INTERNATIONALISING A NATIONAL UNIVERSITY:

THE UNIVERSITI KEBANGSAAN MALAYSIA

EXPERIENCE

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Abstract

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) was formally established on 18 May 1970 after an overwhelming request and support from the population of Malaysia who wanted the establishment of a national university with the Malay Language (*Bahasa Melayu*) as the medium of instruction. UKM was envisaged to have the spirit and soul of the local culture and traditions which would contribute to the advancement of knowledge in arts, religion, humanities, science and technology through the use of Bahasa Melayu as the official medium of instruction. UKM has surpassed the initial intended expectations with its achievements over the years. From a university formed from the call of the people, the university has not only proven that *Bahasa Melayu* may be successfully used at the tertiary level but UKM has now been identified as a research university by the government of Malaysia. After 35 years of existence, more than 105,000 students have graduated. Currently, there are 17,268 students registered at the undergraduate level and another 7,219 students at the postgraduate level of which 931 are foreign students from 35 different countries. UKM encompasses an academic community of 1,772 and a supporting administrative staff of 7,333. UKM's challenge in this era of globalisation is

to promote its national identity beyond the boundaries of Malaysia. The key role that UKM has to play is to internationalise the national identity through networking in the areas of staff and students' exchanges and research. UKM has drawn up various plans to strategically reach this goal. UKM, though a brainchild of nationalistic fervour and aspirations, is very international in outlook without sacrificing its cherished culture and values. Two pertinent issues arise, which are to increase the number of linkages with universities outside the country and to increase the number of international postgraduate students. UKM has played host to more than 80 institutions and organisations from countries all over the world including those from Asia, Europe, America and the Pacific basin. UKM has also made plans to increase the number of postgraduate students to 40% by 2010. This paper will emphasise what has been achieved thus far by UKM to reflect its image as "The national university with an international reach".

1. Introduction

The idea of establishing a national university was first thought of as far back as the early 1920's. The initial proposition was prepared by Abd. Kadir Adabi based on the ideas of Zaa'ba. They sought for the establishment of a university that could meet the educational needs of the Malays and the development of their language. Through the 30's, the idea grew, but secretly cherished in the hearts of the Malays, especially during the time of strong colonial domination. The Malaysian education system prior to independence in 1957 was based on the British system as schools were segregated into various categories depending on the medium of instruction utilized. Majority of the English speaking schools were localized in towns while the Malay medium schools were found in the villages. Upon completion of their studies the students who went to Malay schools had no university to go to and thus many students in the villages ended their education after secondary school.

However, the idea for a national university was again openly and actively pursued during the 40's and the 50's when the Federation of the Union of Malay Teachers of the Peninsula agitated for the placement of the Malay Language in the mainstream activities of the country, and raise the standard of the Malay schools so that their student could further their studies at tertiary level.

When Malaysia gained her independence in 1957 The Education Ordinance was passed by parliament. The main thrust of the new education policy was to create a single national education system with the final aim of using *Bahasa Melayu* the national language as the main medium of instruction. The overriding factor was that the national

language would be the catalyst for forging national unity.

In the 60's, the demands for a national university were repeated and discussions were reopened. A group of Malay intellectuals gathered to discuss ideas of a national university, not only in the context of the Malay needs, but also of a Malaysian nation. Their ideas were well received by all. Thus, from then on, no force could stop the advancement of the people's demands. In 1969, a Sponsoring Committee was set up to prepare and publish a report recommending the establishment of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. There was even a drive to collect money all over the country to expedite the launching of the new national university. The report formed the basis of the University. Much of its recommendations were adopted as guidelines in the official establishment of the University.

Finally Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM as it is popularly known) was formally established on 18 May 1970. UKM is the third university in Malaysia, but the first to use *Bahasa Melayu*, the national language, as the medium of instruction. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia begun with just 192 students, 78 lecturers and three faculties. The early pioneers were placed in a temporary campus in Jalan Pantai. Over the years the University has grown in strength to become an institution of higher learning synonymous with quality education. UKM is celebrating her 35th anniversary this year. Thus, the establishment of the University was indeed an historical event. It was erected on the hard stone and bricks of people's thoughts, sweat and vision. The progress achieved since its formation has proved beyond any doubt the success of *Bahasa Melayu* (Malay language) as a medium of instruction at the university level.

