

Career growth and lifelong learning

MANAGEMENT and Science University (MSU) launched its APEL Centre at the MSU Career and Lifelong Learning Education Fair 2022.

Describing the launch as proactive and timely was Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) CEO Prof Datuk Dr Mohammad Shatar Sabran.

“APEL motivates more individuals with work experience to obtain relevant academic qualifications via a different evaluation mechanism that detours from the conventional route. Statistically up to June 30 this year, a total of 30,771 applications have been received comprising all the APELs offered: APEL A (Access), APEL C (Credit Transfer), and APEL Q (Award).

“The launch of the MSU APEL Centre will enable more individuals to raise their knowledge levels and rise in their careers. The effort streamlines with the Ministry of Higher Education’s aim in developing Malaysia into a hub for global higher education,



MSU Career and Lifelong Learning Education Fair 2022 saw the signing of MoUs between MSU and 10 different companies.

consequently attracting 250,000 international students.”

With 10 locations including Sabah and Sarawak for potential candidates to take the APEL Aptitude Test as the non-

conventional pre-qualification for entry into higher studies, MSU currently offers APEL A and APEL C at T-3 (certificate), T-4 (diploma), T-6 (bachelor’s degree), and T-7 (master’s degree) levels.

Also present at the MSU Education, Career, and Lifelong Learning Fair 2022 were MSU president

Prof Tan Sri Datuk Wira Dr Mohd Shukri Ab Yajid, MSU vice-chancellor Prof Puan Sri Datuk Dr Junainah Abd Hamid, and HRD Corp Placement Centre vice-president Dr Zeti Kasman.

Being part of the *Pelana Jana Semula Ekonomi* KPT (Ministry of Higher Education) CAP (Career Advancement Programme) – a government initiative to address graduate employability and reduce Covid-related unemployment – MSU has been delivering upskilling and reskilling programmes since 2019; with Industry 4.0, Green Technology / Renewable Energy, FinTech, Smart Construction, Smart Farming, Aerospace Industry, Blockchain, Micro-Credential and Future Technology among the focus

areas of involvement.

Ten new MoUs were signed; with MSU Medical Centre, Betelcare, Armila Bhd, Focus Point Vision Care Group Sdn Bhd, Menara Group, iVend Data Sdn Bhd, Healthlane Family Pharmacy, Columbia Asia Hospital Klang, PowerSub One-Stop Mental Health Care and MIOS Gastronomy.

Also participating in the MSU Career and Lifelong Learning Education Fair 2022 were a hundred companies offering a total of over 2,000 vacancies.

Walk-in interviews were held by Biomed Global Services, Mercure Kuala Lumpur Glenmarie, Fire Fighter Industry, Agensi Pekerjaan Nexg, and McDonald’s Malaysia, who also gave a career talk.

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Other career talks were given by Air Selangor, Armila Berhad, Focus Point Vision Care Group and Zeneration.

MSU holds the record for the highest graduate employability in Malaysia, with 98.7% of MSU graduates employed within six months of their convocation.

MSU APEL Centre is managed by the MSU Continuing and Extended Education Centre (CEDEC), which also organised the MSU Career and Lifelong Learning Education Fair 2022.



Funding your postgraduate studies

THE cost of a postgraduate degree can be expensive, so any method of lessening that burden is a welcomed one. There is a handful of alternative funding available worth considering, each with its own unique share of procedures and requirements.

Student loans

Loans continue to be one of the most accessible forms of funding for students looking to obtain a postgraduate education. However, you will naturally be expected to pay off the loan after the end of your studies – with the exact repayment period dependent on the issuing body. Hence, long-term planning and careful evaluation of your career progression will be integral if you’re looking to get a student loan. While the responsibility can seem daunting, as long as you are disciplined in repaying your monthly instalments, it is more than manageable.

Notably, there are more than a few options available as far as education loans go in Malaysia, with both partial and full loans given out. Hence, it is essential that

one does thorough research on the availability of such loans – as well as their stipulations – before coming to a decision.

