

Its status as a premier university for education and research was also affirmed with the achievement of four-star rating from the Malaysia Research Assessment (MyRA) for the year 2014 to 2015. The MyRA star ranking assesses the research, development and commercialization (R&D&C) performance of higher learning institutions in Malaysia.

Located in Malaysia's lively capital city of Kuala Lumpur, UNIRAZAK is a creative playground with its striking street-art wall. Its spirit of flexibility and innovation spurred the adoption of its latest UROX online learning platform, which allows students to take academic programmes or courses anywhere, anytime. UROX enables everybody in the community to continue their studies regardless of commitment on time or resources.

The 22-year-old university is still evolving, but its goals remain the same – to produce model citizens who meet the market demands of a globally competitive knowledge-based society.

Established in 1997, UNIRAZAK is known for its niched specialisation in finance, business and entrepreneurship

Through its seven faculties, UNIRAZAK offers programmes ranging from the diploma level to PhD. To nurture industry-relevant talents with deep expertise, the university has designed unique courses that ride on its affiliation with more than 70 higher learning institutions from all over the world.

One distinctive example is the Bachelor of Business

Management (Entrepreneurship) course. The programme is offered in partnership with Babson College, which has been ranked as the No. 1 undergraduate school for entrepreneurship in the US for 22 years consecutively.

UNIRAZAK's Bachelor of Taxation, in partnership with the Chartered Tax Institute of Malaysia, is also one-of-a-kind. It trains students to specialise in taxation – a key fund for nation-building, but also an area grappling with a lack of experts. The university's postgraduate global Islamic finance programme also offers dual-certification in collaboration with five European partners.

Universiti Tun Abdul Razak



www.unirazak.edu.my



Q&A

Prof. Datin Paduka Dr. Samsinar Md. Sidin
Vice Chancellor of Universiti Tun Abdul Razak

Q: How is UNIRAZAK positioning itself and preparing students for a rapidly changing global environment?

A: Our approach to education is quite simple – we do not mass produce clones. UNIRAZAK aims to empower the next generation to have a personal point of view and a strong voice. In other words, the university is focused on shaping confident and ambitious graduates, and we are here to help them gain the skills and know-how to achieve their career goals.

Q: Technology is revolutionising higher education. Is UNIRAZAK evolving with the waves of digital disruption in learning and teaching methods?

A: Definitely. We believe that learning, including the content and interaction, should be tailored to an individual's speed, interests and location. Hence, we want to shake up the education industry to allow students to learn whatever they want, whenever they want.

This is where our new UROX online learning platform comes in, enabling students to take programmes and courses that are in a traditional university, but without the traditional restrictions of place and time for the classes. They can study anywhere, anytime on the platform.

Q: How would you describe the value and contribution that this university offers to nation-building in Malaysia?

A: We are trying to bridge different disciplines, adding breadth as well as depth to our expertise. Our research expertise is continuously fed back into the faculties at every level, from Undergraduate to PhD.

As the Vice Chancellor for UNIRAZAK, my aim is also to establish a community where people feel secure enough to take creative risks without fear of failure – the secret sauce of an advancing nation.

Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur (IUKL)

The first and only infrastructure university in Malaysia, IUKL is dedicated to engineer the future of tomorrow's leaders



Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur (IUKL) is one of its kind in Malaysia. Established in 1997, the university started as a private college called IKRAM to meet the industry demands for engineering graduates amidst the infrastructure boom in Malaysia. Today, IUKL is among the country's top ranking universities and the only one in Malaysia focusing on infrastructure. The university upholds the belief that 'infrastructure' is not only restricted to buildings, construction and technologies, but also includes soft 'infrastructure' such as communication, language skills, commerce and information technology. IUKL seeks to integrate both in its wide-ranging courses in the fields of Engineering, Business, Communication, Language Studies, Architecture, Biotechnology, Information Technology and many more.

As a subsidiary of Protasco Berhad, a company listed on the Main Board of Bursa Malaysia, IUKL is uniquely advantaged to form close industry linkages with the private sector. The up-to-date academic facility is staffed by highly qualified lecturers, among whom are industry practitioners. An industry panel at IUKL also provides professional input, ensuring that the university's academic programmes stays on track with industry needs.