UKM today has expanded to 11 faculties, namely – the faculties of Economics & Business, Engineering, Education, Islamic Studies, Medicine, Science &Technology, Social Sciences & Humanities, Law, Information Sciences &Technology, Allied Health Sciences, and Dentistry. The university has seven research institutes, the Institute of The Malay World and Civilisation (ATMA), the Institute for Environment and Development (LESTARI) the Institute for Malaysian and International Studies (IKMAS), the Institute of Microengineering and Nanotechnology (IMEN), the UKM Medical Molecular Biology Institute (UMBI), and Institute of Occidental Studies (IKON). Apart from the seven research institutes UKM has two research excellence centres, the Centre for Gene Analysis and Technology (CGAT), and the Centre for Advanced Engineering. In addition, UKM has founded a private limited holding company known as UKM Holdings, which handles the commercial activities of UKM.

Recently the Prime Minister of Malaysia, The Right Honourable Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi launched the Malaysia Genome Institute at UKM. The placement of the

national institute in UKM signifies the research strength of the university in the area of genomics and molecular biology. The Malaysian Institute of Environment (EiMAS) is also located within the vicinity of the main campus thus enhancing research collaborations between this institute and UKM.

The University is supported by several central divisions, which manage and coordinate all academic activities such as – the centres for Public and International Relations, General Studies, Research Management, Publication and Printing, Academic Advancement, Students' Development, and the Co-curriculum Centre. The Computer Centre maintains the University's ICT systems. Postgraduate degrees are coordinated by the Centre of Graduate Studies and include advanced diplomas, specialist degrees, masters and PhDs, which are offered in various fields. The Centre for Educational Advancement is responsible for running UKM's commercial academic programmes.

UKM's dynamism is based on its readiness to face future challenges as is clear from its efforts to redefine its role. UKM aims to be pioneer and explorer, one that ventures into the future in pursuit of academic excellence. To achieve its mission, the University is restructuring and redefining its objectives and aims. During an exercise to formulate its strategic plan, UKM reworded its mission, vision and goals statements to take into account the new world of globalisation. The new vision, mission and goals are given below;

The Vision

UKM is committed to be the leading University that pioneers innovations in creating a dynamic, knowledgeable and ethical society.

The Mission

To be the premier University that affirms and promotes the values of the Malay Language while globalising knowledge within the framework of the national culture.

Goals

To become a leading and competitive centre of knowledge, enriched with technology that:

Affirms and promotes the value of Malay as a language of learning;

Builds a dynamic and ethical society;

Internationalises UKM's image and contribution to the global community and

Stimulates the development of technologies beneficial to society.

After 35 years of existence, more than 105,000 students have graduated. Currently, there are 17,268 students registered at the undergraduate level and another 7,219 students at the postgraduate level of which 931 are foreign students from 35 different countries. UKM encompasses an academic community of 1,772 and a supporting administrative staff of 7,333.

Currently there are 17 government-funded universities, 26 private universities and 500 private colleges in Malaysia. Over 244 000 students are enrolled in institutions of higher learning, over half of whom are women. In UKM the enrolment of women students has risen dramatically purely due to a shift in government's admission policy based on merit. UKM saw the registration of 70% women students during the academic session of 2004/05.

In this era of globalisation UKM's mission is to promote the national identity beyond the shores of the country. In an effort to consolidate its internationalisation programme, a Centre for Public and International Relations (PUSPA) was established on the 1st of January 2002. UKM, though a brainchild of nationalistic fervour and aspirations, is very international in outlook without sacrificing its cherished culture and values. The main theme of UKM's new image is "The national university with an international reach".

2. Challenges of Globalisation

The advances made in information technology coupled with the mass transportation of people have turned the world into a global village. The mobility of ordinary people and the ease plus speed with which we communicate with each other has meant that we now live in a smaller world. Globalisation has arrived at our doorstep affecting the way we live and work. In higher education, the term globalisation may generally be described as trends in higher education that is connected to cross-national implications. These will include the democratisation of education, global choice for tertiary education, international growing scope for employers, the Internet and communication technology. Those in the business of higher education will have to respond to these new challenges brought on by globalisation in order to remain competitive. Internationalisation is the term widely used for the response of higher education systems and institutions to trends of globalisation. The challenges posed by globalisation would be a threat to certain sectors of the education industry but an opportunity to others. The main issue that must be addressed is that tertiary education providers must adapt to the rapid changes brought on by globalisation in order to ensure a sustainable future. The main issues that must be taken into consideration when creating internationalisation programmes are:

General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)

Democratisation of Education

Quality Assurance

Universality of Curricular

3. Strategies for Internationalisation: A UKM Experience

There are a variety of issues that were taken into consideration when developing the strategies to internationalise UKM. These strategies were adopted for foundation of future internationalisation activites.

