

SEJAHTERA ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK

Humanising Education for Raḥmatan lil- Ālamīn
post-COVID-19 disruption

saf

/ʃaff/

Quranic

صف /ʃaff/

in 'solid' ranks (ʃaff), as if they were a solid cemented structure

سورة الصف 61:4

English

row /rɔʊ/

a number of people or things in a more or less straight line

Malay

baris /ba.ris/

satu deret yang merupakan susunan memanjang

Arabic

صف /ʃaff/

سَطْرٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ



**First Print, 2021
IIUM**

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Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia

Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Sejahtera Academic Framework : Humanising Education for Raḥmatan lil- Ālamīn post-COVID-19 disruptions /

Edited by Lihanna Borhan, Amelia Wong Azman, Gairuzazmi Mat Ghani, Muhammad Faris Abdullah, Zainurin Abdul Rahman, Zulkefli Yusof.

ISBN 9789674670184

1. International Islamic University Malaysia.
 2. Education, Higher--Aims and objectives--Malaysia--21st century.
 3. Sustainable development--Malaysia.
 4. Islamic universities and colleges--Malaysia--21st century.
 5. Government publications--Malaysia.
- I. Lihanna Borhan. II. Amelia Wong Azman. III. Gairuzazmi Mat Ghani.
IV. Muhammad Faris Abdullah. V. Zainurin Abdul Rahman.
VI. Zulkefli Yusof.

Published in Malaysia by

**Office of Knowledge for Change and
Advancement (KCA)**

International Islamic University Malaysia
P.O Box 10, 50728 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Tel : +603-6421 6781/6783/6787; Fax : +603-6421 6789
Email : kca@iium.edu.my

Printed in Malaysia by

Rekacetak Sdn. Bhd.(810382-U)
No. 12 & 14 Jalan Jemuju Empat 16/13D
Seksyen 16, 40200 Shah Alam
Selangor Darul Ehsan

SEJAHTERA ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK

Humanising Education for Raḥmatan lil- Ālamīn
post-COVID-19 disruption



LEADING THE WAY
KHALIFAH · AMĀNAH · IḠRĀ · RAḤMATAN LIL-ĀLAMĪN



PHILOSOPHY OF KNOWLEDGE

The University shall be guided by the philosophy and principles which shall include the following:

- A. the meaning and spirit of *surah Al-'Alaq*, verses 1 to 5 of the Holy *Qur'ān* as the fundamental constituent principle of the University;
- B. the acceptance of *tawhīd* in recognising Allah as the Absolute Creator and Master of the Universe
- C. the ultimate source of knowledge is the acceptance of Allah as the Absolute Creator and Master of Mankind;
- D. the propagation and advancement of knowledge is a trust (*amānah*) and shall be in conformity with the purpose of Allah's creation of the universe;
- E. knowledge shall be utilised by mankind as the servant (*'abd*) and vicegerent (*khalīfah*) of Allah on earth, in accordance with the will of Allah;
- F. the quest for knowledge is regarded as an act of worship (*'ibādah*); and
- G. the University shall be Islamic and international in character.

VISION

Inspired by the worldview of *tawhīd* and the Islamic philosophy of the unity of knowledge as well as its concept of holistic education, the University aims at becoming a leading international centre of excellence in education research and innovation which seeks to restore the dynamic and progressive role of the ummah in all branches of knowledge for the betterment of human life and civilisation.

MISSIONS

Towards actualising the University's vision, IIUM endeavours:*

1. To undertake the special and greatly needed task of reforming the contemporary Muslim mentality and integrating Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences in a positive manner
2. To produce better quality intellectuals, professionals and scholars by integrating the qualities of faith (*īmān*), knowledge (*ilm*), and good character (*akhlaq*) to serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress as well as sustainable development in Malaysia and in the Muslim world
3. To promote the concept of Islamisation of human knowledge in teaching, research, consultancy, dissemination of knowledge and the development of academic excellence in the University;
4. To nurture the quality of holistic excellence which is imbued with Islamic moral-spiritual values, in the process of learning, teaching, research, consultancy, publication, administration and student life
5. To exemplify an international community of dedicated intellectuals, scholars, professionals, officers and workers who are motivated by the Islamic worldview and code of ethics as an integral part of their work culture
6. To enhance intercultural understanding and foster civilisational dialogues in Malaysia as well as across communities and nations
7. To develop an environment that instills commitment for life-long learning and a deep sense of social responsibility among staff and students

The Mission Statement of the University may be summarised as the following four core elements:

- Integration
- Islamisation
- Internationalisation
- Comprehensive Excellence

(*these mission statements are not hierarchical)

EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Graduates

Nurture graduates who are balanced and harmonious (*Insān Sejahtera*) as stipulated in the *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan*, crafted on values-based holistic and integrated education for sustainable development (Education 2030)

Teaching and Learning

Provide conducive shared learning (culture of *Iqra'*) ecosystem geared towards the convergence of knowledge founded on the worldview of *Tawhīd* (affirmation of the absolute Oneness of Allah swt) in realising comprehensive excellence

Responsible Research and Innovation

Engage in research and innovation relevant to *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah* and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) aimed at mercy for all the worlds (*Raḥmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*)

Insān Sejahtera and *Khalīfah*

The main outcome of the Educational Goals is to nurture *Insān Sejahtera* (a balanced and harmonious person), equipped with useful knowledge and specialised skills, and committed to Islamic values and practices imbued with integrity, *Amānah*, *Īmān*, *Akhlāq* and *Taqwā* towards the realisation of virtuous civilisation

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FOREWORD

I am delighted to write the foreword for the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF) book that outlines essentially the future academic direction of IIUM. This is central to IIUM survival and growth. Over the years, the world has changed drastically in more than one way, not least due to the socio-political and technological advancement, and so have the functions of academic institutions globally. IIUM, as one of the academic institutions, must work earnestly towards addressing the changes to stay active and relevant as a responsible member of academia.

After more than 37 years in existence, IIUM finally embarks on a systematic effort to re-strategise and re-formulate the framework of its academic programmes and effectively, the IIUM outlook towards education. This, however, does not mean that SAF neglects the past, which has in many ways, deepen the notion of IIUM as the Garden of Knowledge and Virtue. This massive endeavour is a result of careful planning, reflecting the collective effort by all agencies within IIUM to ensure that all components in an academic framework are addressed and appropriately dealt with. It is a 360-degree effort that takes into account the views of students, academic, administrative and support staff as well as the present and past leaders of IIUM.

The publication of this *Sejahtera* Academic Framework book is both a statement and a re-affirmation of IIUM roles in the present world today from here onward. This volume is neither written based on the whims and fancies nor it is conceptualised for convenience reasons. It is a concise compilation of ideas which delineates clearly the information about IIUM ideals, the principles that guide the components of SAF, the explanation of the SAF and finally the elucidation of how the SAF can impact campus' life through the Whole Institutional Transformation initiative. This initiative, started in 2018 and has proven to be beneficial in enhancing the *raison d'être* of IIUM as a global player. This in turn has opened wider vistas in addressing the uncertainties of the future through the exercise of scenario planning.

I believe that the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework is crucial to keep IIUM abreast with the development in the present world and the demands of the future. In fact, IIUM should be spearheading the massive concerted effort to respond to the present coronavirus pandemic, a manifestation of IIUM motto, "Leading the Way". This move is imperative to ensure that IIUM positions itself in the forefront of academia internationally and creates impact in the community as well as the world at large. I sincerely urge IIUM to embrace SAF as one of the ways to make positive changes in this world community in humanising education for *Rahmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*.

Congratulations to IIUM on the publication of *Sejahtera* Academic Framework and may SAF continue to be the guide for IIUM in aligning itself to realise a better world for many years to come.



**HER MAJESTY
SERI PADUKA BAGINDA THE RAJA PERMAISURI AGONG
TUNKU HAJAH AZIZAH AMINAH MAIMUNAH ISKANDARIAH
BINTI ALMARHUM AL-MUTAWAKKIL ALALLAH SULTAN ISKANDAR
AL-HAJ**

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P.K.C., P.K.T., P.J.K.

THE PRESIDENT OF IIUM

The university has requested me to say a few words about the publication of the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF) book, which I have graciously accepted. In my mind, this book is long overdue given the myriads of changes happening around the world; economically, socially, politically and in education. The SAF book contains information about the planning, designing and the maintenance of academic programmes in IIUM, a guide that is useful to new and seasoned members of staff alike. I'm not hesitant to say that the SAF and this book means a lot to IIUM.

For over 37 years IIUM ideals have led to the development of IIUM and its populations as well as IIUM reputation around the world. IIUM was founded under ideals that are unique and unparalleled to other academic institutions. IIUM was established under the guidance of noble philosophy, vision, mission and educational goals stemmed from the spirit of *Iqra'* and based on surah *al-'alaq*. IIUM demand that education be seen as a religious as well as social responsibility rather than a mere business venture. The entire management of IIUM academic programmes is geared towards developing the ummah and treating the members of staff and students as Allah's creations, which is equivalent to humans in today's term. All elements of IIUM ideals are maintained, reinforced and included in the SAF Book.

The methods of achieving IIUM ideals may take different and sometimes long and winding roads but so long we hold steadfast to our ideals and objectives, we will continue to be an institution that the world must recognised. As we move rapidly towards the future, which is now, we have to strengthen our statement and commitment towards IIUM collective goals and this is where I see the SAF comes into play.

In a big picture, SAF is a consummate framework that encompasses all elements related to the management of academic programmes, institution and more. The main business of IIUM is to create changes in life through education and SAF provides a guide that can facilitate the accomplishment of this objective. SAF proposes the alignment of all elements in the rubrics of IIUM ideals and aspirations, academic programmes management, facilities as well as supports and services in order to provide conducive teaching and learning environment, which in turn will produce graduates desired by IIUM.

At its core, SAF insists IIUM academic programmes must be recognised and continue to provide knowledge and skills that are of different natures; religious, contemporary, hard skills as well as soft skills for shaping future generations. At the same time, IIUM must also be cognizant of its quality of graduates. IIUM graduates must be ones that possess good *syahsiah* and fear Allah SWT, give respect to and deserve respect from others, are versatile and are willing



IIUM PRESIDENT
DATUK DR. MOHD DAUD BAKAR

to make good changes in societies, as individuals or as part of the workforce. Hence, brings relevance to the tagline of this book, which is Humanising Education for *Rahmatan lil-'Ālamīn*.

I believe that IIUM population should embrace SAF and through this framework let us bind together as a solid working team to achieve IIUM ideals. Let us continue the ties that we have built and enjoyed all these years and create new and better cooperation as one big family; the students and members of staff, the academics and non-academics, and the present and the past. We should make ourselves visible to the world but still deeply-rooted to our fundamentals.

I congratulate IIUM on the launching of the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework book and may Allah SWT protect us from Covid-19.

INTRODUCTION

The higher education world is currently populated by faculties and staff who grew up in a different kind of environment. But these are also the ones who were behind the many innovations and disruptions the world went through. The impact of the research and development; plus policy-input from those in universities around the world cannot be marginalised. So far from being “dinosaurs in ivory towers,” universities have been at the frontier of knowledge.

However, the impact of the innovations may have gone beyond the expectations of the innovators. For example, thirty years ago, the internet was a nascent element of society, it is now ubiquitous, and the technology advancement has been gigantic. Society has embraced this, yet society is also struggling to handle its impact. This includes the higher education world. On the positive side, there is a wider knowledge web, that is accessible by many and no longer the elite few, and everyone can learn so much. Yet on the other hand, there is rampant plagiarism, and perhaps the rise of “fly-by-night” experts. This is just one example of the complexity of the world today, from the innovations whose roots can in some ways be traced back to universities.

As the world was discussing the IR4.0 disruption and its impact on society, including higher education; another unexpected non-technological disruption occurred in the form of the COVID19 pandemic. And once again, society has to grapple with its impact. Universities may choose to manage, or universities may choose to lead.