"As the subsidiary of the leading infrastructure company Protasco, we are one step ahead in creating linkages with the private sector to produce employable, high quality and industry-ready graduates."

-Prof. Dr. Ideris Zakaria,
Vice Chancellor of Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur (IUKL)

explores their interests together through more than 50 clubs and societies at IUKL. Participation in these clubs and societies, as well as in the year-round activities organised by the Student Affairs Division, is not only enriching, but also develops leadership skills and character.

Guided by the motto "For Knowledge, For Humanity", IUKL aspires to produce technopreneurs and skilled manpower with outstanding communication, technological and managerial skills for building the future of the nation, and for the world.



iukl.edu.my



Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)

Where scholars make a difference

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), the National University of Malaysia, has a diverse community and a global network of academic scholars working in partnership with universities, government and communities worldwide. Our local and global connections provide the platforms for our researchers to conduct groundbreaking and influential research works and innovations, bringing valuable impact to the general public and providing solutions to the global issues we face today.

As one of the established research universities in Malaysia, UKM is committed to carry out world-changing research works and contribute cutting-edge inventions that improve the lives of communities globally. With 2,146 research academics, UKM is opening its door to partners to collaborate in our core areas such as molecular biology, tissue engineering, stem cells, chemical and process engineering, environment, climate and energy, data science and cyber systems, law and human rights, language and culture, halal studies certification, social anthropology and education 4.0.

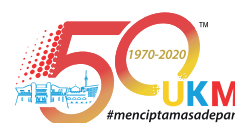
UKM provides an outstanding education environment to attract, excite and recognise high-quality scholars from diverse backgrounds while equipping them for success in a competitive global market. Thus, UKM's vast campus grounds of more than 1,000 hectares are filled with diverse academic and cultural activities. Internationalisation has become one of the hallmarks of the university in which global engagement is a two-way street instead of a one-way route. The international scholars who embark on their journey with UKM will be able to experience the scholarly odyssey with green surroundings, well-equipped library, advanced medical facilities, urban campus feel, helpful campus residence and opportunities to explore UKM's own countryside laboratories at Tasik Chini, Mersing, Fraser's Hill, Kuala Pilah, Langkawi Geo-park and UKM Bangi Permanent Forest Reserve.

The university's scholars exchange programmes, research attachments, internships with industry partners and post-doctoral programmes have established the cultured learning and research environment at UKM, where young, bright, resourceful and cultured scholars get together to shape and build a better future.



"UKM as a national research university is leading the development of a dynamic and moral society, as well as internationalised knowledge that is rooted in the national culture. It is the venue for gathering great minds and talents in the field of science technology and social sciences to shape a better world."

-Prof. Ir. Dr. Mohd Hamdi
Abd Shukor,
Vice Chancellor of Universiti
Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)



www.ukm.my

Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS)



UMS
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH



www.ums.edu.my

UMS combines research excellence and industry-relevant curriculum to offer undergraduate and postgraduate courses, with a focus in environmental research and cultural studies

Sabah, Malaysia, on the island of Borneo is widely known for its potpourri of biological and cultural diversity. This gives Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) a unique edge for research excellence, putting students enthusiastic about natural environment research and cultural studies in the heart of their interest areas.

Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, UMS focuses in seven research areas, namely Aquaculture, Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability, Agriculture and Food, Tourism, Public Health and Smart Healthcare, Poverty Alleviation, Security and Public Transport, and Indigenous Culture and Language.

What helped UMS to produce future-ready graduates is not only its rigorous research, but also its holistic emphasis on both theory and practice. That means stepping up on its inclusion of work-based learning, enhancing entrepreneurship and internship modules, and intensifying

application of technology in teaching and learning.

A comprehensive UMS-Industry partnership underpins the academic development in all its 10 faculties, which includes the Faculty of Science and Natural Resources, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Food Science and Nutrition, Faculty of Sustainable Agriculture, Faculty of Medicine and Public Health, Faculty of Computing and Informatics, Faculty of Business, Economics and Accountancy, Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Heritage, Faculty of Psychology and Education, and Faculty of International Finance Labuan.

UMS is also included in the QS Asia University Rankings and World University Rankings, as well as the UI GreenMetric World University Rankings.

