Star Special

THE STAR, THURSDAY 20 AUGUST 2026

HIGHER EDUCATION

A journey of transformation

By DR EVELYN YEAP EWE LIN

STUDYING itself is a lifelong journey. Therefore, we should never stop learning.

The pursuit of postgraduate education is often driven by aspirations for career advancement, recognition or professional growth. Yet, my journey through a master's degree and a PhD has taught me that the greatest transformation happens beyond the qualification itself.

Postgraduate studies are a humbling experience that reminds us knowledge is an endless journey. No matter how much we learn or how many times we repeat learning the same thing, there are always new perspectives to explore and questions that encourage deeper thinking.

My master's and PhD research journeys introduced me to two different ways of understanding problems, using quantitative analysis to identify patterns and qualitative research to explore deeper meanings and experiences.

Through these processes, I learned that both approaches are equally valuable, as each provides meaningful insights into different aspects of a challenge.

These experiences shaped me not only as a researcher but also as an individual, developing qualities that are valuable in leading a more meaningful life.

Postgraduate education develops discipline, resilience, patience and the ability to approach challenges with an open mind. More importantly, it strengthens communication skills that are essential in every profession.

The true value of postgraduate education lies not only in the knowledge gained but also in the experiences that shape our character. Each challenge, conversation and milestone throughout the journey becomes an opportunity for reflection and growth.

These experiences nurture resilience, discipline, confidence and maturity, preparing us to lead and create meaningful impact in our community and society.

Meet renowned UM professors during its Mega Open Day.

If you have ever considered furthering your studies, I encourage you to meet us at the Universiti Malaya (UM) Mega Open Day on Aug 22 and 23.

Explore the opportunities available and speak with our academics to discover how continuing your education can open new pathways for personal growth, professional development and meaningful impact.

I also have exciting news to share with all UM alumni. Exclusive tuition fee discounts will be available as you return to continue your learning journey and reconnect with the UM community.

Dr Evelyn Yeap Ewe Lin is a deputy registrar at Universiti Malaya and holds a PhD in Higher Education.

Anticipating exam questions

YOU have a thick textbook, a pile of notes and no clue how to pass the test. Instead of trying to learn everything and hoping for the best, try anticipating the exam questions.

Unless you are taking a new course, you should be able to find some old exam papers. Read through them, note the themes and mark the ones that come up over and over again.

Look at your textbook's table of contents and the headings of your study guide, and jot down all the buzzwords that you've heard most often in class.

When you have six to 10 topics, think of what a typical exam question might be for each. If you have more time to revise, go through everything again and note the minor subjects. Then, repeat the exercise.

Finally, read the textbook again. Now that you have a good grounding, you'll pick up something new.

Boosting research excellence

MANAGEMENT and Science University (MSU) is strengthening its transition into a global, comprehensive, research-driven dual-sector university through the strategic rebranding and realignment of eight Centres of Excellence (COEs).

The initiative reflects MSU's evolution from a teaching-focused institution into a university that integrates academic excellence, technical education, industry engagement and research, aligned with its strategic pillars, international priorities and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

MSU president and founder Prof Tan Sri Dr Mohd Shukri Ab Yajid said MSU has grown from a college into a global university serving students from 79 nationalities and offering more than 200 programmes.

"Teaching remains important, but research must now become an equally strong component of our university.

"If we want to be truly global and comprehensive, we must be good at both teaching and research," he said.

The eight rebranded COEs will focus on specialised areas while promoting interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, collaboration, innovation and commercialisation.

The research areas also provide opportunities to advance multiple SDGs, from quality education, health and well-being to climate action, sustainable communities and global partnerships.

The seven research-focused centres comprise the Centre for Applied Intelligence (CAI), MSU Centre for Climate Resilience and Strategy (M-Crest), Centre for Life Enhancing Eye Care Innovation and Rehabilitation (CLEAR), Neuroscience and Mental Wellbeing Centre (NeuroMIND),

Through the new COE structure, MSU aims to develop research that is strategically aligned, interdisciplinary, collaborative, industry-connected, globally focused, innovative and commercially relevant.