Scholarships and their variations

Unlike loans, scholarships are usually granted as either a partial or full reimbursement of tuition fees, with certain schemes offering to cover accommodation costs and even an allowance. Securing a scholarship will ensure that you will have access to all the necessary resources for a fruitful venture into your postgraduate studies – so long that you meet the required criteria.

There are different types of scholarships available for those who are looking to apply – while some are awarded by the universities themselves, various government departments or private institutions also offer various grants and endowments to candidates who showcase potential as well. However, these scholarships are usually given on a merit basis – meaning

“Loans continue to be one of the most accessible forms of funding for students looking to obtain a postgraduate education.”

application slots can often be very competitive. Furthermore, many scholarships also require the individual to maintain a consistent level of academic quality; this is the sort of stress that is to be expected of scholarship holders.

For those who still have confidence in their ability to meet and maintain outstanding academic results, consider reviewing your CV – an impressive resume is likely to bolster your chances of landing a scholarship. Another tip for those interested in



Research on the options for additional funding to find out which one you are eligible for.

a scholarship would be to consider mass applying to as many scholarships as possible.

Company sponsorships

It is not uncommon for companies to sponsor postgraduate studies for certain employees, usually in the interest of developing their talents. Such sponsorship schemes are seen as an investment in the eyes of the company – an opportunity to further ‘upskill’ those with promise amongst their workforce.

However, there are some challenges in obtaining such a

sponsorship. As with every investment, you represent a risk – and it is essential to the company that a postgraduate course eventually brings value to the business. By showing commitment to the company – whether through taking initiative, regularly requesting feedback and being punctual – employers are more likely to consider any sponsorship requests. It should also be noted that an employer would naturally expect a selected postgraduate course to be an extension of the employee’s current job scope.

Increase your chances of a promotion with an MBA

ARE you looking to be promoted but don't have the skills necessary to demand for one? Aside from working up the courage to request for a better position, there are several challenges that might present themselves. Employers look at various factors before even considering offering a promotion. This could include an employee's willingness to volunteer on difficult projects, work longer hours and propose new systems or solutions to problems.

A Master of Business Administration (MBA) programme is specifically tailored to groom executives for future leadership roles in digital business and marketing. With an MBA degree, there are a number of reasons

you would be able to justify your stand for a much-deserved promotion.

One good point you can communicate across to your employer upon graduating with an MBA degree includes your enhanced marketability as a professional at work. There are numerous skills that you are able to upscale with an MBA degree, including your ability to present ideas effectively and creatively. An MBA degree allows you to experiment with new approaches to presenting ideas that may inspire you to apply in the workforce.

"Creativity is an important visualisation skill in business. With creativity, you will be able to come up with useful solutions to fix

problems. At University of Cyberjaya (UoC), we polish creative-thinking skills to determine how flexibly and imaginatively students approach problems," says Prof Dr Mudiarsan Kuppusamy, dean of the Faculty of Business and Technology at UoC.

Having an MBA degree also exposes you to an extensive business network which employers would find to be a good value in an employee. A wide network will allow you to stay abreast of the latest industry developments through peers of various industries. In fact, every new person you meet has the potential to become a future client or a business partner which could benefit a business or company. A new network of peers coupled with good people skills and management know-how could inevitably increase your chances of climbing the corporate ladder.

Additionally, an MBA degree provides the knowledge and expertise to analyse data to make informed decisions. Being able to leverage data strategically and appropriately is currently a high-demand skill. "When structured data is collected, analysed and understood from a business value perspective, there are a lot of questions about how ethically you are using this data. You need to know how to ethically use it so that you don't create privacy issues and that's what students are taught in an MBA programme," adds Prof Mudiarsan.

It is important to highlight that you are not only prepared to leverage data resources and analyse findings to support your company's business approaches, but also capable to appropriately secure and regulate this information.

At UoC, students are taught to become leaders in a digital environment. Senior lecturer Dr Kyra Law Ley Sy says, "Our CIMA-accredited MBA programme takes one

year to complete but what makes us different is our 8:2 ratio. Eighty per cent of the coursework covers industry-centred projects or assignments while the remaining 20% focuses on theory-based teaching which is evaluated with examinations.