Disruptions will continue to occur, at a rate faster than previously experienced; and universities will need to continually make the choice - are they going to just manage and adapt, or are they going to lead the way? And how to do so without sacrificing the soul of the university?

It is with this in mind that the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework was crafted - to enable International Islamic University Malaysia to not just manage or adapt, but to lead the way - foreseeing the incoming disruptions, coming up with our own innovative solutions, while maintaining true to our vision and mission, especially on serving Allah and bringing good to the world (*Rahmatan lil-‘Ālamīn*) - in short, educating in current students “now” to face the future, regardless of what the future might be. Hence, the need to provide an environment that is transformative, that develops both the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and most importantly - values that will bode well for the graduates and the society. This mandates a change in the delivery processes beyond the curriculum delivery but on the management of the University.

For change we must. But we change not to simply adapt, we change to also affect the changes that we want.

The SAF is not a definitive answer cast in stone for perpetuity, for the specifics will continue to change as needed, but it has been developed to allow the University to move ahead in unison while maintaining our core values. SAF is envisioned to be a platform for the various parts of the universities to speak together in a common language that speaks to contemporary and future issues, allowing everyone to develop and fulfill our potential.

Hence, a thorough reading of this volume is recommended. SAF is our beginning to a more integrated collaboration, and it is hoped that this will be the start of more dialogues and discussions that will enrich our lives - the students, the staff, and the larger community.

May Allah ease and bless all our efforts.

LIHANNA BORHAN

DZULKIFLI ABDUL RAZAK

PREFACE

IUM has been growing rapidly since its establishment in 1983. And with any institution, the larger it becomes, the challenges and strategies vary, and the accompanying narratives also vary. The lessons and experiences that IUM has gained along the way become a backdrop of who we want to be while maintaining our core identity. All these are put together in the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF), as described in this volume.

The main objective of SAF is to nurture holistic human beings who have been entrusted on us in a “*jami’ah insāniah*” environment. IUM refuses to be the factory that “produces” simple minded mass productions who are only skilled at what they have been assembled for, void of human values and virtues.

The curriculum has been carefully embedded with important elements, which have been carefully put together to ensure that values are being infused in all grains of knowledge imparted and shared by the scholars in IUM.

The planning and the implementation of SAF are guided by the IUM’s vision and mission, the most pivotal one - the students’ growth in attitude, worldview, personal psychological well-being in a flourishing sustainable Islamic environment.

The first guiding principle in the development and implementation of SAF is empowerment. The revisions in the curriculum took into consideration of the views and attitudes both the lecturers and students have of the old curriculum. This is a proof that the IUM community is given the authority to make decisions and changes according to their own experiences. By doing this, redundant and outdated contents and methodologies are taken out, the “old” one is improved while also coming out with new ones.

SAF pays a greater attention to create a flexible teaching and learning environment for the lecturers and students. Courses are revised and constructed with a space for modifications and further improvements. Flexibility encourages innovative thinking. Academics are motivated to adapt and adopt new ideas, methods for better products and outcomes at all levels.

Having said that, everyone has the responsibility to justify their decisions and innovations that they have been empowered with.

It is significant to highlight that decisions made regarding SAF is not made based on administrative and financial factors. We keep in mind that curriculum should be giving a meaningful and impactful teaching and learning experience for both lecturers and students.

The adoption of SAF is a turning point towards the university’s Whole Institution Transformation (WIT). All agencies in the university must work together in ensuring the success of SAF. Without enhancements or transformation in the facilities and support systems, what has been planned will not be successfully executed. This volume is the beginning of that transformation. It is hoped that with the publication of this volume, the major roles of each one of us - both as the people and the agency - are made clear, and will drive all of us to reflect and re-work our activities, such that we will be able to deliver the transformational educational experience to all.

The Office of Deputy Rector (Academic and Industrial Linkages, later renamed to Academic and Internationalisation) are committed to continue driving this initiative forward, but it can only successfully do so with the continued support of everyone in the University, not just the agencies reporting directly to the Office. We look forward to this continued support, may Allah bless this effort, and may we be able to nurture the *khalifah* who will lead the future.

This volume is already a testament of the commitment of so many people in the University, working together in addition to their already huge portfolio of work, but forging ahead to ensure that the University community not only has a framework to tie our major goals together, but a commitment that they will also be pushing this through together. This is a “work in progress” not in the sense this is unfinished, but a “work in progress” because we will never rest on our laurels, and there are always room for continual improvement, to keep offering the best that we can, and to be the best we can be.

May Allah ease our way.

**PROF DR ISARJI HJ SARUDIN
(DEPUTY RECTOR ACADEMIC & INDUSTRIAL LINK 2017-2020)**

**PROF DR AHMAD FARIS ISMAIL
(DEPUTY RECTOR ACADEMIC AND INTERNATIONALISATION
2020-CURRENT)**

A misty mountain landscape with a house visible in the foreground. The scene is hazy, with layers of mountains and dense forests. In the lower-left foreground, the dark silhouette of a tree with many leaves is visible. In the middle ground, a house with a tiled roof is partially obscured by trees. The background shows rolling hills and mountains shrouded in mist, creating a sense of depth and tranquility. The overall color palette is muted, consisting of greys, greens, and browns.

“
There are two blessings
which many people lose:
(They are) health and
free time for doing
good.”

(Sahih Bukhari)

INTRODUCTION

Although initially small in terms of student enrolment, from its inception, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) has always dreamed big. From a humble beginning of 153 students as its first intake in 1983, IIUM now has almost 30,000 students from foundation to doctorate levels, from more than 100 countries. From one small temporary campus of 11 hectares, IIUM now spans around 700 hectares in its 3 campuses of Gombak, Kuantan and Pagoh, another 200 hectares in its Gambang campus hosting the Centre of Foundation Studies and a more modest Kuala Lumpur campus. A full-fledged preparatory campus of our own is testimony to how far IIUM has grown.

Almost 4 decades since its establishment, IIUM has been offering academic programmes that are of high quality and international standards. IIUM alumni have gone on to work in prominent positions across the globe, to be respected academics, to be social activists and to be pillars of society, among others.

The academic programmes have been crafted based on an understanding of the Philosophy, Vision and Mission of the University. However, developments in the local and global arenas, especially disruption in technology and life post-pandemic, require that these programmes be reviewed to continue making IIUM a prominent player in higher education across the world. Specifically, IIUM graduates

should continue to make waves as leaders for positive change and advancement in their society in addition to their areas of expertise.

To that effect, the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF) is developed. Re-establishing the 7 mission statements as one of the backbones of our *raison d'être*, the framework seeks to offer a comprehensive educational experience for IIUM students that will equip them with useful knowledge and specialised skills, while committed to Islamic values and practices imbued with integrity, as befit a *khalifah*, even in a volatile and uncertain world.

The academic review should not be done piecemeal at the programme level, as per the regular curriculum review. A university level academic review is not simply about doing simultaneous curriculum review of all programmes. It has to go beyond. It requires critically looking at what has been done, reflecting on what is currently being done, to be able to identify our strengths and weaknesses - as a university. It requires being confident enough to innovate in our pedagogical and assessment approaches. It requires the willingness for non-academic agencies to also participate and change, if need be, in order to realise the educational goals set forth. It requires a change of attitude on the role of academics and students, and administrative and management staff alike. In short, it requires a unification such that an organisation as large as the IIUM will be able to move all its elements in tandem in pursuit of yet more excellence, beyond the normal academic goal posts.

Much has been discussed on various platforms but they have not been tangibly translated into how our academic programmes are being run. A large part of that is due to the non-existence of a framework connecting these parts together, and perhaps the reluctance of certain quarters to adapt to the way and the pace needed to continue leading the way.

A framework is only worth its while if it is fully embraced - both intellectually and also in the actions of those involved. Hence this book does not just present what the framework is about (Section 4), but it discusses some of the action plans needed to make it work. The *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF) for IIUM academic programmes is informed by current practices (Section 3), and among other things they emphasised not only the necessity of critically reviewing the existing programmes, but also demands a transformation of the whole institution (Section 5).

The University counts among its alumni prominent figures in various nations, but we cannot rest on our laurels. Disruptions, in its various forms, continue to happen in the world. Our graduates should not be trained only to function in the world that they know now, but they should be equipped to handle the various disruptions on multiple levels in their future. In fact, if a positive disruption (e.g. an innovation that eliminates poverty) is initiated by any one of our alumni, then we can indeed be confident that the University is leading the way.

MOVING FORWARD WITH THE PHILOSOPHY, VISION AND MISSION

The University level academic review is braced by the Philosophy, Vision and Mission of the University which seek to reform the Muslim *Ummah* by Islamising Human Knowledge, integrating Revelation and Reason, such that every action is an act of worship (*'ibādah*).

The philosophy of the University was inspired by the recommendations of the first World Conference on Muslim Education held in Mecca in A.H. 1398/ A.D. 1977. The spirit of this philosophy is based on the Holy *Qur'ān*, in particular the five verses revealed to the Prophet Muhammad SAW namely *Al-'Alaq*, verses 1 – 5:

*Read! In the name of thy Lord and Cherisher,
Who created Created man, out of a leech-like clot
Read! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful
He Who taught (the use of) the Pen
Taught man that which he knew not*

According to this philosophy, knowledge shall be propagated in the spirit of *Tawhīd*, leading towards the recognition of Allah as the Absolute Creator and Master of mankind. The spirit behind this recognition of Allah as the Lord of the Worlds (*Rabb al-ālamīn*) represents the apex in the hierarchy of knowledge. Thus, all disciplines of knowledge should lead towards subservience of this truth.

This is because knowledge is a form of trust (*amānah*) from Allah to humankind, and hence man should utilise knowledge according to Allah's will in performing his role as the servant and vicegerent (*khalīfah*) of Allah on earth.

In this way, the seeking of knowledge is regarded as an act of worship.

Colonialism and secularisation that inundate Muslim *Ummah* which have systematically challenges Islamic institutions, beliefs, and practices, divorcing revelation from everyday activities necessitate the University to reintegrate the three sources of knowledge: revelation (*waḥy*), reason (*'aql*), and the universe (*al kawn*) (Abu Sulayman, 1989).

The strength of the *Ummah* is Islam. Colonialism and the process of secularism in the Muslim world isolate Islam from everyday life of every Muslim, weaken and disintegrate the *Ummah*. Indeed, the world has witnessed the disastrous consequences of the moral failure of secularism, secular modernity, secularised knowledge and secular-humanistic modern civilisation grounded upon the epistemology of autonomous human reason and the ontology of naturalism and materialism (M. Kamal Hasan, 2013).

Secularism and colonialism have demoted the great principles inherent in Islam that is of an active, motivating, and inspiring in directing the spirit and lives of Muslims into a rigid formalism that was incapable of inspiring or of directing the spirit and lives of Muslims. They have impaired Muslim unity and distracting its scholars from the original sources and unsullied fountainheads of Islam. Isolating Islam from everyday life, and twisting it into a dogmatic labyrinth, ensnaring the hearts and minds of many Muslims, reshaping its thinking and clouding their Islamic vision (Faruqi, 1988).

At the intellectual level, the intellectual incursion, change, and disruption that was introduced by secularism, especially in the social sciences and the humanities, was of such enormous proportions as to make the Muslims either overlook Islamic thought and legacy or, at best, to simply study it and treat it as an ancient phenomenon neither needed by nor relevant to contemporary life. Establishment of these sciences was in accordance with Western circumstances and goals and rooted in its ideological worldview. Hence, these sciences reflect the Western-centric values, concepts, and beliefs, upon which all Western aspects of behaviour, activity, and social institutions are established. While these disciplines are acceptable and compatible with Western objectives, they may not be compatible with Islamic values (Abu Sulayman, 1989).

IIUM is to reverse the secularisation process, to Islamicise human knowledge by reintegrating Revelation and Reason such that every action is an *'ibādah*.



