

Local Universities To Benchmark Through QS-Apple 2016

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 14 -- In Malaysia's bid to highlight the reputation of its institutions of higher learning (IPT) at a global level, a platform to improve the ranking and rating of IPTs is regarded vital.

The QS-APPLE Conference and Exhibition 2016, an international level seminar to be organised by Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP), will serve as the platform that will allow local IPTs to benchmark with renowned universities around the world.

As an inaugural organising partner of the event's 12th edition, UniMAP clearly has a heavy responsibility especially as it also aims to be among the top 500 universities in the world by 2020.

QS-APPLE 2016

Although Malaysia has hosted the event in 2009, jointly organised by Universiti Malaya (UM) and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), not much is known by the public of QS-APPLE and its history which began in 2005.

QS-APPLE, which stands for Asia-Pacific Professional Leaders in Education, is a major conference and exhibition for international educators in Asia, Europe, America and Australasia.

Each year the conference is held at a different location to focus on the richness and variety of the higher education sector in the Asia Pacific region.

The event was first hosted by Singapore for two consecutive years in 2005 and 2006, followed by Hong Kong, South Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Taiwan and Australia.

Noting UniMAP's target to become one of the best in the world, its Vice Chancellor Datuk Professor Dr Zul Azhar Zahid Jamal said Malaysia's participation in the event would be significant in benchmarking its academic reputation among strategic international partners.

"Academic reputation is one of the criteria in QS Star Ranking and QS World University Rankings.

"Therefore, it is also important for IPTs in Malaysia (including UniMAP) to be active in the conference," he said.

Zul Azhar continued that to achieve their goal, networking with strategic partners from other universities is important.

"We (UniMAP) have lined up a clear strategy for work and make it come true.

"By becoming a strategic partner of a professional body which focuses on university ranking activities

(QS Quacquarelli Symonds), we will better understand the criteria used for evaluation. The chance to approach international level universities will indirectly allow us to attain our goal," he explained.

The opportunity is also an honour for UniMAP for once again bringing the international conference to Malaysia to discuss matters pertaining university ranking in the country.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

According to UniMAP Chief Librarian Mazmin Mat Akhir, this year's theme, 'New Directions in Asia-Pacific Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities', was chosen to represent the main purpose of the conference.

He said during these difficult times, transformation in education is an element that requires serious attention.

Established in 2001, UniMAP is a relatively new public university therefore it is important for the institution and others to understand challenges and opportunities that could benefit them all.

Citing an example whereby IPTs encourage foreign student enrollment, evaluation in QS is seen as a medium to promote and increase the visibility of an educational institution, including among foreign students.

"To me, ranking and rating is not something that is important but it is an element that should not be neglected," he continued.

Mazmin clarified that in efforts to achieve their goal, UniMAP is not alone as the Higher Education Ministry has also been working together to outline measures needed in the aspect of rating and raking through the Malaysian Education Blueprint-Higher Education (PPPMPT).

MAINTAIN PERFORMANCE, EXEMPLARY MODEL

Going further into the matter of rating, UniMAP believes that in maintaining reputation and momentum towards becoming among the world's top universities the future will hold bigger challenges.

School of Manufacturing Engineering Dean Associate Professor Dr Khairul Azwan Ismail said despite this, the university is determined to continue making a name for itself at the global level.

"Since our establishment, our achievements were the result of internal and external challenges we had faced.

"Now, as we aim higher, our strategy is to be more innovative especially in terms of administration and research. We will definitely seek new opportunities in becoming a more creative and competitive institution," he said.

Dr Khairul Azwan added that through benchmarking with other top universities in the Asia Pacific region, UniMAP is also more prepared to outline strategies that suit the objectives it hoped to meet by 2020.

Estimating 350 participants from over 39 countries, QS-APPLE 2016 will take place from Nov 22 to 24 at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre (PICC).

Disediakan oleh;

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