A diverse experience

The sprawling campus of UMS that spans over 1,000 hectares of land is not only rich in ecological heterogeneity, but also cultural diversity. Local students of various backgrounds and ethnicities form a melting pot with international students from 36 different countries in the world.

Student enrolment currently stands at 17,000, of which 86% are undergraduates. The rest are pursuing postgraduate studies and research,



which all faculties in the university offer. Furthermore, the vibrant varsity population is supported by a wide network of alumni, which totals about 66,700 at present.

UMS keenly reaches out to the world beyond its Malaysian home ground to exchange ideas, discourse and understanding by establishing partnerships with global institutions. The university is also enhancing its international intake under the stewardship of the Centre for Internationalisation and Global Engagement.

Going forward, the UMS Strategic

Plan 2018-2022 has laid out nine key results areas: Teaching and Learning, Research and Innovation, International Visibility and Reputation, Governance, Leadership and Delivery System, Financial Sustainability, State and National Development, Environmental Sustainability, Holistic Student Experience, and Industry/University 4.0.

With a true north of becoming an innovative university with a global standing, UMS is steadfast on its course to produce graduates who can hit the ground running.

An eco-campus that has drawn ecological experts and enthusiasts worldwide, UMS specialises in the research of tropical flora and fauna diversity, forest ecology, hydrology, geology and eco-tourism

UMS has been initiated as an eco-campus since 2013, upholding the core values of sustainable development, ecological protection, resource conservation, environmental compatibility and environmental stewardship.

The university's vast progress in eco-transformation research and programmes closely aligns to a number of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This puts UMS closer to becoming a SDGs-engaged university.

UMS has established the Institute of Tropical Biology and Conservation, through which it forms active partnerships with government agencies, private sector companies, NGOs, and international bodies in undertaking research and education on biodiversity in Sabah.

Three other institutes have also been set up to achieve its SDGs-oriented goals, namely the Borneo Marine Research Institute, Biotechnology Research Institute, and Borneo Institute of Indigenous Studies.



Q&A

**Prof. Dr. Taufiq
Yap Yun Hin**

*Vice Chancellor of Universiti
Malaysia Sabah (UMS)*

Q: This year, UMS is celebrating its silver jubilee. Can you tell us more about how far the university has come?

A: Words cannot fully express my pride in how much UMS has grown since its establishment in 1994, but numbers may do the trick. We started the university with only 205 students across three faculties. Now we have 17,000 students, both local and international, in 10 faculties. Our alumni totals about 66,700. And we are still growing!

Q: What are the unique opportunities and advantages of working or studying with UMS?

A: Sabah is known for its beautiful coastlines, mountainous backdrop and warm, multicultural locals. UMS is located right in the heart of this unique mega-diversity, not only of flora and fauna, but also in terms of cultural, ethnic and language diversity. Hence, students with a keen interest

to study or research in these areas are in an advantageous position on our campus.

Q: How does UMS close the gap between industry and academics to produce "relevant" graduates?

A: The uniqueness of Sabah is not enough for UMS to be a preferred university if we do not offer industry relevance on a global scale. Hence, we actively engage the private and public sectors in our research activities and academic design.

For example, UMS partners up with global tech companies such as Huawei and Microsoft on programmes like Data Science and Cybersecurity to ensure that our graduates have up-to-date skillsets that fit business realities. Ultimately, we are committed to produce future-ready graduates and capable entrepreneurs, so that they can be job creators too.

Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM)



uitm.edu.my

UiTM, the largest university in Malaysia, opens its world-class education and research opportunities to international students at the postgraduate level for the first time

The largest institution of higher learning in Malaysia is about to get bigger. Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM), a public university that comes out top in the country in terms of size and student population, is opening up its postgraduate programmes to scholars of all ethnicities and nationalities.

Established in 1956, the university's primary focus has been to enhance the knowledge and expertise of the Bumiputras, or indigenous Malays, in Malaysia. But the knowledge economy and job market is growing globally and borderless. Hence, UiTM is doubling down efforts to internationalise its postgraduate courses, thus creating an inclusive synergy in a campus populated with students of different cultural backgrounds and country of origins.

UiTM is a comprehensive public university that strives to provide world-class education and research opportunities that are in tandem with global development. This means improving student mobility and forging international collaborations.