MSU Centre for Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG), and the Global Health Centre (G1), while the International Centre for Halal Studies (ICHLAS) will expand MSU's Halal expertise beyond food and services into broader areas of research, education and development.

Supporting the university's wider ecosystem is the service-focused Software Engineering and Digital Innovation Centre (SenDI), which will continue as MSU's technology hub to provide digital and technological solutions across the university.

The new COE structure is designed to break down traditional academic boundaries by bringing together expertise from different disciplines to address complex challenges.

The approach supports SDG 4 (Quality Education) by strengthening research-informed learning and technical education, while SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) is advanced through applied research, digital innovation, technology development and industry collaboration.

For example, CAI will draw on expertise across MSU to develop intelligence-based solutions for the university, industry and society.

SenDI will further support digital transformation, while the COEs provide opportunities to develop research and innovation that contribute to sustainable economic and technological development.

The focus on health and well-being through NeuroMIND, CLEAR and G1 contributes directly to SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), while research and education opportunities associated with ICHLAS support responsible production, consumption and sustainable practices under SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

M-Crest and ESG strengthen contribution to SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 14 (Life Below Water) and SDG 15 (Life on Land) by creating opportunities for research addressing environmental resilience, sustainability, resource management and responsible development.

The ESG Centre also reinforces the principles of responsible governance, inclusion and institutional accountability associated with SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

The COEs will also strengthen collaboration between researchers, faculties, industry and external partners, supporting MSU's Industry Embedded University approach.

ICHLAS, meanwhile, provides opportunities to explore halal research and development in areas connected to sustainable industries, responsible consumption and inclusive economic activity, supporting SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) alongside SDG 8 and SDG 12.

Transforming LIVES, ENRICHING Future

msu college

For qualifications that make a real difference to your career choices, look no farther than MSU College.

#beMSUrians

Focus Areas:

. Hospitality & Tourism . Culinary Arts & Catering .
. Spa & Beauty . Graphic Design & Computer Science .
. Information & Multimedia Technology .
. Management & English Language Teaching . Early Childhood Education .
. Health Science . Digital Photography .

For further information, contact us now :

MSU College Shah Alam
DK248-06(B) KP(JPS)5195/IPTS/886/C/JId.I (52)
Level 5, Science Tower, University Drive, Off Persiaran Olahraga
Seksyen 13, 40100 Shah Alam, Selangor.
Tel : 03 5521 6787
Email : shahalam@msucollege.edu.my

Yayasan msu msucollege | www.msucollege.edu.my

UNIVERSITI MALAYA

MEGA OPEN DAY

22 - 23 Aug 2026
9am - 5pm

Dewan Tunku Canselor, Universiti Malaya

QUANTUM LEAP FORWARD

study.um.edu.my

Groundwork for future in healthcare

EVERY successful professional starts somewhere. Before becoming a doctor, pharmacist, nurse, business person or healthcare innovator, they must first build the knowledge, confidence and skills to thrive.

At IMU University, that journey begins with the Foundation in Science (FIS), a one-year, purpose-built programme designed for students pursuing careers in healthcare, health sciences and beyond.

Since 2014, the programme has helped thousands of students take their first steps in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, psychology, biomedical science, chiropractic, nursing and pharmaceutical chemistry.

Nusaibah chose FIS for its smooth pathway to IMU's partner universities abroad.

Mathiswaselan says his time in FIS helped to strengthen his passion for medicine.

Ng credits FIS with making her undergraduate studies transition smoother.

For future healthcare professionals

Students learn under the guidance of IMU's experienced faculty members, who provide not only academic guidance but also personalised support through a strong mentor-mentee system.

A key advantage is the chance for students who meet the required academic standards after the second semester to receive an early conditional offer into their intended IMU undergraduate programme.

Students also get hands-on learning, interdisciplinary experiences, community engagement activities and modules that let them explore different disciplines before embarking on their chosen degree.

More than academics

Life in FIS extends beyond the classroom, with community engagement and learning experiences that help students discover their interests and build friendships that shape them into compassionate professionals.

