

BECOMING a chartered accountant involves more than completing a degree in accountancy. After graduation, students must also pass additional professional examinations and acquire relevant post-study work experience before being able to qualify as a chartered accountant.

Despite the economic ups and downs, the demand for qualified accountants remains consistently high – in fact, accountants have been included in TalentCorp's Critical Occupations List (COL) since its inception in 2015.

Accountants with globally recognised qualifications also have many opportunities to work outside of Malaysia, such as in Singapore and the UK. Notably, those that rise the fastest in their careers are a lot more than just number-crunching accountants – they use their business and financial acumen to advise clients and leaders on strategy and operations.

Henley-ICAEW Programme

Henley Business School is one of the UK's leading business schools and one of a handful in the world to hold triple-accredited status from the AACSB, AMBA and EQUIS* for the quality of its teaching and faculty (*AACSB – Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, AMBA – Association of MBAs, and EQUIS – European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD) Quality Improvement System). Students are able to receive the same high-quality business education through Henley's presence in Malaysia at the University of Reading's branch campus located in EduCity, Iskandar Johor.

The Henley-ICAEW programme (HIP) is a partnership between Henley Business School Malaysia and the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), one of the industry's most respected professional bodies. Designed as an integrated, career-focused programme, HIP offers students a fast track to chartered accountancy which can normally be achieved within three to four years after students graduate.

Upon successful completion, students on HIP are not only awarded the prestigious BSc Accounting and Finance degree from Henley Business School, but also receive the ICAEW Certificate in Finance, Accounting and Business (CFAB) and are able to use the Business and Finance Professional (BFP) designation after their name. Students can claim up to a maximum of eight Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) or paper exemptions from ICAEW, as well as a waiver of about £850 (RM4,895) in exemption and registration fees.

One of the key benefits of ICAEW is the global recognition of its ACA qualification – ICAEW has reciprocal memberships with professional bodies in countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia,

Fast track to a life in chartered accountancy



Students on their industry placement at EY Johor.

New Zealand, South Africa and Canada.

12-month industry work placement

HIP students undergo a full year work placement in Year 3 where they have an opportunity to acquire valuable work experience. Students are normally placed in established firms such as EY, KPMG, PwC, Deloitte, Grant Thornton, BDO and other ICAEW Authorised Training Employers (ATE). Students are not only able to put into practice what they learn in the classroom, but develop valuable workplace skills such as business communication, time management and client interaction.

Prof Wing Lam, provost at University of Reading Malaysia, highlighted the key advantages of HIP's industry work placement:

"The HIP programme is one of the very few in Malaysia with an integrated 12-month industry work placement. It is often the first time that students have the opportunity to work in a professional setting at a major firm, so it gives them a real taste of what the industry is about. They not only get to apply what they learn in the classroom, they also develop the soft skills that companies are seeking but often missing from fresh graduates. The whole 12-month experience is hugely transformational for our students, and I see a big difference in them before and after the work placement. The experience gives

them a distinct advantage in employability, and many are offered the opportunity to continue with the placement firm after they graduate."

Students are paid by the firm during their work placement and get to participate in both work and company social activities just like a regular employee. It also provides students with an opportunity to network with others outside of their usual university circle. Notably, the industry work placement also counts as credit for prior work experience for the purpose of meeting the requirements for chartered accountant status. Even during the global pandemic, graduate employability has been excellent with the majority of students securing jobs even before they have graduated.

Excellent student experience

Students can be reassured they will receive an excellent learning experience. Some 75% of Henley's academics in Malaysia are PhD-qualified and many have further industry and professional certifications.

Henley's approach to teaching and learning ensures students not only acquire the technical knowledge they need, but also the ability to think critically and solve problems. In short, students are taught skills that will enable them to adapt to different situations in a world that is constantly changing.

Another benefit of studying at Henley Business School in Malaysia is the low student-to-staff ratio. Class sizes are typically no larger than 35, which allows students to receive a more personalised learning experience and benefit from a high degree of interaction between students and academic staff. In addition to the academic staff who are always ready to help, each student is assigned an academic tutor to provide support and mentoring where required.

The modern, state-of-the-art campus in EduCity, Iskandar Puteri, provides students with excellent facilities that include IT-enabled classrooms, PC labs, social areas and a spacious Learning Resource Centre (LRC) with breakout rooms.