Abdul Hamid Ahmad Abu Sulayman, IIUM second Rector defines Islamisation of Human Knowledge (IOHK):

"as a plan to reformulate Islamic thought, using as its starting point Islamic beliefs and Islam's humanitarian, global, and civilizational principles based on tawhid and deputation. The plan aims at recapturing the positive, comprehensive Islamic vision, with a view to reforming the approach to education, built on an indissoluble integration of divine and human knowledge. The plan addresses the reality of human life on earth with the aim of realizing the purposes of Islamic Law [*Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah*] – namely, conciliation and welfare – and observes the principles of reason and the divine laws of the universe. It thus, provides the necessary tools to purify and refine Islamic culture and remove the distortions, and the superstition, charlatanism, impurities, and illusions that have infiltrated it. Ultimately, it will provide sound educational and cultural inputs to reform the mental and psychological constitution of Muslim individuals and of the *Ummah* and raise generations endowed with strength, ability, and productivity" (AbuSulayman, 1989).

Mohd. Kamal Hassan, the third Rector of IIUM, added it is important to reiterate that the processes of Islamisation of Human Knowledge at IIUM entail a two-pronged reformatory approach, namely:

- the reform of the curriculum of the University, and
- the refinement of the character and work ethics of the students, scholars and administration staff of the university

The process of intellectual reform of Islamisation of Human Knowledge requires the inculcation of Islam's spiritual and moral values in the mind, personality and conduct of the Muslim academic, administrator and scholar as expected in an Islamic university. It is to provide the necessary alternatives to those secular or agnostic or atheistic paradigms of knowledge which have produced remarkable advancements in science and technology. These advancements which on one hand are beneficial to human society, have also precipitated or are perhaps even responsible for the unparalleled spiritual crises, moral decadence, global economic and political and injustices, disastrous and unprecedented ecological problems of grave proportions.

The great Islamic scholars of the past are well-known for integrating profound scholarship with excellent moral and spiritual attributes such as piety, humility, aversion to self-glorification or self-centred egoism or conceit, disregard for human adulation or flattery, and constant vigilance against worldly temptations and other diseases of the heart.

Reintegration of revealed values, norms and ethics (*'aqīdah, shari'ah and akhlāq*), in the social sciences, human sciences, professional sciences, and also in aspects of the natural sciences that emphasise the unity of "Signs of Allah" in the *Qur'ān* and "Signs of Allah" in the Universe, leading to *'islāh* (reform), *tawazun* (balance) and *falāḥ* (holistic wellbeing or *Sejahtera*).

The enhancement of the integration of *'aqīdah, shari'ah and akhlāq* is reflected in the new academic framework introduced, the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF). SAF's overarching principle is a humanising principle, which is the belief in the potential of the human being and putting people first. The educational endeavours are efforts in nurturing human persons that understand his/her relation with his/her Creator, his/her relation with other humans, and his/her relation with the universe.

IIUM should not be content being a player only within the Islamic world. Now entering its fourth decade of existence, IIUM should also be more prominent in the non-Muslim dominant countries. This means pushing the integration and internationalisation agenda further. These two agenda cannot be fully attained if we choose to maintain working mainly among the Muslim countries or to be apprehensive and suspicious of measures that supposedly originate from the non-Muslim communities.

However, when we go out into the truly international arena, we have to be able to sift through the many scenarios and ideologies and offer them viable alternatives via the Islamic perspective. This means the **Islamisation** agenda has to be strengthened and offer **pragmatic solutions** to the entire world, not just the Islamic nations, in tandem with *Raḥmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*.

IIUM will only be able to truly lead the way if we are comprehensively excellent. This includes offering undergraduate programmes that are relevant to the needs of the community such that our graduates will become highly sought-after, as they also become our true ambassadors to the external community of what the 7 missions embody.

The required actions to realise the vision to reform the Ummah is elaborated in the 7 mission statements. Each programme should ask itself in what way does it support the 7 missions? For programmes that have been running for some time, what has been their impact towards IIUM's *raison d'être*? Will this impact continue to manifest itself when evaluated against the 7 missions? Given the changing situation in the world, if the programme does not make any substantial changes, will the programme remain relevant while being able to fulfill the 7 missions, contributing towards the realisation of our vision?

These are not easy questions to answer. They require not just a glut of empirical data, but also a lot of soul-searching. But answer them we must, if we are to fulfill the *amanah* inherent when we choose to join this organisation called the International Islamic University Malaysia.

A RENEWED NORMAL

Humanising the world of education

Just like in the pre-industrial days of the 1700s when education (or what was left of it) was disrupted into an assembly-line model of the 4Ms (Manpower- Mind-Machine-Money), the next wave of educational disruption is to humanise education yet again, in an increasingly inhumane environment, where schools have become mere factories for mass production of human capital or workers as input for further production process (*homo economicus*). This is an outcome of the secular conventional model that is not acceptable in the nurturing of the "wise" person as reflected by the notion of *homo sapiens*. Consequent to the re-emergence of *homo sapiens* against the background of the Anthropocene era, the change must, by and large, present a long-term solution to the current precarious state of affairs, following on from the Holocene era. In IIUM context, it is perhaps also not inappropriate to extend this concept further to *Homo Islamicus* - the holistic human person or an *Insān Sejahtera* who has the wisdom and the competencies to contribute to the betterment of society, which has been the vision and mission of IIUM.

Activities that are regarded as anthropocentric in substance, namely those that further deepen the Anthropocene, will have no place in reshaping the future. They are, on the contrary, a threat to humanity and its survival. As such, the nature and meaning of "work-live-play," as we know it today, will have to be drastically redefined, not unlike the introduction of slavery or forced labour at the height of the industrial revolutions with their long-standing dehumanising consequences, and has become more relevant with movements such as "Black Lives Matter" and the Hong Kong protests. View this within the context of the pandemic (which tends to be no less dehumanising enforced through lockdowns and physical distancing for instance), this is one lesson that must be taken seriously to heart. There is simply no room for another myopic mistake in the name of progress and development that glosses over what is unknown or unanticipated, intentionally or otherwise. This time, the competencies to predict, forecast and build scenarios are imperative before putting lofty ideas into action. It is one of the new skill sets that must not be missed in the futures of education.

Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (573—634) was the first caliph. He was the Prophet's closest companion and adviser. He spent his wealth in the service of Islam; divesting himself from his riches when he was elected caliph.

IIUM since two years ago, has adopted "humanising education" as its main strategic goal. It is well documented in the IIUM Roadmap 2019-2020 translating into a model of *Insān Sejahtera*, which are well-aligned to the vision and mission of IIUM. Among other things, the mission statements included an explicit statement on the need for sustainable development whereby the desired result is a state of society where living conditions and resources are mobilised to meet human needs without undermining the integrity and stability of the natural ecosystem. The aspiration is civilisational.

The pandemic is a reminder that disruptions will occur - and the disruptions may be either positive or negative. IIUM graduates then, should be equipped to face an uncertain world - not just in terms of knowledge and competencies, but also attitude. IIUM graduates should be able to cope with adversity to come out better than ever. If ever their adversity quotient is measured, it would be high.

In this spirit of humanising education in the IIUM mold, the tagline of the university reflects the characteristics of the people in the university - be they students or staff. The core elements of "*Khalifah. Amānah. Iqra'. Raḥmatan lil-'Ālamīn*" (KhAIR) are further adopted as our **graduate attributes**.



KHALĪFAH

A *khalīfah's* role is to lead humankind to the right path of Allah which is *al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* as well as to become an exemplar to others. All human beings regardless of their beliefs and religions are appointed as *khalīfah*. One of the important tasks for *khalīfahs* to do then is the *'imārat al-kawn* (construction of the universe), to administer, manage, develop, and flourish.

AMĀNAH

The world is an *amānah* that Allah has given humankind to be fulfilled, bringing peace and harmony to the world. *Amānah* is also an adjective to describe our graduates who are ethical, trustworthy and conscientious in executing their responsibilities in any sphere of life.

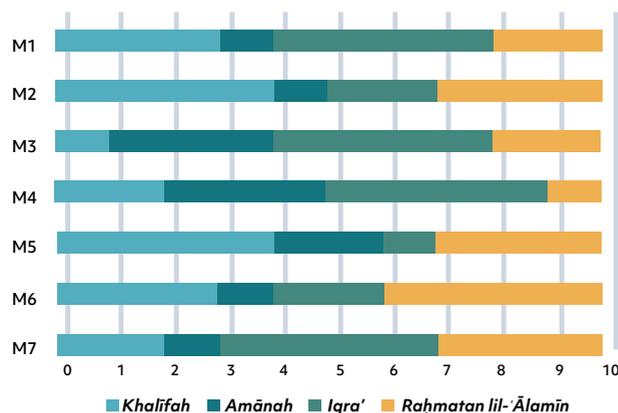
IQRA' BISMIRABBIKALAZI KHALAQ

The pursuit of knowledge in the name of Allah is sacred. The learners who fulfil the *amānah* of knowledge become scholars, who should be the inheritors of the prophets. *Iqra'* is not just about being knowledgeable in a specific area of study, but this attribute also pertains to one who expands on the culture of *iqra'*, spreading knowledge to others, and imparting *hikmah* wisdom.

RAḤMATAN LIL-ĀLAMĪN

Essentially, this attribute speaks to the nature of the graduates who effect change and advancement in humanity via the knowledge, wisdom, and skill sets that they have gained. IIUM graduates aim to do good, and will do good, to all people regardless of creed; and to do good for all the worlds - nature, animals and the built environment.

The graduate attributes acronym of **KhAIR** is Arabic for "good." The *Qur'ān* has used the term "*al-khair*" or its plural form "*khairaat*" in many instances, emphasizing that doing good is a mission for everyone.



KhAIR and the 7 IIUM Missions

A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE

Preamble

Sejahtera is a multi-faceted Malay term that does not neatly lend itself to the simple English translation of "well-being." It is a delicate balancing of the 10 SPICES that make up *Sejahtera*: spiritual, physico-psychological, intellectual, cognitive, cultural, ethical, emotional, ecological, economic, and societal.

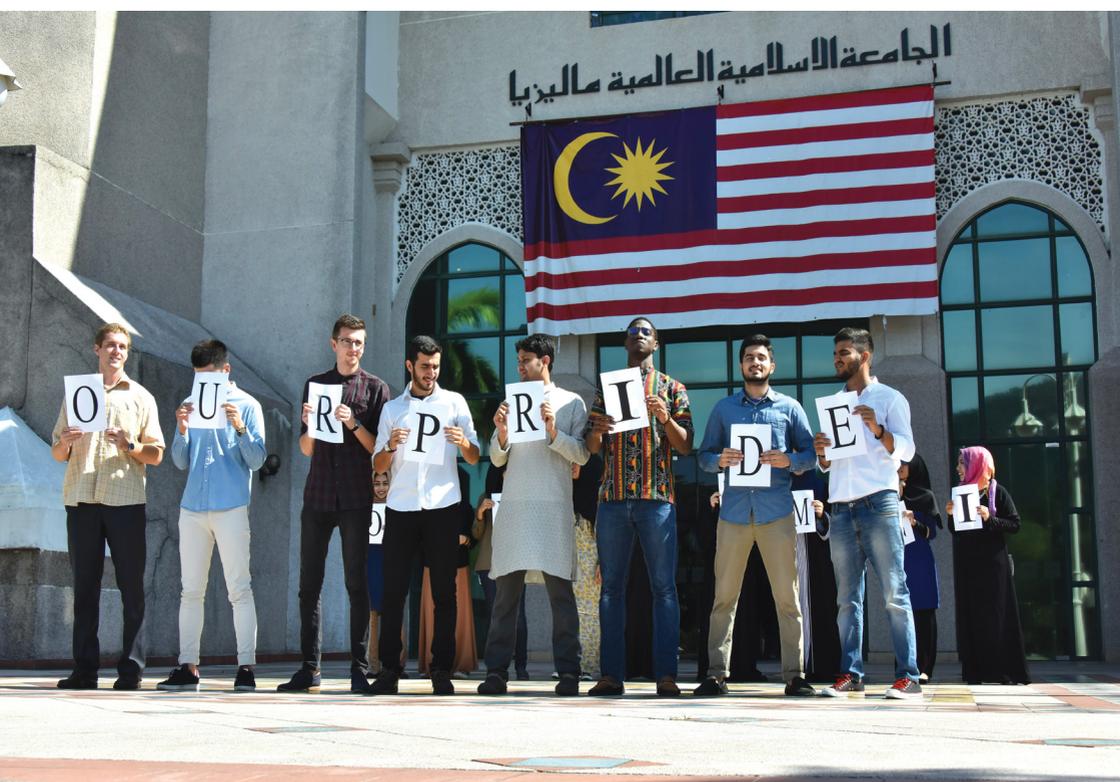
The SAF puts together the various elements that are major parts of a higher education institution to create a coherent "*jami'ah insāniah*" system. Cognisant that although students flock to campus initially to go through an academic programme, the SAF views the entire student experience in addition to the formal curriculum as core towards the students becoming and embodying *Insān Sejahtera*. Therefore, the SAF highlights the roles that each element plays in nurturing **holistic human beings** - the University refuses to be a degree mill intent only on simply producing employable graduates without "soul".