Malaysian Government's Policy

Public university such as UKM has no restrictions on the intake of foreign postgraduate students. However, the Ministry of Higher Education has set a ruling of allowing only 5% enrolment of foreign students into undergraduate courses at public universities. For courses in key areas such as medicine, dentistry, pharmacy and engineering the acceptance of foreign students are made only through a government to government agreement. UKM is currently promoting its postgraduate programmes overseas, a strategy that augurs well with the university's strive to become a research university. The statistics on foreign students' intake into UKM is given in Table 1.

Table1. Foreign Students Statistics in UKM, 2001-2005.

Academic Session	Number of students			
	Undergraduate	Master	Ph.D	Total
2001/2002	60	208	189	457
2002/2003	55	372	279	706
2003/2004	61	430	322	813
2004/2005	78	492	439	1009

The current trend clearly shows an increase in the enrolment of foreign students. As the University is entrusted to look for its own funds, the setting up of international programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate level may look as a very promising alternative. The international programmes would be developed under UKM's business arm, UKM Holdings Sdn. Bhd. Such programmes will help the University raise much-needed funds for future developments. UKM hopes to create new international academic programmes by partnering with universities from overseas. Currently, UKM with the University of Duisburg Essen (UDE) is conducting double degree programmes.

Such a move has created a paradigm shift for public universities in Malaysia.

UKM Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan is like a beacon to the management in UKM in ensuring that we are travelling on the same path that will lead to academic excellence and sustainability. The overall strategy to achieve the mission lists 10 ensuing strategies in several areas deemed to be contributing components:

Strategy 1: To advance and nurture *Bahasa Melayu*.

Strategy 2: To emphasise and intensify research.

Strategy 3: To uplift the quality of academic programmes.

Strategy 4: To lead UKM to the international arena.

Strategy 5: To realise students excellence and potential.

Strategy 6: To equip UKM as a leading agency of the ICT era.

Strategy 7: To develop and maintain human resources.

Strategy 8: To implement budgeting according to planning.

Strategy 9: To provide the required physical infrastructure and environment.

Strategy 10: To emplace a quality work culture based on indigenous values.

UKM's quest to acquire global recognition is highlighted in Strategy 4. The Centre for Public and International Relations was formed in January 2002 to spearhead the internationalisation programme. A good key performance indicator for the effectiveness of UKM's internationalisation programme is the number of foreign students registered in the various courses. There has been a 100% rise in the intake of foreign students from about 500 in 2002 to the current 1009 (931 are postgraduate students). The agency responsible for monitoring the implementations of the strategy is the Centre for Academic Advancement.

3.3 Academic Restructuring

Academic restructuring is about managing change, of which it is the most difficult change imaginable, which is a shift in intellectual paradigms. The change in intellectual paradigm is to effect quality of programmes. In UKM, academic restructuring has been envisaged to happen through the consolidation of academic programmes and the identification of niche programmes as well as niche research. Consolidation broke down barriers between faculties, enabling disciplines to interact in a better and interactive way. This manner of consolidation produced three new faculties from previously 9

different faculties. The other consolidation is through internal restructuring, an exercise of re-invention. Faculties, which have not been consolidated through merging of faculties, need to consolidate themselves through disciplines and the total body of knowledge they wish to emulate.

Through restructuring, new programmes and new ways of delivery emerge. It is these niche programmes and niche research that will attract participation and interest to others at the international level. Niche research is housed in centres of excellence positioned to attract international partners. Niche programmes too are results of especially constructed programmes perhaps designed as an on-off study arising out of specific agreements between UKM and other international partners.