Henley's Financial Dealing room is modelled on that at Henley's UK campus, and provide students with access to the ICTrader platform, one of the most

sophisticated trading systems that is simulated to trade equity, foreign currency and derivatives in the US and UK markets.

Students also have access to the world-renowned Refinitiv financial database (formerly known as Thompson-Reuters Eikon). Fast WiFi is available throughout the campus.

In the current pandemic situation, where the Ministry of Higher Education restricts access to campus for health and safety reasons, students can be reassured that they will be provided with excellent support for online learning.

Students have access to a suite of digital learning tools including the Blackboard Learning Management System, Blackboard Collaborate, Microsoft Teams and round-the-clock access to the university's digital library, which are the same set of robust digital tools used by students on the Reading UK campus.

Learning materials such as screencasts and presentations are available, supported by live virtual sessions with academic staff.

To encourage a healthy lifestyle, students at EduCity enjoy excellent facilities that include an Olympic-sized swimming pool, running track, indoor stadium, fitness centre, music studio and 24-hour student hub. Students not only work hard but play hard.

Study UK option

Students can take advantage of the flexible options which allows them to spend one or even two years at Henley Business School in the UK. The option may appeal to parents who wish to send their children to study in the UK but are concerned about travel restrictions and health and safety in the current pandemic situation.

The Henley Business School is located on the university's main campus in Reading, which is set in 130ha of beautiful parkland and has won the Green Flag award nine times in a row, making it one of the UK's best green spaces. The campus has everything a student could need, including sports facilities, health centre, eateries, a supermarket and on-campus accommodation.

Furthermore, Reading town is only a 22-minute train ride from London, making it ideal for students who are seeking to make the most from their time in the UK.

Admissions

Entry points for new students are in April, July and September each year. Those with A-levels, STPM, UEC and equivalent qualifications can apply for direct admission to the HIP programme. SPM, IGCSE and equivalent holders can enrol in the university's 12-month International Foundation Programme (IFP) which, upon successful progression, guarantees them a place on the HIP programme in Malaysia.

For eligible students studying in Malaysia, Henley Business School's High Achievers Scholarship is valued at up to RM33,840, or the equivalent of a 30% discount for the duration of study (subject to terms and conditions).

■ For more information, consultation or to arrange for a campus visit, call or WhatsApp Joyce 016-721 5400 or Devi 016-225 4012, email my.enquiry@reading.edu.my or visit www.reading.edu.my/henley and UoRM's Facebook and Instagram pages.



Henley Business School is located at University of Reading's Malaysia state-of-the-art campus in EduCity Iskandar.

HELP University offers two foundation programmes: the Foundation in Arts and Foundation in Science.

As preparation for university study, they are no less rigorous compared to other pre-university courses. In fact, they offer some clear advantages.

They include modules like Study Skills, Critical Thinking Skills, Personal Development and Leadership, and Culture, Arts and Politics. They provide academic knowledge as well as develop thinking and critical minds, personal and leadership qualities and well-informed individuals who are cognisant of contemporary culture, arts and politics.

Another advantage is the diversity in the type of electives to prepare students for admission into subject majors in the university. In the Foundation in Arts, they include Legal Studies, Psychology, Accounting, Business, Economics, Early Childhood Education, TESL, Communication, Maths, Calculus and Programming.

The Legal Studies elective is a popular choice for students who intend to read for a Law degree

A good foundation for law studies

at HELP.

“For students interested in Law, the best way is to take the Legal Studies module at the Foundation level,” says Dhanesh Balakrishnan, dean of University Foundation Studies at HELP, who is a lawyer himself.

“It can be taken in the second or third semester. They will experience first-hand what the study of Law is really about. Students who did not consider doing law have opted to do so after doing the module at the Foundation level.”

Dhanesh cites the example of Emeline Khoo, who had not planned to pursue a law degree until she sat in his class and found the subject fascinating.

Khoo went on to join the UK Law Degree Transfer Programme at

HELP's Faculty of Law and Government and completed her studies at the University of the West of England, Bristol (UWE), graduating with First Class Honours. Khoo also won the prestigious Lord Templeman Scholarship tenable at UWE.