"FIS taught me the academic knowledge, communication, leadership skills and overall preparedness needed to succeed in my degree studies," says IMU medical student Chong Zhan Xuan.

Fellow medical student and JPA scholar Mathiswaselan Paramaselan chose FIS for its healthcare-focused curriculum, which offers early exposure to the field.

"Personally, it was the ideal bridge between high school and medical school. It strengthened my scientific foundation while providing me with the knowledge, techniques and learning strategies for my MBBS," he said.

The programme's international opportunities also attracted Nusaibah Amani Zahid, a dentistry student.

"I was drawn to FIS for its smooth entry into the undergraduate partner track and IMU's international benchmark in education quality. Now, in dentistry, I hope to later transfer abroad for my clinical years."

IMU also encouraged her to get involved from foundation year, with opportunities ranging from refugee workshops to tree planting and awareness runs.

Shirley Ng, a pharmaceutical chemistry student at IMU feels the programme built both knowledge and confidence:

"It strengthened my knowledge, while the practical sessions and community engagement activities helped me develop confidence, teamwork, leadership and communication skills."

First step towards a dream career

The next commencement of this programme is in September. Prospective students can apply online today.

For outstanding students seeking financial assistance, the IMU Foundation in Science Scholarship supports their journey in 2026, with awards based on actual SPM or IGCSE/O-Level results.

■ For details, visit *www.imu.edu.my* or email start@imu.edu.my or call IMU at 03-2731 7272.

Crafting skills for a rewarding culinary career

CULINARY arts involve preparing, cooking, presenting and serving food in a professional manner. Those in this field are responsible for preparing delicious dishes and creating edible works of art.

MSU College's School of Hospitality, Education and Business Studies (SHB) also offers a Diploma in Culinary Arts programme, which allows students to transform their passion for cooking into a professional skill that will lead them into the rewarding world of food preparation.

The programme will not only expose students to a variety of culinary arts disciplines, but it will also provide a blend of solid culinary knowledge, practical competency, industry know-how and management skills.

This could include patisserie and local cuisine, visually appealing food art presentation and flawless cooking and food processing.

For entry requirement, students must obtain a minimum of three credits in any subjects in the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) or its equivalent.

Students who complete the diploma level can begin their career or further their studies at the Management and Science University (MSU) through the School of Hospitality and Creative Arts (SHCA) with credit transfers allowing them to enter the second year of a bachelor's degree in the same field or a related programme.

In line with MSU College's aim to produce balanced, holistic and well-rounded graduates, various components are embedded into the student learning experience to further enhance their soft skills and ensure they are well prepared for the job market.

Turn your love of cooking into professional skills with MSU College's Diploma in Culinary Arts programme.

With all the knowledge and entrepreneurial and soft skills acquired, graduates may have the opportunity to work in hotels, build their own restaurant or cafe, or run a catering business.

Students can also choose other programmes such as Tourism Management, Hotel Management and Food Service and Restaurant Management.

MSU College is also the MSU APEL Centre for potential candidates to take the APEL Aptitude Test as the non-conventional pre-qualification for entry into higher studies, in which 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.

■ For more information on the programmes offered, call 03-5521 6787 or email enquiry@msucollege.my or visit *www.msucollege.edu.my*

IMU UNIVERSITY

A strong start, endless opportunities.

Foundation in Arts
(N/0011/3/0128) (03/29) (MQA/SWA17403)
Intake: Apr / Jul / Sep

Foundation in Science
(R2/010/3/0186) (09/28) (MQA/FA3974)
Intake: Apr / Jul / Sep

IMU UNIVERSITY
DU006W
IMU Bukit Jalil Main Campus
126, Jalan Jalil Perkasa 19, Bukit Jalil, 57000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
+603 8656 7228 (Main)
IMU Technology Park Campus (New)
Lot 6, Jalan Inovasi 1, Taman Teknologi MRANTI, Bukit Jalil, 57000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
2022 SETARA COMPETITIVE
+603-2727 7515 (Enquiry) start@imu.edu.my www.imu.edu.my