Currently, UKM has embarked on its restructuring programme by successfully establishing the new streamlined Faculty of Science and Technology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities and Faculty of Economics and Business. These three newly restructured faculties offer programmes that are multidisciplinary, transcending previously different departments. It is anticipated that future students inclusive of international students will have a wider choice of courses to choose from thus enhancing UKM's academic programmes.

3.4 Curricular implications

The curriculum in UKM while having a very international input has to retain a certain percentage of national identity as indicated in our mission statement. Malaysia's perspective of a sustainable society has meant national unity as the overriding factor in the development of a nation. Hence, the curricula should be a fusion between the requirements of globalising knowledge and the ability to produce graduates with a strong national culture and identity. Currently, the curricula are revised once every 3 years. The curriculum revision exercises are required to seek advice and comments from international external assessors, industries, private sectors, government agencies and professional bodies. The management is also actively arranging for activities to expose UKM graduate to as many international experiences as possible in tandem with the slogan "The national university with an international reach".

Internationalising *Bahasa Melayu*

Even though the Malay language is ulitilised as the main language of deliverance in UKM, the university has come up with strategies to encourage students to enhance their proficiency in English as well as other major foreign languages such as French, German, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Thai and many others. All students in UKM are

required to take up 4 units in English. From 2003 all Science and Mathematics based courses are taught in English in line with the Malaysian government's policy.

UKM has never ceased in realising her mission, which is "To be the premier University that affirms and promotes the values of the Malay Language while globalising knowledge within the framework of the national culture". Today the *Bahasa Melayu* issue has matured to a stage where it is not just confined to language alone but transcends other areas such as technology, culture and architecture. UKM sees her role of promoting the Malay language through new indigenous knowledge that is born, nurtured and cultured from research carried out within the university. It is the new knowledge that is generated through her research that is attracting foreign students to UKM. Most of the 931 postgraduate foreign students come to UKM to attach themselves to various research groups in UKM. Internationalisation of our research activities has helped to promote the Malay language among the international students, as they need to master the command of the language to communicate effectively with the masses. The professors heading many of the niche areas in science, medicine, engineering, information technology, education, social sciences, humanities and Islamic studies have indirectly helped to promote the Malay language among other nationalities that come to join their research groups.

3.6 Changing Patterns of Finance and Governance

One of the main challenges that UKM must face with respect to globalisation is to remain competitive. Funding for UKM, being a public university has traditionally been from the government. Low fees structure enjoyed by the students is the result of heavy subsidies from the government. In order to bring about greater accountability and productivity the government of Malaysia has decided to make all public universities autonomous. Once fully autonomous the university is expected to generate its own income with the government financing only a fraction of the total expenditure. All public universities has been given the target of achieving 25% self-sustenance by the year 2010. Since the 15 March 1999, UKM has undergone the initial autonomy exercise by which UKM is now governed by a Board of Directors.

UKM recognizes the enormous commercial potential of its human resource expertise and research activities to contribute to the finances of the university beyond its traditional funding base. Commercial generation of revenue involves harnessing the expertise and resources of UKM to provide specialist consultancy, research and technology transfer capabilities, executive and specialist training programmes for the community and industry. To this end, UKM Holdings Sdn Bhd. (UKMHSB) was

incorporated under the Companies Act 1965 with an authorised capital of USD 1 million on April 19, 2000. A board of directors who reports directly to the UKM Board of Directors governs the management of UKMHSB. The chairman of UKMHSB is the Vice-Chancellor of UKM.

3.7 ICT in UKM

The computer has become an integral part of our daily lives. The importance of ICT is reflected in UKM's Strategic Plan as Strategy 6. Currently UKM has put in place a very effective computer system for administrative purposes. There are various systems to manage personal data of UKM staff, financial systems and appraisal systems. The students have their own systems not just for record keeping and registration purposes but also a system to handle students' complaints. UKM has also set-up an e-learning portal to aid teaching and learning besides the conventional lectures and tutorials. The implementation of Strategy 6 is consolidated by an ICT policy, which has listed down seven major projects that will be executed in stages.

Standardisation of the ICT capabilities for UKM denizen

E-learning

One student one computer

E-Friends of the University

E-Intellectual property trove for the University

University's campus communication system

Computer assisted research network

Research Capacity

A key thrust in the internationalisation programme of a university is the research activity. Research may be viewed as the main product offered to the community outside the university especially the international community. Research may be translated into tangible products such as postgraduate programmes, publications, patents and awards. More importantly research is the source for new knowledge ensuring the economic sustainability of a country. With respect to research, UKM has shown tremendous progress. The Government of Malaysia has identified UKM as a research university.