The generic SAF is applicable to all IIUM academic programmes - from Foundation to Doctoral levels. The relevant diagram is to be read together with the Guiding Principles detailed out in Section 4.

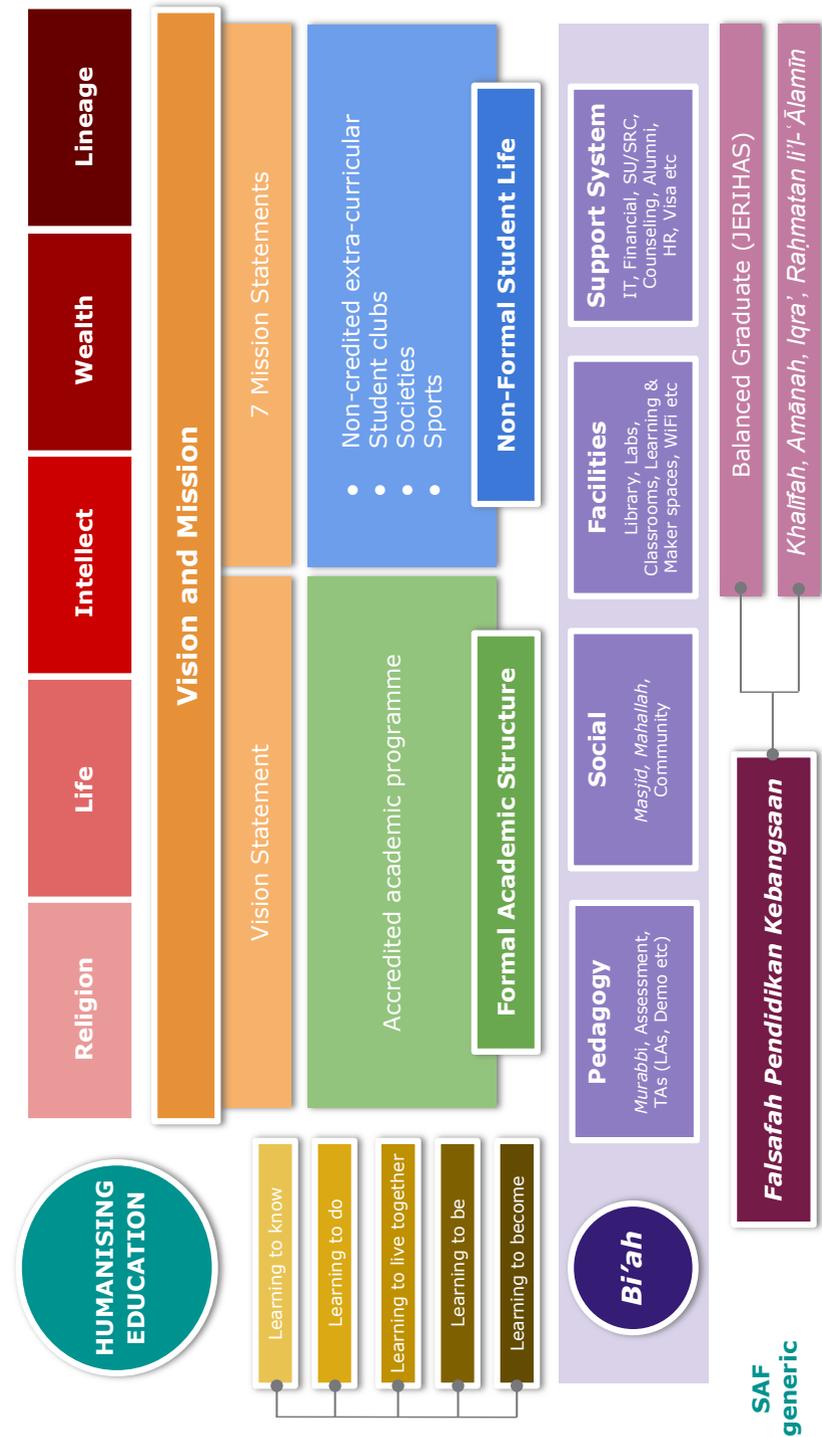
SAF is not simply about academic programmes. SAF is about putting together the elements of IIUM as a higher education institution that will provide for an educational experience that is transformational. Transformative education leads to change of attitude and worldview, personal psychological growth, and successful adaptation while building upon the personal experiences of the learner. SAF ensures that this occurs in a flourishing Islamic environment.

Indeed, SAF is also a reminder for the community to engage in activities that are well-aligned to the right path, and to be united and stronger together, for becoming an excellent academic institution is an obligation of a university bearing the term "Islamic" in its name.

SAF is not about achieving certain statistics, chasing some "objective" numbers purported as indicators of quality, or about going after accolades, especially the commercial ones. SAF is a testament of the University's commitment to the true nature of education - that of discovering and propagating knowledge that would bring about change and advancement to the self and to society. In our world, knowledge that would bring us, as complete persons closer to our Allah *Rabbul-ālamīn*.



THE GENERIC SEJAHTERA ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK



The *Sejahtera* Academic Framework is IIUM's articulation of humanising education in the post-pandemic and post-materialistic era, where humanising education is the enterprise of knowing and glorifying Allah and seeking knowledge and putting it to beneficial use in the society for the achievement of *Rahmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*. It is values-based.

The Arabic word for 'religion' (*deen*, Arabic root د ي ن) is strongly associated with spiritual intellectual and civilised life, with its four primary meanings being mutual obligation, submission or acknowledgment, judicial authority, and natural inclination (Douglas and Shaikh, 2004). *Deen* expresses the idea of obligation toward Allah, based on natural inclination towards Him. A derivation of this root is the Arabic word for city— *madinah*. A city is a community of complex social relations and transactions based on responsible and reciprocal fulfillment of obligations, submission to civil judgment and authority. Another derivation is the word *tamaddana*, meaning to found cities, or to humanise thought, while the word *tamaddun* itself means civilisation or refinement of manners (Douglas & Shaikh, 2004). For people to be civilised, they need education. And in IIUM, this education is grounded in the philosophy of knowledge that is firmly rooted in Islam, the *deen*, a way of life.

Hence, humanising education here means that students are not seen as products, but as vital and active forces of the University's existence, where students co-create their learning experience and their educational environment for glorifying Allah and seeking knowledge and putting it to beneficial use in the society for the achievement of *Rahmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*. As active participants, students are also responsible and accountable for their actions, as part of the learning process, thus making them wiser.

Humanising education here also means that instructors are given the opportunity and support to also develop and prosper. They are not robots, or even robot-like, who repetitively teach a course or conduct research simply to fulfill their annual performance goal set up by another party. Instead, they generate and propagate knowledge, beyond the walls of their classrooms or offices, and engage in effecting progress in the community, on or off campus.

In a humanising educational organisation, the other members in the University community are also engaged to provide an ecosystem that celebrates knowledge and activities related to it. The importance of staff members is not measured by their position, but by their commitment towards providing the best, as befit their own roles of *khalifah*. In other words, the performance of staff is measured by their impactful contributions.

With this overarching principle in mind, the elements of SAF are briefly described below:

Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah

The concept of *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah* does not just inform the decisions made with regards to the administration of the academic programmes and University affairs, but it also underlies the values to be embedded in both the formal and informal academic curricula. It is the *raison d'être* of the University. *Hifz al-dīn, an-nafs, al-'aql, al-mal and an-nasl* is loosely translated as preservation and promotion of faith, life, intellect, wealth and lineage. They are also the five essentials of human existence.

Vision and Mission

The Vision and the 7 mission statements of IIUM as preserved in the IIUM Constitution provide another layer of inspiration for creating the IIUM transformative educational experience. Academic activities - be them curriculum development and implementation, research, publication or consultation - should endeavour to embrace the vision and mission.

Pillars of Learning

The pillars of learning as espoused by UNESCO are adopted into the SAF. Learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, learning to live together and learning to become (i.e., to transform oneself and society) are not just learning outcomes to be put on paper, but they inform our pedagogical practices and co-curricular activities, emphasising IIUM's role in nurturing the person and developing the *ummah*.

Formal Academic Structure

This element constitutes the formal academic structures, forming a major, if not the most important, part in a student's educational experience while in IIUM. Students come to IIUM in pursuit of a formal academic qualification, and the University is accountable to offer them high quality education, evidenced via accredited academic programmes. The structure of the programmes will differ for the different levels of studies, but the educational goals remain the same.

Non-formal student life

The non-credited student activities also shape students. The formal academic load should not consume the entire time of the students' tenure in IIUM. Cognizant of this, there should be structured or semi-structured activities or programmes that are non-credited and voluntary, yet will contribute to the students' educational experience beyond the classrooms and the campus. This may be in the form of (but not limited to) student clubs, organised sports, cultural activities, community engagement projects, etc.

Bi'ah (ecosystem)

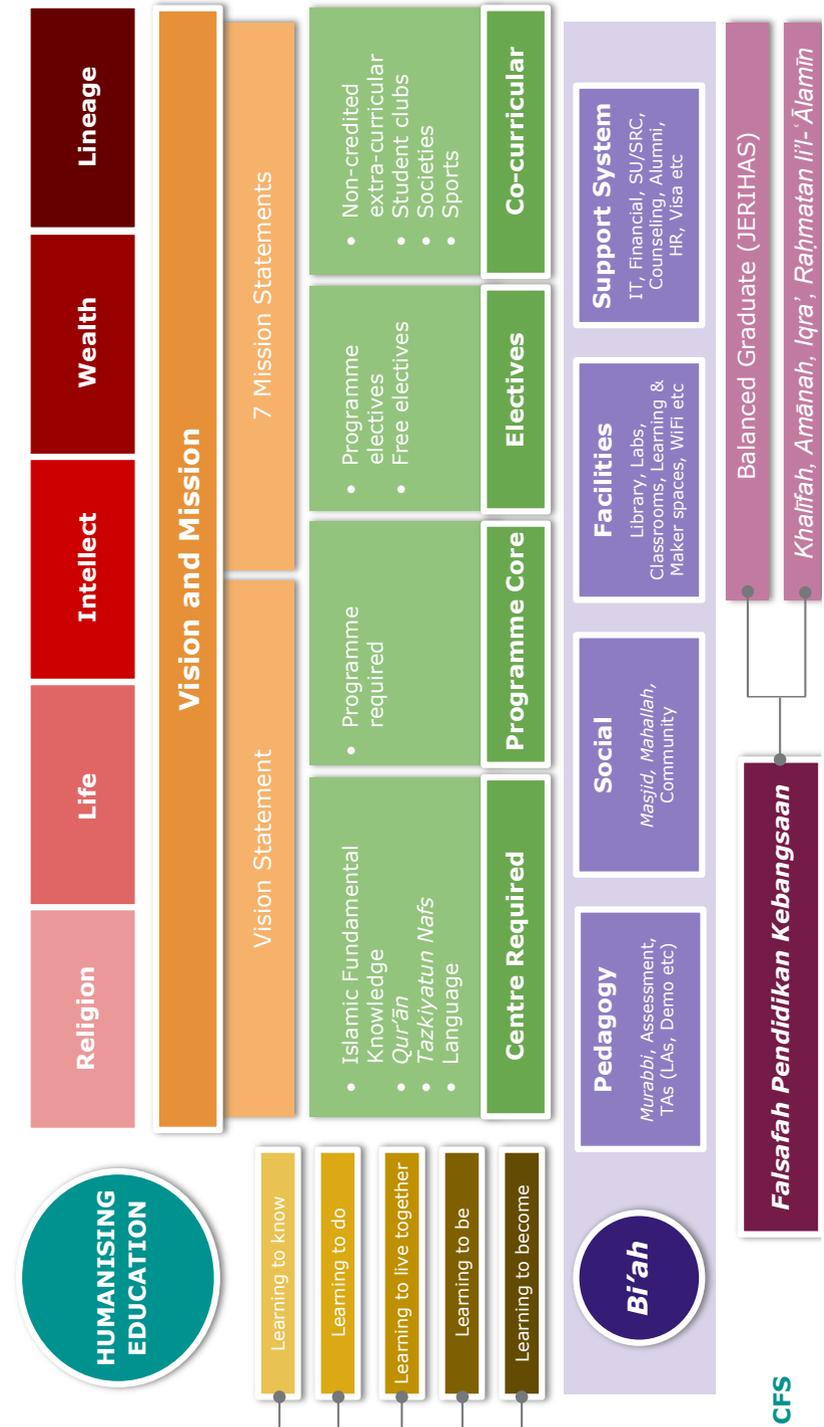
Classes do not exist in a vacuum. The *bi'ah* is the ecosystem that does not simply support, but may at times, be drivers towards realising the transformative education process.