To bolster its on-going push for internationalisation and providing global opportunities for its students, UiTM holds a number of formal links with institutions from around the world. It shares teaching and research, as well as facilitate staff and student exchanges, with universities from Australia, Germany, the UK and the USA. These relationships with international institutions have been a tradition of the university since 1956 and have been fortified over decades.

The university is doubling its international collaboration within the next three years. Moving forward, UiTM has initiated the "Better Universities Partnership", which is a collaboration with universities in the US, the UK and Shanghai to develop a global mindset among its students. The "Path to ASEAN" partnership also sees UiTM teaming up with second-tier universities among ASEAN countries to facilitate mobility in the region.

To prepare graduates for the international job market, UiTM steps up on student mobility, both inbound and outbound. For 2019, UiTM targets 2,000 student exchanges, and aims to reach 5,000 student exchanges within the next three years.

By welcoming more international students, UiTM stays true to its philosophy: every individual has the ability to attain excellence through the transfer of knowledge and assimilation of moral values, so as to become professional graduates capable of developing knowledge, self, society and nation.

It is also through this philosophy that UiTM has maintained its course towards building Malaysia's inclusive knowledge-based economy. Known as a "research-intensive entrepreneurial university", UiTM is home to 170,000 students, both local and international – a testament to the university's popularity as an academic destination in one of ASEAN's most prosperous countries.

These students are enrolled in the university's 500 academic programmes ranging from foundation to postgraduate level over a vast number of faculties and academies, including in the areas of arts, design, accountancy, business, medicine and so on. The university especially excels in business programmes, offering exclusive specialist courses that are not available elsewhere.

UiTM offers 158 master's programmes and 49 PhD programmes

at the postgraduate level that are open to international students.

In line with the university's objectives, these robust academic programmes are high in quality and innovation, tailored to suit current market needs, global demands, and policies of national development.

On top of accolades by local and international bodies, UiTM has been rated 'Tier 5: Excellent' by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) Rating System for Higher Education Institutions in Malaysia.

The university is also currently ranked 137th in the QS Asia University Ranking 2019, a climb from the 158th last year.

The main campus of UiTM is located in the city of Shah Alam, which is also the state capital of Selangor – just 28 kilometers west of the country's capital, Kuala Lumpur. Besides the main campus, the university has 13 autonomous state campuses and 27 satellite campuses, which are supported by more than 17,000 academic and non-academic staff.



Q&A

Prof. Ir. Dr Mohd Azraai Kassim

Vice Chancellor of Universiti Teknologi MARA

Q: You have been appointed in February 2019 as the new Vice Chancellor of UiTM to spearhead the University's strategy to open up and to internationalise. What are your most pressing responsibilities?

A: Opening up the university's post-graduate programmes to international students is a new strategy. As Vice Chancellor, I aim to boost the university's international collaborations and partnerships, which we want to double within the next three years. I would also like to attract more students and staff from ASEAN countries to join our university in Malaysia, where they can easily adapt to.

Q: It must be quite a challenge to change strategic direction in a large university like the UiTM. How do you see the university moving forward?

A: Our university is like a sleeping giant. We have a big potential, with 35 campuses throughout the country and the largest enrolment of students. In the past, we have pioneered a lot of programmes and UiTM has been leading the way in higher education nationally. Now, we have to look beyond Malaysia. We understand that we have to continue developing and progressing so that we can become more competitive in the global arena.

Q: What are the challenges of internationalisation and how does UiTM deal with this?

A: It is our responsibility to prepare our students for the international job market. But while we have the pressure to adapt to a global mindset, it is also important to maintain our Malaysian culture and values. UiTM is committed to strike a balance throughout our activities and curriculum so that our students can compete globally but with their cultural values intact – to be successful without losing integrity.

ASEAN Business Leaders



ASEAN Business Leaders is an on-line platform developed by Shaping Asia Media.

ASEAN Business Leaders serves to promote international collaborations and increase global awareness about opportunities in the ASEAN region. The platform features the insights and opinions of business leaders, higher education professionals and top decision makers, and showcases a selection of companies, universities, government agencies and other organisations.

Full interview transcripts and universities profiles are available at:
aseanbusinessleaders.com/higher-education-malaysia



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