UKM is receiving an increasing amount of research grants. During the period of 2001-2004 UKM's researchers have successfully secured grants worth about USD 50 million for various projects. The detailed breakdown of grants obtained from the Intensification of Research in Priority Areas, a scheme by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, as well as short-term grant schemes given by the Ministry

of Higher Learning and external grants from international entities are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Grants Obtained by UKM for 2001-2005

Source	Grant (RM)
Intensification of Research in Priority Areas (IRPA)	143, 538,000
Fundamental Research	7, 353,000
External Grants	12,918,000
Europe Aid (Asia Link, AUNP ect.)	2,500,000
Consultancy	24,000,000
Total	190,309,000

*1 USD = RM3.80

3.9 Quality Assurance and Mutual Recognition of Qualifications

In UKM the Centre for Academic Advancement is the agency responsible for carrying out activities pertaining to quality assurance issues. The key elements connected to quality assurance are international bench marking and accreditation from international professional bodies. With respect to international accreditation by professional bodies, the Chemical Engineering programme was accredited by the Institute of Chemical Engineers in the United Kingdom. Thus chemical engineering graduates from UKM may practice in the UK without first having to seek permission to do so from the professional engineering bodies. All degrees from the Faculty of Engineering in UKM are accredited by the Board of Engineers Malaysia which is seeking membership into The Washington Accord. Members of the accord give mutual recognition to one another, thus ensuring the engineering graduates of UKM easier employment opportunities in the member countries. The Biomedical Sciences programme in the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences has received international accreditation from the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) in United Kingdom ever since 1997. The accountancy programme in UKM was given partial accreditation by ACCA and CIMA for some of the courses. The current activities with respect to quality assurance augurs well for the programmes in UKM. International recognition will ensure that our graduates would be better equipped to seek employment anywhere in he world.

Besides the professional recognition, UKM has successfully attained ISO 9001:2000 accreditation from SIRIM QAS for its quality system involving undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. UKM has also launched their campaign for ISO 9001:2000

certification for research activities. It is anticipated these quality accreditation exercises will bring greater efficiency and productivity.

Currently UKM is also involved in the development of the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) which, will enable an Education Quality Assurance Agency to negotiate on qualifications on a global level for Malaysia. A QF will enable UKM to secure standards of qualification and reinforce as well implement policies on education quality assurance and ensure accuracy and consistency of nomenclature of qualification.

4.0 Internationalisation Activities in UKM

As globalisation looms in the background UKM has included Strategy 4 in its Strategic Plan. The strategy has outlined objectives, which in turn lists down specific activities to ensure the smooth implementation of the internationalisation programme in UKM. Of utmost importance is the formation of strategic alliances with universities outside the country. It is hoped that the alliances will lead to a greater network of partnerships in academic activities such as research, joint publications, joint supervision, exchange of students (undergraduate and postgraduate), staff exchange, joint seminars and others. Such activities besides giving added knowledge to the people of UKM, will also expose them to new cultures and experiences. Such experiences will enhance the performance of the university as a whole truly reflecting UKM's image as "The national university with an international reach".

4.1 Consolidation of Information

The most important aspect in the internationalisation of UKM is the information available to the community outside the campus. In the age of ICT, the Internet is a powerful tool for the effective dissemination of information. UKM has taken steps to consolidate its information especially those pertaining to research. A database containing the expertise of UKM's academics is easily accessible and may be updated personally by the respective individuals.

The information published on the website is easily accessible and updated regularly. The easy download of applications forms has also made the process of registering into UKM academic programmes relatively easy.

The setting up databases such as PADAT containing about 50,000 entries of works on the Malay World and Civilisation has truly helped to internationalise the work carried out at the Institute of the Malay World and Civilisation.

Besides the Internet, the University places emphasis on corporate publications in the form of an international bulletin, Resonance as well as brochures to promote the

research and postgraduate programmes in UKM.