"We have specialisms in Digital Marketing and Digital Business. The former teaches students on Data Ethics and Information Management, New Age Start-ups, Transformation and Leadership in the New Age while the latter includes courses such as E-Commerce Analytics, Data-Driven Business, Strategic Digital Marketing and more," she adds.

UoC offers 13 other programmes which include postgraduate-taught programmes and postgraduate-research programmes for various fields. Some of which include Masters in Clinical Pharmacy, Master of Clinical Psychology, Master of Physiotherapy, Doctor of Philosophy and more.

The university is also in the works of launching its brand-new MBA Online Distance Learning programme which is catered to busy working adults. This programme allows candidates to learn remotely and at their own pace and time with interactive video lectures, online assignments and more. This newly curated programme hopes to help those who are seeking a managerial role without affecting or interrupting their busy schedules at work.

Make the move to upskill your career with an MBA to help you get that promotion. The October intake is now open for applications.

■ For more information about UoC's programmes and scholarships, WhatsApp education counsellors at 011-1112 3344, email studywithus@cyberjaya.edu.my or visit cyberjaya.edu.my/pg.



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Programmes

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KPT/JPT(N/721/7/0071)03/2022 MOA/SWA8570

Analytical and Pharmaceutical Chemistry (MSc) ★ Mar / Sep

KPT/JPT(R2-CDL/442/7/0001)01/2027 MOA/FA1191
KPT/JPT(N-DL/442/7/0022)02/2026 MOA/FA1191

Business Administration in Healthcare Management (PG Cert / PG Dip / Master) Mar / Sep

KPT/JPT(N/345/7/1082)9/2023 MOA/PSA11354
KPT/JPT(N/345/7/1090)12/2023 MOA/SWA11355
KPT/JPT(N/345/7/1085)10/2023 MOA/SWA11353

Counselling (Master) Sep

KPT/JPT(N/762/7/0046)09/2026 MOA/PA12002

Diabetes Management and Education (PG Dip) Mar / Jul

KPT/JPT(N/726/7/0030)02/2023 MOA/SWA9086

Endodontics (PG Dip) Apr

KPT/JPT(N/724/7/0043)05/2024 MOA/PSA12162

Health Informatics and Analytics (PG Cert / PG Dip / Master) ◆ Sep

KPT/JPT(N/720/7/0131)09/2025 MOA/PSA13973
KPT/JPT(N/720/7/0130)09/2025 MOA/PSA13972
KPT/JPT(N/720/7/0129)09/2025 MOA/PSA13974

Health Professions Education (PG Cert / PG Dip / Master) ★ Mar

KPT/JPT(R/145/7/0066)09/2025 MOA/SWA05162
KPT/JPT(R/145/7/0064)09/2025 MOA/PA5163
KPT/JPT(R/145/7/0070)09/2025 MOA/SWA5164
KPT/JPT(N-DL/145/7/0120)02/2026 MOA/SWA05162

Implant Dentistry (PG Dip) Intake in 2022

KPT/JPT(R/724/7/0019)06/2026 MOA/SWA6111

Molecular Medicine (MSc) ★ Mar / Sep

KPT/JPT(R2/545/7/0078)07/2027 MOA/FA1299
KPT/JPT(N-DL/545/7/0101)09/2025 MOA/SWA11357

Pharmacy Practice (Master) Mar / Sep

KPT/JPT(R/727/7/0051)03/2024 MOA/SWA02796

Prosthodontics (PG Dip) Jun

KPT/JPT(N/724/7/0042)05/2024 MOA/PSA12163

Public Health (MSc) ★ Mar / Sep

KPT/JPT(R2/720/7/0077)09/2025 A10618
KPT/JPT(N-DL/720/7/0118)09/2023 MOA/SWA11356

Medical and Health Sciences (MSc / PhD) Throughout the year

KPT/JPT(R2/720/7/0049)06/2026 A10618
KPT/JPT(R2/721/8/0043)01/2027 A3767



University of Cyberjaya offers almost 40 programmes, including undergraduate, postgraduate-taught and postgraduate-research programmes across a wide set of disciplines.