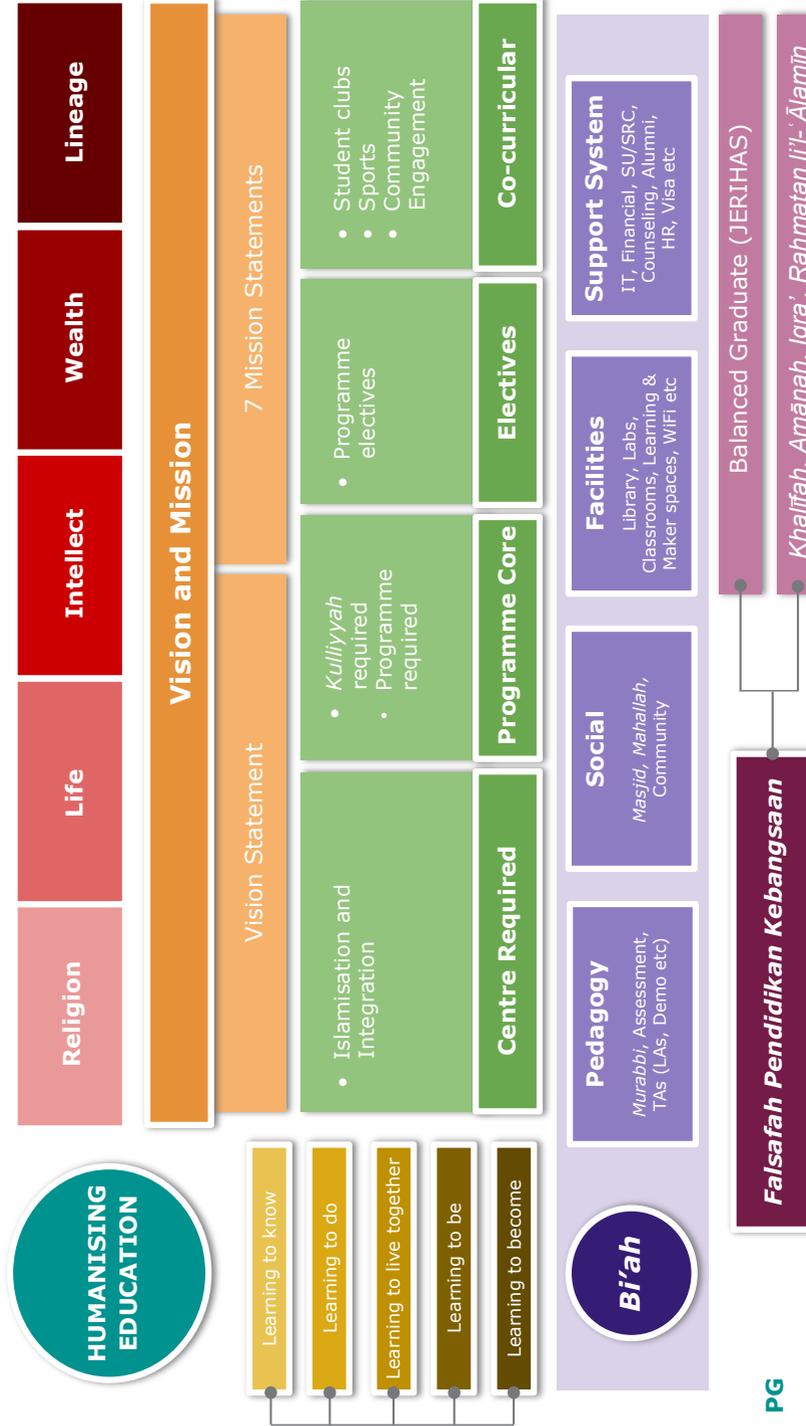
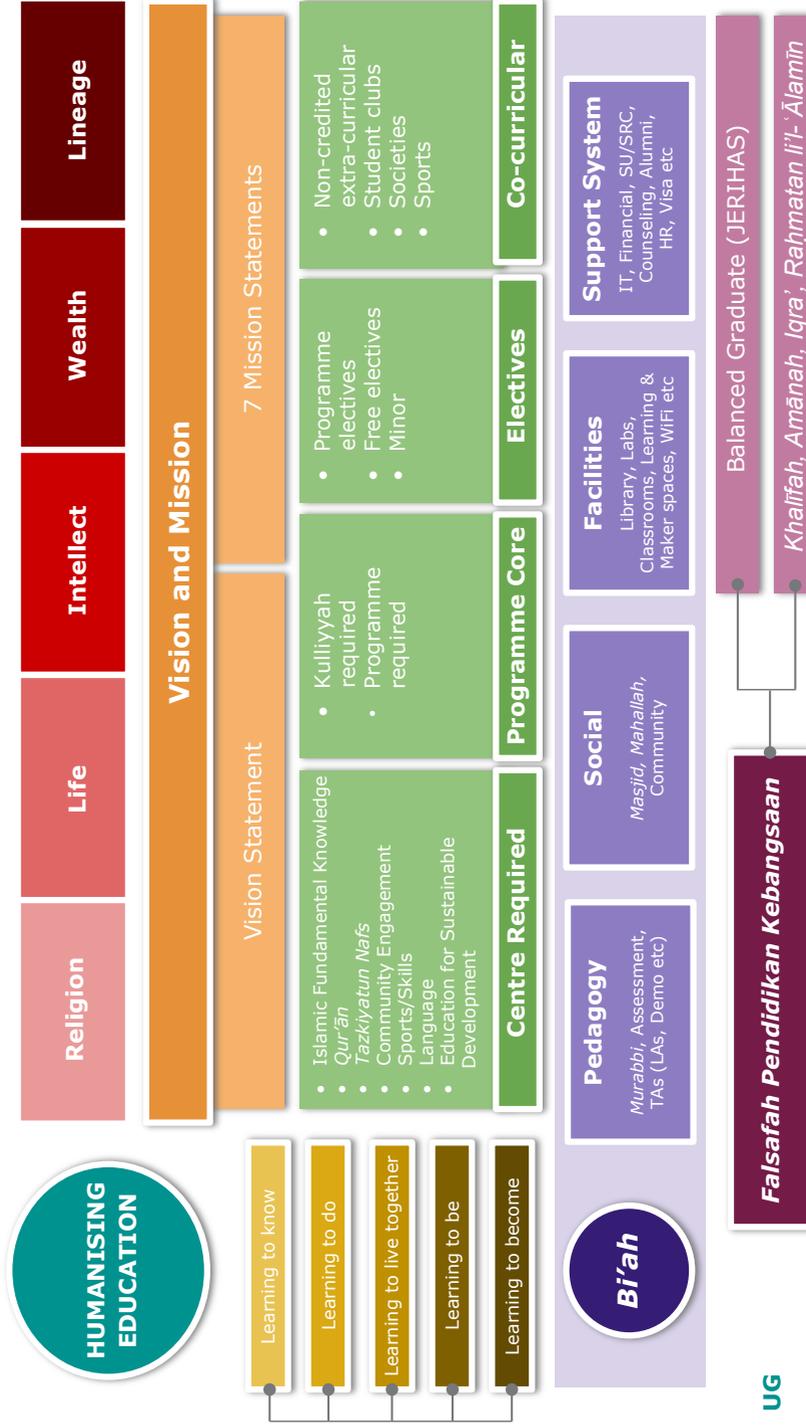
- on the surface, emphasising on the pedagogy and not the person seems counter to the humanising principle. SAF intentionally focuses on the pedagogy and subsumes the person under it as the conduct of classes may not be fully dependent on the instructor. For transformative learning to happen, the instructors take the back seat, allowing students to explore, guiding as and when necessary. The nature of how this is done requires the instructor to have a firm understanding of pedagogical principles in assuming the *murabbi* role. In constructive alignment, the assessment is also a major part of the process. SAF also acknowledges the role played by non-academic assuming the teaching roles, such as the teaching assistants, the demonstration leaders, the lab technicians and the clinical trainers. Indeed, it takes the whole campus community to educate a student.
- the physical space is as much a part of the *bi'ah* as the social environment. Hence, the roles of the *masjid*, the *mahallah* and the community should be considered and highlighted in the transformational education environment.
- facilities will continue to be an integral part of any higher education institution. They should not just be available, but they should be maintained and upgraded whenever possible to ensure the University's capability in offering high quality educational experiences.
- the support system consists of the agencies that not all students may not come in direct contact with but which remain essential in the University's quest to offer the best educational experiences to the students, and the best working environment to the academic, professional and administrative staff.

Graduate attributes

When all is said and done, at the end of their academic journey, students will leave the University. As IIUM alumni, it is expected that they will embody these graduate attributes exemplified under the core elements of *Khalifah*, *Amānah*, *Iqra'* and *Rahmatan lil-'Ālamīn*. How this is manifested will differ depending on the level of study. Regardless of whether they are pre-degree or post-graduate students, they are nurtured to become balanced individuals who uphold the *tawhīd* principle and contribute towards the community, making IIUM a beacon in manifesting the *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan* (FPK, National Philosophy of Education). The balanced IIUM graduate will encompass the expanded JERI+HAS domains explicated in the FPK (refer to section on FPK).

THE SEJAHTERA ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK FOR FOUNDATION STUDIES





“
Knowledge is that
which benefits not that
which is memorized.”

(Imam Shafi'i)



A CONVERSATION WITH OUR MURABBI PROFESSOR EMERITUS TAN SRI DR. MOHD KAMAL HASSAN

Report by: Zainurin Abdul Rahman

On the 24th January 2019 representatives from the Office of Knowledge for Change and Advancement (KCA), the Office of Communication, Advocacy and Promotion (OCAP) accompanied by Dr. Nadzrah Ahmad from Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (KIRKHS) made a short trip to Institute Latihan Islam Malaysia (ILIM) in Bangi, Selangor to meet one of the most popular and influential figures in IIUM, Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dr. Mohd Kamal Hassan.

Upon our arrival, we were ushered to a meeting room to wait for his arrival. We were a bit apprehensive about the kind of reception that we would be getting. With butterflies in our stomachs, we quietly ask questions to ourselves; how should we greet him? What should we say first? And how would he react to our questions? All our concerns disappear as soon as we heard Professor Kamal's a gentle voice giving salam as he entered the room.