4.2 International Visits to UKM

The number of visitors to UKM has increased steadily over the years, a reflection of the effectiveness of the information dissemination on the University. The main interest in UKM is collaboration in research and mobility programmes for both staff and students. An interesting phenomenon that we are witnessing lately is requests by universities from the United States of America for short summer courses on understanding Islam. Naturally, it is an honour for Malaysia as well as UKM, to be acknowledged as a moderate Islamic country and having very safe environments for students to study in.

4.3 International Visits by UKM

Another important aspect for the internationalisation of UKM is the ability to forge new strategic lingkages with foreign universities to enhance the academic activities between the two institutions. The top management has undertaken trips to visit the universities in neighbouring countries in ASEAN as well as those in Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Korea, United Kingdom, Europe, the United States of America. These trips act as icebreakers to get to know one another and to explore the various possibilities of collaborations that may be undertaken together to ensure academic sustainability of both institutions.

These trips have proven to be very successful as we enlarge and enhance our network of linkages. Not only have we been able to find new research partners but also diversify the places where we send our staff and students for training.

Currently the number of official collaborations in the form of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) is given in Table 3.

Table 3. MOU forged by UKM 2002-2004.

Country/Continent	Number of MOUs
Asia	21
Asean	18
Australia & New Zealand	5
United States of America	1
Europe	6

UKM also encourages its academic staff to attend international seminars. Mass participation by UKM staff are reserved for seminars which are deemed important for

the setting up of new networks. The ripple effect is seen as more institutions visit UKM after the initial contacts are made at the seminar. Besides the visits, UKM lecturers are invited to deliver talks and share their expertise with new contacts made at these seminars.

4.4 International Research Exhibition

A key thrust in the internationalisation programme of a university is the research activity. Research may be viewed as the main product offered to the community outside the university especially the international community. At the international level UKM researchers have participated in the International Exhibition of Inventions of New Techniques and Products, Geneva since 1993 garnering awards and honours for the University. UKM has steadily over the years participated in these international exhibitions as part of our quest to internationalise our research products. Our first sole entry in 1993 by Professor Dr. Ibrahim Abdullah with the product "Liquid Natural Rubber" brought home a silver medal from Geneva. Subsequently over the years UKM has secured a total of 43 medals from our participation in the International Exhibition of Inventions of New Techniques and Products, Geneva. Last year our researchers brought honour to UKM and the country with a total of 10 awards from the Seoul International Invention Fair. These awards signify that our research products are internationally recognised and that our research strategy is heading in the right direction. The number of awards won at Geneva and Seoul since 1999 are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. The Number of Awards won at International Research exhibition in Geneva, Switzerland and Seoul, Korea.

Year	Research Exhibition in Geneva and Korea			
	No. of Products	Gold	Silver	Bronze
1999	2	1	1	–
2000	3	2	–	1
2001	3	1	1	1
2002	8	4	3	1
2003	6	2	2	2
2004	9	4	3	2
2005	15	2	8	3
Total	46	16	18	10

4.5 Mobility Programmes for Staff

The management is also actively arranging for activities to expose the UKM staff and graduates to as many international experiences as possible. The exchange programmes for staff include both academic and administrative. Among the mobility programmes that are currently available in UKM for academic staff are:

Overseas training for Master and Doctorate degrees.

Sabbatical leave.

Post-doctorate training.

Foreign lectureship.

Foreign consultation.

For the administrative staff short working stints for up to two months have been organised. In 2004, UKM had become host to five senior administrative and academic staff of Universitas Indonesia in their on the job comparative exposure and training at various strategic centres and departments within UKM for two weeks. In 2003, a few of UKM senior and junior registrar officers were selected for on the job exposure stints in New Zealand universities.

The various foreign exposures have meant that UKM act as a melting pot of ideas derived from various countries. The synergistic employment of different approaches to solve common problems has ensured dynamism in UKM's quest to provide quality education.

4.6 International Projects

A key thrust in the internationalisation programme of a university is the research activity. Currently, the bulk of the research grants are obtained from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, Malaysia through the Intensification of Research in Priority Areas (IRPA) mechanisms. However, UKM researchers have also been actively sourcing out international grants from various sources such as:

Higher Education Link (British Council)

German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

Third World Academy of Sciences (TWAS)

Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)

Asia Public Intellectual Programme (API)

Southeast Asian Fellowship Programme (SEAF)

Europe Aid (EU)

The research projects are conducted in both the sciences and humanities faculties as

well the research institutes in UKM. UKM is currently involved in 8 Europe Aid funded projects.