“The Foundation in Arts helped me to decide my career path in law,” Khoo says. “I met some of the most dedicated and passionate lecturers who were not only concerned with the syllabus and academic material, but also ensured the development of soft skills so essential at the workplace.”

In view of the current pandemic, HELP currently offers a special package for students if they enrol in the Foundation programme and complete the three-year HELP LLB.



Vasantha believes that the university's approach is holistic and that great careers are built on firm foundations.

Welcoming this arrangement, dean of the Faculty of Law and Government Vasantha Punniamoorthy explains why the HELP LLB is an apt choice for aspiring lawyers:

“Building on the strong basis provided by the HELP Foundation, we provide an education that prepares students to take their places as honourable members of the legal profession. We provide high-quality teaching and our faculty members are experienced, dedicated and qualified. Some were former practitioners who have turned to full-time teaching. We believe that great careers are built on firm foundations.”

The students' knowledge and skills are also strengthened through two modules: Legal Skills and Legal Practice. They impart skills such as legal research, drafting, advocacy, client counselling, opinion writing, negotiation and mooting. Ethical principles are also emphasised. All these are an essential part of the faculty's pedagogical excellence and are aimed at fulfilling the legal profession's demand for competent, ethical and immediately employable law graduates.

This enlightened approach to curriculum design echoes the views of Harry T. Edwards, a judge of the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, who wrote in the *Michigan Law Review* on the growing disjunction between legal education and the legal profession:

“The firms should be ensuring that associates and partners practise law in an ethical manner. But many law schools have abandoned their proper place by emphasising abstract theory at the expense of practical scholarship and pedagogy.”

“While the schools are moving toward pure theory, the firms are moving toward pure commerce,

and the middle ground – ethical practice – has been deserted by both. If law schools continue to stray from their principal mission of professional scholarship and training, the disjunction between legal education and the legal profession will grow and society will be the worse for it.”

The faculty provides other learning and practical experiences designed to strengthen students' competencies.

It publishes the *HELP Law Review* and the *HELP Student Law Journal* which function as incubators of knowledge and ideas to sharpen legal thinking and encourage research, writing, publishing and collaboration amongst the faculty members, students and members of the legal fraternity.

Students learn the art and skill of legal writing, reporting and presentation to facilitate the creation and dissemination of legal thought and ideas. This is important to sustain law as a vibrant system of thought, a philosophy, body of knowledge, and above all as a profession.

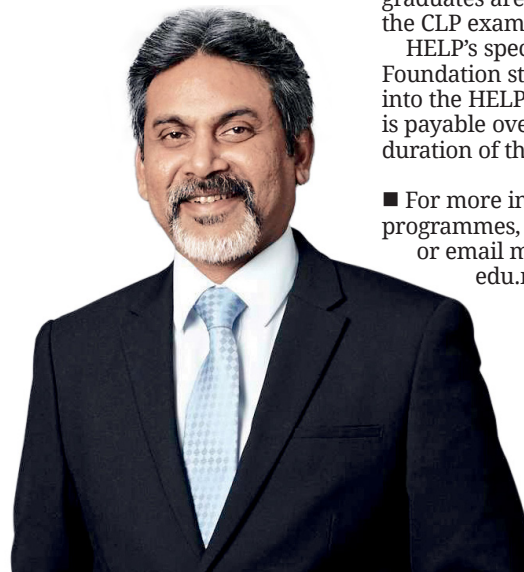
HELP's law students will also be equipped with soft skills that will help them in their careers: workshops in resume writing and accounting for lawyers; and seminars in business, economics, communication and psychology.

“They cannot be expected to know only the law,” says Vasantha. “Law must be read as an integrated discipline, e.g with economics and business. Graduates must be able to understand the law and ethics needed for the IR4.0 and AI era. All our students are also given the opportunity to do the Certificate in Data and Business Analytics course at no additional cost to them.”

The HELP LLB is recognised by the Malaysian Legal Profession Qualifying Board and graduates are eligible to sit for the CLP exam.

HELP's special package for Foundation students to continue into the HELP LLB for RM60,000 is payable over the four-year duration of the two programmes.

■ For more information on the programmes, call 03-2716 2000 or email marketing@help.edu.my.