After exchanging pleasantries and a short *ta'aruf* we began our discussion, which revolved around his years in IIUM, how he spends his time now, and finally the history as well as the relevance of the IIUM song. Professor Kamal spoke fondly of his days in IIUM, his plans and achievement and the people who worked for and with him. He also spoke highly of IIUM ideals, vision and mission. We believe that, to his mind these features of IIUM reflect the identity of IIUM just as the wearing of *songkok* and *tudung* during IIUM convocation. In terms of his present activity, we were quietly surprised when he mentioned that he has just started his attachment to ILIM which is on voluntary basis. While many figures at his age feel contented resting at home, true to the spirit of sharing and seeking knowledge, Professor Kamal still finds time to share his knowledge and wisdom with others at no costs.

Professor Kamal's tone of voice changed to a more one serious one as we started talking about the conception, composition and more importantly the selection as well as the meaning of words and phrases in the lyrics of IIUM song. We felt that he took the task of coming up with IIUM song very seriously. The song, to him, should not be sung merely as part of a ceremony. Although he agreed that the IIUM song should be identified as "IIUM anthem", he believes that the meaning of the song should be understood and internalized by all because the song is loaded with messages. At the very least, it can unite IIUM community, wherever and whoever they are now.

Our discussion with Professor Kamal progressed amicably and interspersed with reminder and laughter. His comments, advices and suggestions were well-elaborated and he even invited us to exchange ideas with him, quite like a father talking to his children. Throughout our discussion with Professor Kamal, we sense that his love and concern for IIUM has never changed or diminished. We feel that all he wants is for IIUM to live up to its expectations and to succeed in providing education for the ummah. As for the immediate future of IIUM, he agrees with the initiatives of the present Rector's office and with the right support from IIUM community, Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dato' Dzulkefli Abdul Razak might just be the right person to lead IIUM into the future.

The discussion ended with Dr. Zulkefli Muhammed Yusof from KCA handing over a basket of fruits to Professor Kamal as a token of appreciation. A small gift for someone who has given so much to IIUM.

LEADING THE WAY: THE PHILOSOPHY OF IIUM SONG

By: Prof. Emeritus Dr. Kamal Hassan and Dr. Nadzrah Ahmad

Introduction

The IIUM Song entitled Leading the Way was composed by the late Johan Nawawi back in 2007. One of its primary objectives is to strengthen the emotional bond among IIUM community. It is rather emotional instead of intellectual because the melody appeals to the heart, not to the intellect. The song highlights the ideals of IIUM which includes its vision, mission and principles. It also aims to foster the *ukhuwwah Islāmiyyah* among Muslim brothers and sisters. From an aesthetic viewpoint, the song has its own uniqueness. It starts with the melody of chirping birds, which put the listener into the state of calmness. Its overall melody is also a mix between contemporary and traditional Malay melody. The main themes of the song are described below:

Leading the way

The song starts off with the implied objective of a *khalifah*, to lead humankind to the right path of God. Today, the zeitgeist of humanism of our modern world has however, granted everybody the right to lead humankind to his or her path. As far as Islam is concerned, from the perspective of a Muslim, the right path is one, which is *al-ṣirāt al-mustaqīm*. The right path aims to steer those who willingly tread it back to God, not leading humankind away from God.

Enlightening the future

The philosophy of nihilism and absurdism today has painted the world pessimistically dark and bleak. A large deal of its philosophy owes its emergence to the strand of post-modernism. Post-modernism has decreed the principle of deification of reason and the rejection of revelation as its essential drive. It also brought the crises of existence, which as has been professed by Protagoras, due to the role of homo mensura i.e. that man is the measure of all things. It is only by following the right path that we can enlighten the future and develop optimism.

Sharing the wisdom

The *Qur'ān* has called upon humankind to follow the right path by submitting themselves to the Divine will. It is by following the revelation that we may attain wisdom, for revelation is also *ḥikmah* from Allah SWT. The *Qur'ān* also urges Muslims to spread the spirit of Islam with "*ḥikmah* and good advice."

Internalising the spirit of Islam

The quintessential spirit of Islam is *tawḥīd* that is the divine uncompromising oneness of God. The element of *tawḥīd* is the fundamental basis for an Islamic worldview, and that it must be let permeated through the whole system.

Relying on Revelation and reason

The primary essence of IIUM is the integration of revelation and reason. In the epistemology of Islam, knowledge is not received only by reason, but also by the virtue of revelation. Revelation and reason are not two separate phenomena, but rather integrated.

Readiness to excel and prevail (We shall excel we shall prevail)

The line gives the promise of an ultimate success. It also implies the struggle against ungodly forces such as *kufur*, hypocrisy, *nafs*, materialism, egoism et cetera. It is a call to excel and prevail over these obstacles. On the other hand, excel also means comprehensive excellence, which is one of the mission of IIUM.

Merging faith and knowledge

Some of those who have knowledge today believe humankind should depart from God. They believe things can be solved with sole reason and science. Islam however, views reason and science not as an infallible epistemology. Therefore, it has decreed that knowledge which is sought by the learners, must be grounded on faith. It is fundamental because the revelation also comes from God, and therefore its validity is safeguarded.

Carrying the roles of *Khalifah* (We are the *khalifah*)

All the tasks and objectives are incumbent upon us because we are the *khalifah*. All human beings regardless of their beliefs and religions are appointed as *khalifah*. One of the important task for us to do is the *'imārat al-kawn*, to administer, manage, develop, and flourish.

Fulfilling the *Amānah* (We will fulfil the *amānah*)

The world is an *amānah* that Allah has given us to be fulfilled. We are obliged to fulfil the role of bringing peace and harmony to the world.

Making this world a better place (Together, let's make the world a better place)

The line serves as a rallying cry for all humankind to make the world a better place. It includes everybody, not only the Muslims but the non-Muslim as well, to work together and making the world a more inhabitable place. The world has to be worked out to make it a better place because today, human beings are suffering, devoid from spirituality and overpowered by materialism.

Upholding the culture of learning (Forever expand the culture of *Iqra'*)

The concept of *Iqra'* is so foundational in Islam. It can be seen from the fact that the first revelation being revealed to the Messenger SAW is to read, based on surah *al-Alaqa*. But the first revelation does not stop at read or recite; it follows to read and recite on the name of God. Allah is the one who knows, human beings are the one without knowledge. The pen as the instrument of pursuing knowledge is also sanctify by God. That implies that the pursuit of knowledge is sacred. Knowledge is also an *amānah*. The learners who fulfil the *amānah* of knowledge becomes scholars. In Islam, scholars occupied a great position. After the prophets, it is the scholars in the hierarchy. Scholars should be the inheritors of

the prophets. But unfortunately, today scholars are divided from prophethood. To some of them, God is superfluous, and they therefore departed from the path of God. This is exactly the phenomenon revealed in the *Qur'an* when Allah says: he views himself as self-sufficient (*an ra'āhu astaghna*). So, to expand the culture of *Iqra'* is vital to become, not only the culture of Muslims, but also the culture of humanity.

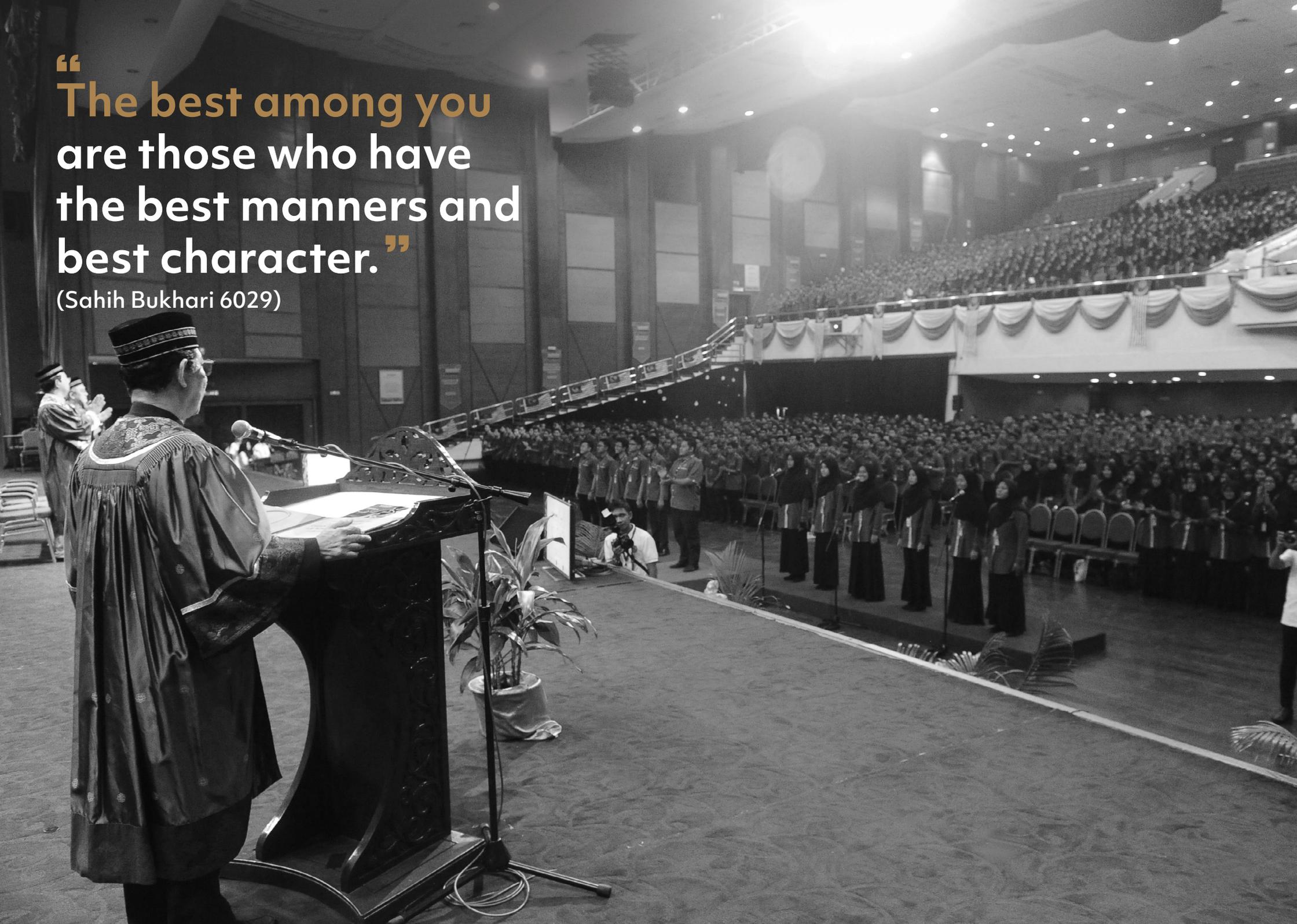
Realising the meaning of *Rahmatan lil- 'Ālamīn* (IIUM is to realise the meaning of *Rahmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*)

IIUM is one of the educational instruments to realise the mercy to all mankind. Here, one of the manifestations of *rahmah* is the integration of revelation and reason. Besides that, the concept of *Iqra'*, submission, *sharī'ah*, *aqīdah* and *akhlāq* are all mercy from God to humankind as well. Mercy should not be reduced to tolerance per se. Its source is from the Messenger SAW himself, who is the embodiment of *Rahmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*; his sayings, deeds and actions all are mercy as well.



“
The best among you
are those who have
the best manners and
best character.”

(Sahih Bukhari 6029)



INTRODUCTION

The framework is a conscious attempt to pull together the foundation of IIUM (its mission and vision), the *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharīah* and the contemporary and future issues of the world today, both at the national and international levels.

Education provides a platform for various parties to come up with solutions to what is happening in the world. However there should be no “one-size-fits-all” when it comes to specific approaches or content or even curriculum structure, but decisions made are done so after a careful consideration of institutional, local and global perspectives.