Chairs of Excellence

UKM has obtained endowment funds from the private sector to set up special professorial chairs of research and training in faculties and institutes. So far about RM10.25 million (USD 2.7 million) had been donated by outside corporations and foundations for the five chairs of excellence. The names of these chairs, their year of establishment, the host faculty / institute and names of professors from universities in Asia and the Pacific who had been appointed to these chairs, and their duration of tenure are as follows:

i. Noah Foundation Chair (Est. 1995), Faculty of Economics and Business

Professor David Marshal Hunt (University of Southern Mississippi), May 1997 – May 1998

Professor Dr James E. Nelson (University of Colorado, USA), December 1996 – April 1997

Professor Zahir A. Qureshi (University of Western Michigan), June 1995 – June 1996

ii. Pok Rafeah Chair (Est. 1997), Institute of Malaysian and International Studies

Professor Kunio Yoshihara (University of Kyoto, Japan), March 2001 – February 2003

Professor Dr James H. Mittelman (University of Washington, USA), April 1997 – March 1999

iii. Rashid Hussain Group Chair (Est. 1997), Faculty of Economics and Business

Professor Carl McGowan (University of Oakland, USA), August 2003 – April 2004

iv. Tun Ismail Ali Foundation Chair (Est. 2001), Faculty of Economics and Business

Professor Paul H. Malatesta (University of Washington, USA), May 2003 – May 2004

Professor Abul Mansur Mohammad Masih (King Fahd University of Petroleum and Mineralogy, Saudi Arabia), June 2004 – September 2004

v. Abdulaziz Palace Foundation Chair (Est. 2002), Faculty of Education

The first chair has yet to be appointed.

4.8 International Programmes for UKM Students

There are exchange programmes for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. Currently, at the undergraduate level UKM has exchange programmes with Sun Moon University, Korea; Beijing Foreign Studies Universities (BFSU), China; and University of Duisburg Essen (UDE) in Germany. UKM and UDE currently offer a double degree programme for Electrical & Electronics Engineering and Communications & Computer

Engineering programmes. So far about 15 students have benefited from this programme.

Study tours abroad are organised to various destinations. The Centre for Students' Advancement acts as the secretariat for internationalisation activities for undergraduate students. The Co-curriculum Centre in UKM has also started a new programme where students may spend up to 6 weeks in a foreign country studying a specific matter unique to the country. It is clear that UKM is constantly devising new programmes to include the dimension of internationalisation into its curriculum. It is really up to the students to utilize fully all these programmes to gear themselves to be globally competent.

There are exchange programmes for postgraduate students of UKM. The postgraduate students exchange programme was set up by the Department of International Relations, Centre for Public and International Relations (PUSPA) UKM since 2002. So far, 17 students have benefited from the programme, which entitles a student to spend up to 3 months to carry out research in a foreign laboratory.

Two Master degree students from Faculty of Science and Technology were selected to carry out research over a semester at University of Canterbury, New Zealand. In 2003, a total of 9 students had been selected by the UKM Advisory Committee of Internationalisation Programme for a stint at the Australian National University, Canberra, Australia; University of Cape Town, South Africa; University College Cork, Ireland; Universitaet Maastricht, The Netherlands; Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia; and the Hussian Ebrahim Jamal (HEJ) Research Institute of Chemistry, University of Karachi, Pakistan. In 2004 a total of 6 students were awarded grants for work in the following universities, (HEJ) Research Institute of Chemistry, University of Karachi, Pakistan; Stockholm Universiteit, Sweden; Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia; University of Cambridge, England; University of Reading and The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, England.

5.0 Conclusion

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia has transformed itself from a university set up with a mission to promote the usage of the Malay Language at the tertiary level to a research university. UKM has the Strategic Plan as its guidance. The University sees the importance of restructuring its academic programmes to fit in with the new world. Special emphasis is given towards consolidating its research through international strategic alliance as in this era of globalisation smart partnerships must be forged at the international level. It is envisaged that through research UKM will successfully gain international recognition. Emphasis is also given to quality assurance issues. There will

be great challenges ahead but UKM has the will to overcome all these challenges to realise the theme "The National University with an International Reach".

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