Dhanesh advocates a strong foundation for aspiring lawyers.



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Greener pastures and hidden discomforts

THE growth of offshore campuses in countries aspiring to be regional and international education hubs is changing patterns in staff and student destinations and mobilities. Data from the Cross-Border Education Research Team (C-BERT) shows that most offshore campuses are located in Asia and the Middle East. These countries, including Malaysia, are becoming attractive destinations for international education and employment.

Over the past three decades, Malaysia has been hosting growing numbers of foreign

lecturers and international school teachers – otherwise known as academic and teacher expatriates. Existing research has focused on the factors that facilitate or inhibit expatriate adjustment in Malaysia. However, not much is known about expatriates in the education sector, especially the complexities and nuances of their migration which a social science perspective can offer.

To bridge such a gap, Dr Koh Sin Yee from the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Monash University Malaysia, teamed up with Dr Sin I Lin, Research Associate at the School of Arts and Cultures, Newcastle University upon Tyne, to dive deeper into these expatriates' global mobilities and their experiences in Malaysia.

In their scoping study conducted from 2018 to 2019, Dr Koh and Dr Sin interviewed 40 foreign lecturers and international school teachers in Malaysia. They spoke to academic and teacher expatriates based in the Klang Valley and EduCity, Iskandar Malaysia, two regions in Malaysia with the highest concentration of overseas branch campuses of foreign universities and international schools.

The sample covered expatriates from different countries of origin, ethnicity, religion, marital status, discipline, seniority, and migration histories.

Notably, some participants are mixed-race, dual citizenship holders and have partners from different ethnic and national origins, including Malaysians.

The rich diversity captured in the sample provided the team with opportunities to explore the expatriates' varied experiences of the international education scene and day-

to-day life in Malaysia.

"We decided to study academic and teacher expatriate groups together as they share fundamental similarities in their mobility trajectories and experiences in the international education sector. First, they possess reputable qualifications and international research or teaching experiences that their employing institutions and destination countries value. Second, they are typically employed on temporary, fixed-term contracts and work visas. This is a factor that compels them to be constantly on the move, in search of the next job and life opportunity," says Dr Koh.

With the global and national push towards the internationalisation of education, it is not surprising that academic and teacher expatriates are positioned as representatives of the "international faculty" or "international teaching staff" by their employing institutions.

Some of the interviewed expatriates felt a persistent local-foreign barrier that positioned Western expatriates as more desirable experts than local staff. They would like to see a more balanced recognition of local and regional knowledge, skills and expertise in Malaysia, which they consider valuable and relevant in the global knowledge economy.

Ironically, academic and teacher expatriates' appreciation as valued talents may not always transcend to other aspects of their expatriate lives in Malaysia. Although these expatriates hold an employment pass, the duration of their work visas differ. While some are given two- to five-year work visas, others are given one-

year work visas. Generally, the duration of the work visas seems to be tied to the expatriates' nationality, although further research needs to be conducted to ascertain this.

On the one hand, this offers the expatriate the flexibility to move to another destination country upon their visa expiration. On the other hand, it brings uncertainty and instability to the expatriates, some of whom have developed a strong sense of belonging and home in Malaysia and wish to remain longer. Some of the interviewed expatriates shared that their hopes to stay were challenged by regulations that prevent their accompanying spouses or unmarried partners from working in Malaysia.

Dr Koh and Dr Sin's research stresses the need to recognise the hidden discomforts in expatriation. A paper they are writing at the moment looks into the vulnerabilities that academic and teacher expatriates face, alongside the privileges of working and living in Malaysia.

Contrary to popular belief, academic and teacher expatriates do not enjoy boundaryless lives. Like everyone else who dislocates, they and their significant others face relative disadvantages and limitations. They, too, have to navigate around risks, opportunities, choices, obligations, and necessities.

More can be done at the policy level to make global mobility more flexible and inclusive for academic and teacher expatriates. This will expand the potential for the expatriates and their significant others to experience and contribute the fullest to Malaysia and beyond.



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“The Foundation in Arts helped me to decide on a career in Law. I met some of the most dedicated and passionate lecturers who were not only concerned with the syllabus and academic materials, but also ensured the development of soft skills so essential at the workplace.”

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