Hence, it is important to have an institutional perspective of the various inspirational forces that have shaped the framework. This section will interpret the major concepts that are in the framework, contextualising them to IIUM.

Fatima Al-Fihri
(b. 800) used her wealth to found the oldest library in Fez, which was a part of the al-Qarawiyyin mosque. The mosque was established not just as a centre of worship but as a centre of study.

THE NATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

The statement of the National Philosophy of Education or better known as *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan* states,

"Pendidikan di Malaysia adalah suatu usaha berterusan (lifelong) ke arah memperkembangkan lagi potensi individu secara menyeluruh (holistic) dan bersepadu (integrated) untuk mewujudkan Insan yang seimbang dan harmonis dari segi intelek, rohani, emosi dan jasmani berdasarkan kepercayaan dan kepatuhan kepada Tuhan. Usaha ini adalah bagi melahirkan warganegara Malaysia yang berilmu pengetahuan, berketerampilan, berakhlak mulia, bertanggungjawab dan berkeupayaan mencapai kesejahteraan diri serta memberi sumbangan terhadap keharmonian dan kemakmuran keluarga, masyarakat dan negara"

The IIUM *Sejahtera Academic Framework* is grounded on the University's vision and mission and the *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan* (FPK). The FPK statement highlights several key elements which are:

- i. the development of individuals' four domain potentials, JERI i.e. physical (*Jasmani*), emotional (*Emosi*), spiritual (*Rohani*), and intellectual (*Intelektual*); the University expands this concept to include the Islamic Philosophy of Education domains which are H (*Hamba Allah*), A (*Alam sekitar*) and S (*Sosial*) - to be referred henceforth as JERIHAS.
- ii. in a holistic, comprehensive, and integrated manner;
- iii. with the aim to produce a complete or perfect *Insān (insān kāmil)*;
- iv. who has a firm belief and faith in God, is obedient, and devoted to Him.

IIUM embodies this under the concept of *Insān Sejahtera*.

To realise this noble aim, the developmental domains of the individual, i.e., physical, emotional, spiritual, intellect, social, environmental and servant of Allah (JERIHAS) need to be well developed to their full potential and aligned to the Islamic values and principles based on the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* through the theory and practice of a balanced and integrated curriculum and co curriculum. What is fostered from such a curriculum would be individuals who possess good health, are physically fit and energetic; have harmonious and stable emotions; pure and strong spirituality; positive mind; high consciousness; are deeply knowledgeable and wise. These individuals are to be educated within the integrated concept of knowledge and education for mastering both the revealed knowledge and the derived human knowledge, to then recognise and be mindful of both types of knowledge. To complete the education process, students' *akhlāq*, values, skills, and attitudes need to be given careful attention

too. An integrated curriculum such as this will be able to produce *Insān Sejahtera*, who will not only attain his or her *kesejahteraan diri*, but to spread it out to enable the society's, environment's and nations' *kesejahteraan* too.

As an *Insān Sejahtera* (*Sejahtera* person), one is responsible to contribute towards the advancement and betterment of all aspects of one's life whether economic, politics or social, for one's family, society and nation, as well as the world. More importantly, in one's endeavours to fulfil this responsibility, one has to limit *fasād* or destruction. The *Insān Sejahtera* shall always strive for development not for material gain alone, but rather for the *kesejahteraan* and equilibrium of the society. This idea of limiting *fasād* is equivalent to the idea of sustainable development - preservation and promotion of the 5Ps (Peace, People, Planet, Property, Partnership).

Hence, IUM lecturers as *murabbis*, besides teaching students to excel in their academic studies or to become experts in their area of study, need to also focus on students' capabilities, resilience, and strength of critical, creative and innovative thinking, the internalisation of values, the discernment of making good and fine judgment, decisions and resolving problems and crisis, and development of pro-social behaviours, concern for and compassionate towards the *kesejahteraan* of the society and environment. The aspiration of the FPK, i.e. in line with the vision and mission of IUM, is to nurture IUM graduates who are responsible and just towards the society, environment, and the *ummah*; and achieving total success (*Falāḥ*) in the world and Hereafter.

Although FPK may be seen as "local" to Malaysia, with its specific reference to "Malaysian citizen", the spirit is not localised, and is applicable to all IUM students. The FPK does not detract from the Islamic Philosophy of Education, which continues to be the basis of the mission and vision of the University. FPK though, is explicitly included in the SAF because it provides a concise and common objectives which may be shared with all, Malaysians and non-Malaysian alike.

MAQĀṢID ASH-SHARĪ'AH

The teachings of Islam as contained in the *Qur'ān* and elaborated by the Prophet (peace be upon him) do not concern only matters of correct belief and good personal behaviour or the affairs of family life no matter how important they are. Rather, those teachings cover all aspects of human life and existence both at the individual and collective levels and throughout the different stages of the human journey in this world. Accordingly, setting up the norms and criteria of good and evil and truth and falsehood and laying down rules and laws to regulate human social, economic and political interactions and relations within and among societies and countries are part and parcel of Islamic teachings and practices. The feature of Islamic teachings and practices clearly underscores the social and communal nature of Islam as a way of life caring for both the individual and the community.

The *Sharī'ah* as enunciated in the noble *Qur'ān* and Prophetic Sunnah in all of its parts is means to;

1. **secure a benefit for the people, and**

2. **protect them against corruption and evil.**

Besides being revealed to benefit human beings and removing them from harm, this is also an indicative of Allah's mercy to humankind.

There are three (3) different categories of the objective of *Sharī'ah*:

a. Essentials: The matters on which the spiritual and worldly affairs of the people depend, to neglect them will lead to total disruption and disorder and it could lead to bad ego-centric consequences.

b. Complementary: The matters of which a kind of interests or benefits which leads to hardship of the individual or hardship to community if it is neglected but does not lead to the total disorder of normal life. The aim is removing hardship. For example, *rukhsah* in *'ibādah*.

c. Embellishment: The matter of which its realisation leads to improvement and the attainment of desirable means. For example, the observance of cleanliness in personal appearance and in *'ibādah*, moral virtues. the disappearances will not interrupt the normal life; however, it might lead to the lack of comfort in life.

These five values of the "Essential" to human existence are:

1. **Preservation and protection of *ad-dīn* (Religion)**
2. **Preservation and protection of *an-nafs* (Life)**
3. **Preservation and protection of *al-'aql* (Intellect)**
4. **Preservation and protection of *al-mal* (Wealth)**
5. **Preservation and protection of *an-nasl* (Lineage)**

Collectively, they are deemed as the five essentials of human existence.

Preservation and Protection of *ad-dīn* (Religion)

The word *ad-dīn* signifies 'religion' in the widest sense, extending over all that pertains to its doctrinal contents and their practical implications, as well as to one's attitude towards God. (Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'ān*, KL: 2011, p. 69). In other words, it includes what we should think and believe about God and other articles of faith as well as how we should behave and act in our worldly life. It is a way of life.

In the Islamic worldview, it is religion and religious faith that establish and maintain the essential vertical bond between human beings and God, their Creator and ultimate Sustainer (or *Rabb*). This connection with God is at the origin of all human spirituality and ethics and has far-reaching implications for human life and existence in the world.

Just as religion builds and enhances our vertical bond with our Creator who is the Absolute and most Sublime being, it lays down the values, norms and rules that shall govern our behaviour and actions and regulate our horizontal relationships and interactions with fellow human beings and the natural world with all that exists therein. Both types of human beings' connection with God and His creation have a definitively spiritual character no matter how strong or weak it may be.



“ Knowledge exists potentially in the human soul like the seed in the soil; by learning the potential becomes actual. ”

(Imam Al-Ghazali)

Preservation and Protection of *an-nafs* (Life)

Protection of *an-nafs* or self-preservation means the infallibility of the human self from its material and moral elements, by establishing its origin, which is the axis on which the architecture of the earth revolves, and the meaning of disagreement is realised in it. The Almighty said: "He created you from the earth and made you responsible in it" (*Qur'ān*, 11:61) as it is preserved physically, moral and spiritual, and in its total and partial dimension.

Self-preservation manifests itself in two aspects;

1. **Preserving it from the aspect of existence; and**
2. **Preserving oneself from the side of nothingness.**

An-nafs extends beyond the human self to include other life forms. The above verse and also *Qur'ān* verse 2:30 are just some of the verses which made explicit this aspect of protection and preservation of life.

Preservation and Protection of *al-'aql* (Intellect)

The mind is a bounty from Allah to us, and we have to make use of it to know Him, to distinguish between right and wrong and to bring in benefits to ourselves and our societies.

The mind (*'aql*) is the condition for the responsibility given by Allah to human beings. Without having a sound mind, Allah will never give Trust (*amanah*) to humans. The child, the Insane or the sleeping person is not accountable while he/she is in this stage or condition. Hence, preserving the mind functioning well becomes a necessity in our life. *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* stressed on the use of the mind for the purpose of thinking and reflecting to achieve benefits for humanity and protecting them from harm. Individual mind is the ownership of humanity, so we have to preserve it directly to public interest towards *Rahmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*.

In Islam, the heart and mind are used interchangeably. Hence, to understand the functioning of the mind, we have to take into account both thinking and emotions. Characteristics such as self-confidence, self-esteem, self-control, happiness and positive attitudes, optimism are significant for reasoning and logical thinking.

Our minds are in need first to protect them from what affects their functioning negatively and to activate them to be useful. Since our religion looks at the personality as a holistic and integrated entity, our mind also has to be viewed as an entity which is affected by physical, psychological and social factors. Unhealthy bodies, psychological problems and bad environments, whether physical or social, have a high impact on our minds, their development and their productivity.

IUM planned and implemented academic programmes and courses have to adopt an integration approach and lead students to success in this life and the life to come, through delivering quality holistic care for the students, cultivating

Islamic commitment to develop students' Islamic personality and identity. Furthermore, our educational system has to prepare students to become responsible, and self-sufficient in their future life to have impact in their societies upon their graduation and behave ethically in their daily life. Hence, it is important that our programmes and courses become conduits for the preserving, protection and promotion of the intellect, and not just a platform to disseminate knowledge.

Preservation and Protection of *al-mal* (Wealth)

Properties, resources and wealth in this life belong to Allah. We are the heirs and custodians of properties given to us by Allah and entrusted to use them for lawful purposes. Islam guides us how to earn wealth and spend it in lawful means. Islam encourages us to be productive, and by doing so, we are getting closer to Him. Islam guides us how to preserve property and wealth to achieve success (*falāḥ*) in this life and the life to come. Managing the property, resources and wealth of the university is one form of worship by which we seek the blessings from Allah.

Islam forbids waste, exploitation, deception and misappropriation of properties, resources and wealth. The primary purpose of wealth is to fulfil our needs as human beings with dignity in this life and the life to come. Thus, the preservation of wealth becomes a necessity for us to take it.

In the context of managing IUM as a *jami'ah insāniah* and an international centre of educational excellence, IUM has to exert its utmost efforts to prevent any financial or wealth misuse and abuse; and optimise its use in fulfilling the vision and missions of the University. IUM community should be made aware that *zakat*, *sadaqah*, and *waqf*, are essential form of fundamental support for the university as it was also the primary source of funding in Muslim history for educational institutions. Well-established mechanisms, systems and regulations have to be set up to ensure the effective use of wealth in supporting IUM.

Preservation and Protection of *an-nasl* (Lineage)

The preservation and safeguarding of lineage or progeny start in the pre-natal stage of existence and does not wait until human beings are born. Another term that is directly connected to that of *nasl* is namely the term *nasab* which has also been used in the *Qur'ān* and is frequently mentioned by Muslim scholars in conjunction with *an-nasl*.

Nasab embodies the essential natural bond or blood relationship between parents and children, whereby the latter are properly attributed to the former. It thus gives rise to the primary layer or immediate constituents of the family system, which includes the spouses and their descendants, and may also include their ascendants. From it emerged the sense of descent and belonging in the hearts and minds of the children and that of owning and prolongation at the level of the parents.