Securing financial assistance

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Despite these drawbacks, however, a company sponsorship can still be a strong option to consider – especially for those set in their future in both their company and career of choice. While it may be the most limiting in terms of choice, there is less financial pressure on students – allowing them to fully focus on performance in their upcoming postgraduate studies.

Looking abroad

When looking to pursue postgraduate studies, there are two vital factors to consider: the average cost of living and the cost of the course itself. While Malaysia is already one of the more affordable countries

regarding these aspects, there are several comparative options available when looking abroad – and they also come with a unique opportunity to experience a new culture.

One such example is Germany; beyond enrolment and admin fees averaging about €300 (RM1,375) a year, a vast majority of public universities offer higher education courses with no tuition fee – which also applies to international students. Within Asia, both India and Taiwan are also very affordable options, with low and sustainable average cost of living for any prospecting students.

For students who seek a more holistic postgraduate experience beyond lectures and notes, and are willing to make the move, moving overseas for their studies can be an insightful and enriching experience.



Loans continue to be one of the most accessible forms of funding for students.



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Students who join UNM's MA in Media, Communications and Culture will have the opportunity to benefit from working with CNN.

Building great careers

By
**PROF DR
JASON
PANDYA-
WOOD**



IN previous columns, I have talked about the importance that University of Nottingham Malaysia (UNM) places on graduate employability. By this, I mean those opportunities we can build for our students to experience the world of work and to build industry-relevant skills during their time with us. We want our students to match and exceed employer expectations as they enter an increasingly demanding, competitive and complex job market.

We are also not simply interested in a measure that asks whether our graduates are in any job within a set period after graduation. We want to be assured that our graduates are in the jobs that match their degree-level education.

Universities the world over have had to transform at the institutional level, building work-life competency into traditional academic education. As I have written before, a good university

education provides students with the critical and analytical skills to assess and weigh up evidence and judge the merits of arguments. Undoubtedly, they become specialists in their subject area. During their studies, they can also build relationships and work in teams, developing critical social skills. For our students, this is a truly international network drawing from over 85 different countries.

Our courses are delivered by great lecturers and are underpinned by the latest research, all of which enables the above to happen. But moving beyond this means creating a stronger link between what happens in the classroom and what students will experience when they graduate. There are several ways to make this happen.

Some of it happens when we change how we deliver our teaching and assess learning. Traditional lectures and seminars have their place and are an important element of the student learning experience. Alongside that though, we increasingly use participative approaches, building what is known as 'flipped learning'. Students will come to class having already been briefed on learning materials so that they can spend more time together focused on problem-solving and thorough conversation. It is flipped because it moves from the idea of passively receiving knowledge and going away to read more about it, to coming ready to participate and be active in deepening knowledge alongside peers.

This approach has several benefits for employability as it develops the skills to practice and apply concepts and ideas through interaction with peers and teachers. When you complement this approach with a diversity of ways of assessing students, you can really enhance employability skills. Exams and essays still have an important place in the assessment schedule at a university. Now though, we will also see students required to produce reports, present to audiences, film documentaries and make podcasts, all of which enhance the CV of a prospective graduate employee.

The other way we build skills is through embedding industry engagement throughout our curriculum. This is made possible through several different strategies. Many of our courses benefit from industry speakers who deliver insightful sessions anchored in the world of work. There are opportunities for students to undertake internships or other forms of work placement with several of Malaysia's leading employers. Many of our courses in business have industry accreditation, giving students the additional professional qualifications or experience that will give them a step ahead.

"As I have written before, a good university education provides students with the critical and analytical skills to assess and weigh up evidence and judge the merits of arguments. Undoubtedly, they become specialists in their subject area."

How can we go further? One innovative way is to co-create the curriculum with industry, and this brings me to a very exciting development happening at UNM this coming academic year. Students who join us on our MA in Media, Communications and Culture will have the opportunity to benefit from working with one of the world's most recognised news brands – CNN – through a new module on digital storytelling and production.

The module will combine campus-based and online inputs from our staff and CNN tutors. Students will then fly to Abu Dhabi to join a dedicated week-long immersive simulation with the newsgathering, digital and programming teams associated with CNN's flagship current affairs programme *Connect the World with Becky Anderson*. During the week, they will work through a real-life breaking news case study, produce and broadcast a short TV show and launch a digital news product.

Our partnership with CNN offers us a blueprint for doing things differently. We're already immensely proud of the theoretical and analytical skills we develop in our students. For those wanting to pursue a career in, say, journalism, public and media relations, politics, strategic marketing, brand consulting or corporate advertising, we can now add an incredible industry experience to their portfolios.

Throughout the summer we have been talking to people about our courses at our various open days. Our next open days are on Aug 27 and 28 so do come along to find out more about the transformative education on offer at UNM. I hope very much to meet you there.

■ Assoc Prof Dr Jason Pandya-Wood is dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Nottingham Malaysia.



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When technology meets the healthcare industry

THE full accreditation visit for IMU's Postgraduate Certificate in Health Informatics and Analytics (PGCHIA) took place at the end of February and the full accreditation visit for IMU's Master in Health Informatics and Analytics (MHIA) took place in July. Both programmes were launched on Sept 6 last year.

MHIA is a 40-credit, two-semester programme, offered at three levels (postgraduate certificate, postgraduate diploma and master) and allows for multiple exits from the programme. Students who enrol in the Master's programme can exit after one semester with a postgraduate certificate or after one-and-a-half semesters with a postgraduate diploma.

Classes are delivered mostly on weekends, both online and face-to-face. Students can choose to complete all modules of the Master's programme within a year as full-time students or within a maximum period of six years as part-time students.

IMU's MHIA programme provides the perfect pathway for recent graduates or professionals from various areas who intend to switch careers into the healthcare sector. This is also an ideal programme for current health and social care practitioners who are looking to gain additional knowledge and skills in digital innovation.

It prepares graduates for a range of careers in the healthcare sector across various settings where health improvement is sought and enhanced by technology. This includes health-related industries in the private sector as well as ministries and departments in the public sector. The programme will also lead to opportunities for further study (PhD).

The programme is delivered by a multidisciplinary team of experts in computing, artificial intelligence, health informatics and health-related disciplines. Students learn about state-of-the-art technologies and systems related to Digital Health and Health Informatics.

IMU's first PGCHIA graduate Tee Kar Men shares her experience, "As a recent science graduate with limited to no background in data science or computer



IMU prepares graduates for a range of careers in the healthcare sector across various settings where health improvement is sought and enhanced by technology.

science, PGCHIA has taught me so much in understanding how health data is collected, processed, analysed and used to gain insight for informed decisions within the healthcare industry.

"I have learned to use several analytic tools such as R Studio, Python and SQL. Lecturers who are experts in their fields and supportive course mates from multidisciplinary backgrounds have facilitated lively discussions between students and lecturers. It was a challenging and eye-opening experience. I look forward to applying the knowledge and skills to my

future career," she adds.

The success of the programme is due to the quality and commitment of IMU staff involved in its delivery and the collaboration with industry partners, such as Doc2Us, Fusionex, HealthMetrics, Medic Footprints Malaysia and Imperial Medical Solutions (UK).

The first intake welcomed 15 students, made up of six medical officers, six students with a background in bioengineering or biomedical sciences, and three start-up managers. Four students are currently finishing the MHIA programme full-time

"Micro-credentials in Health Informatics IMU also aims at equipping working adults in the area of Health Informatics through micro-credential courses."

with a 20-week research project whilst the other students are enrolled part-time.

The second intake of the MHIA programme is on September 5.

Micro-credentials in Health Informatics IMU also aims at equipping working adults in the area of Health Informatics through micro-credential courses. "Introduction to Health Data Engineering" courses will be offered from September. The courses aim at building an understanding of the needs of data science, data management and data engineering in the healthcare sector. Grow your passion for allied health sciences at this prolific institution.

■ For more information about this or IMU's other postgraduate programmes, call 03-2731 7272, email start@imu.edu.my or visit www.imu.edu.my.



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