Family rights and obligations in the Islamic context are not mere private family matters that do not concern the rest of society, though their administration is assigned to the family members to handle privately. Marriage and family constitute the fundamental social institution providing the necessary natural and proper ecology for the physical, psychological, moral, spiritual and intellectual development of the human being at very crucial stages of his/her life, thus shaping their personality in a decisive manner.

The most fundamental aspect of human life and existence stems from an important fact about humankind in the *Qur'ān* according to which God has created man and woman from one and the same original human reality or entity and instilled in them a natural inclination towards each other that is the source of love, compassion, tenderness, and tranquility expressed by *Qur'ānic* terms as *mawaddah*, *rahmah* and *sakeenah*.

FUTURES OF EDUCATION

The *Futures of Education* as proposed by UNESCO (2020) is framed as a global initiative "to reimagine how knowledge and learning can shape the future of humanity and the planet". Indeed, it is a bold step forward that has not been comprehensively undertaken since the days of the industrial revolutions where "education" took a drastic turn leaving behind "a world of increasing complexity, uncertainty and precarity". To this extent, the UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay was quoted as saying: "Our deeply humanist DNA cannot let us reduce education to a technical or technological issue, nor even to an economic one." Allegorically, this is in perfect sync with what the younger generation has been saying the same all along in their criticism to what is deemed as the "failure" of today's so-called "education."

Greta Thunberg, TIME's Person of the Year for 2019, called out one such criticism in questioning where education is heading in the 21st century and beyond. She has been famously quoted to query the need to go to school when her future (and that of her generation) cannot be assured. She said: "I felt everything was meaningless and there was no point going to school if there was no future." It, no doubt, is a powerful indictment of how education has failed to meet the "new" expectations, while some considered it as irrelevant to the post-2020 generation. More so, the post-pandemic days of COVID-19. Most significantly, she took the initiative to push back, turning it into a wave of protest and a global movement: Fridays for Future. "I promised myself I was going to do everything I could do to make a difference," she said. In fact, she was adamant that 2020 would be the year for action against climate change. An oblique way of saying the "education" has not been serious enough to engage, let alone, resolve the related issues coming on the heels of the COP25 United Nations Climate Change Conference 2019. COP25 had to be extended from Chile to Madrid despite a two-week session, giving the impression that Thunberg was on the right track, what with the less-than-optimistic outcome coming from world leaders in their deliberations. It gave rise to widespread frustration and disappointment, including that expressed by UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres because it lacks clarity without any clear consensus as to how best to save planet Earth, and its inhabitants.

Education for Sustainable Development

Putting this in educational terms, the gap is clear and wide. There is much to be done in educating world leaders and policymakers on the burning issue (pun intended). Developing countries and their inhabitants, for example, are still generally unaware of the dire consequences of the climate crisis that are being shifted to them, making their future even more vulnerable when the related culprits are largely not held accountable. As long as this remains, the situation will worsen because the prevailing unjust distribution and consumption of resources between the Global North and South is unsustainable. This is further enhanced by the coronavirus outbreak that abruptly descends on the already ailing planet. We are reminded of the profound statement made by former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon: "There is no Plan B, because there is no Planet B." Meaning, the standard to be agreed upon must be equitable and just for all humanity regardless of divides – social, technical and political. The cliché to "flatten the curve" introduced to tackle the pandemic outbreak is spot-on on all fronts, education included. In other words, all nations must operate within the limits of one planet in terms of the available finite resources. Simply put, countries that have been living on a binge must now recalibrate (read re-educate) themselves into adopting a new sustainable lifestyle that is based on one planet.

Decolonising education

More than that, they must return the resources used in their unbridled excesses to those who have been deprived of them due to historical injustices of the past. Correcting such injustices is a vital educational outcome in achieving global sustainability post-2020 by decolonising the prevailing education ecosystem. Specifically, it must meet the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, or in short, Education 2030. Sustainable development is the organising principle for meeting human development goals while simultaneously sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services on which the economy and society depends. Unfortunately, this is a far cry from what it is today, where education is in general geared towards unsustainable production and consumption, drawing on the model of the 19th century. Generally, it resembles the factory model coming out of the very first industrial age some 300 years ago. Since then, there have been many variations over time, including the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR 4.0), the latest of its kind. Fundamentally, however, the assembly-line structure based on the nexus of Manpower-Mind-Machine (Hi-tech), 3Ms, is the main stay subservient to the economic paradigm of the neo-liberal Human Capital Theory. This is now increasingly recognised to be inadequate as the ultimate solution for the future, given the confining and dehumanising nature of the 4Ms, made more fragile by the COVID-19 predicament. For example, this includes the issues of "lockdowns," uncertainties, and shared prosperity so that no one is left behind! Succinctly, it is about contributing "to the common good of humanity", as highlighted by UNESCO.

As the pandemic deepens with more than 30 million people affected, and more than 1 million deaths globally by the third quarter of 2020, the “true” nature of the so-called “modern education” is made bare to the eyes of the world. Its relationship to slavery, slave trade and scientific racism can no longer be disputed. The so-called “world-class” universities of the Global North are no more what they claimed to be – just, fair and universal. To quote the Christopher L. Eisgruber, the current President of Princeton University on the decision to remove Woodrow Wilson’s name from their School of Public and International Affairs: “Princeton honored Wilson without regard to, and perhaps even in ignorance of, his racism. And that, I now believe, is precisely the problem. Princeton is part of an America that has too often disregarded, ignored and turned a blind eye to racism, allowing the persistence of systems that discriminate against black people” (2020).

In other words, today’s education is not only unsustainable, but also colonised and coloured by racism in a very subtle way, and this has been kept away from the public’s consciousness until the coronavirus pandemic exposes it.

Education 2030 — from 4Ms to 4Hs

Translated into educational terms, the 4Ms (Manpower-Mind-Machine-Money) must now be expanded into a 4Hs nexus of Humanity-Heart-Hi-touch-Humanising Life. Alternatively, this framework further aims to enable the reconstructing of future education to be more inclusive, as envisaged by the overarching outcomes of Education 2030. This is interrelated with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2016-2030 encompassing the 5Ps of People, Planet, Prosperity, Partnership and Peace. It is no coincidence that the 2020 International Day of Education, which falls on January 24, 2020, is contextualised on the same reference points. From a similar perspective, the younger generation clearly point to what education’s next destination would be like, and what it means. It is equally a moral as it is an educational imperative. According to TIME, Thunberg “offered a moral call to those who are willing to act, and put shame on those who are not” — global leaders included. Reportedly, Thunberg has joined forces with renowned natural historian, Sir David Attenborough in asserting their leadership globally, not just a sustainable one, but an equitable and fair partnership between the Global North and South. By creating a “global attitudinal shift”, as it were, millions across geopolitical boundaries have endorsed the call by joining hands to force recognition of an urgent need for change.

Gone are the days when the South was coerced into playing catch-up based on the (unilaterally) standard set by the North or the West, which has been regarded by experts as the very source of the problem way back during the Earth Summit of 1992. As a result, for the ensuing decades, the case further deteriorated until the introduction of the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development in 2005, which ended in 2014. In the 10 years, the

education factor played a pivotal role in moving the needle towards the goals of sustainability. Post-2014, SDGs came to the fore as described earlier, where the education factor is inherent in the transformative process towards a sustainable future.

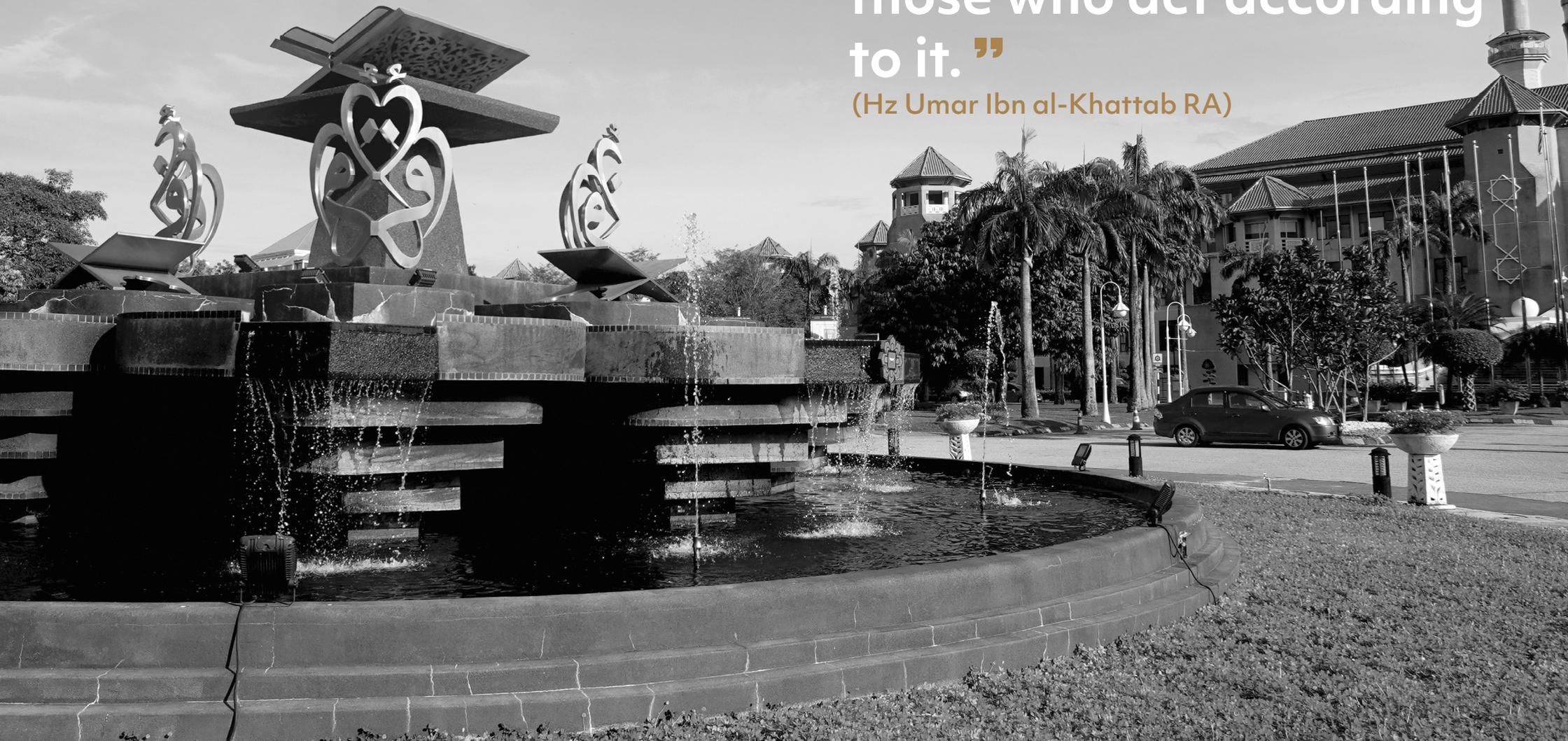
This cannot be better illustrated than the effort taken by UNESCO, the lead agency for SDGs. In launching the futures of education, “Learning to Become” was crafted as a major think piece that projects a new trajectory forward. It complimented well another approach of learning that is rooted in the 1972 Faure Report, “Learning to Be”, and two decades later, in the 1996 Delors Report, which embraces the four pillars of learning for the 21st century, namely, Learning to Know, Learning to Do, and Learning to Live Together, being other three. Put this together, within the framework of the 1956 Razak Report, the ensuing *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan* (1996) and the inherent wisdom of its *Sejahtera* concept, Malaysia is well-poised to reach out towards the futures of education. The ultimate global mission is to save planet Earth, and along with it ensures that all living species and their natural ecological ambience survive intact. Simply put, survival or being sustainable is the new endgame for education. And everything else follows accordingly.

It therefore becomes the basic catalyst to go beyond the 21st century, designed to share a forward-looking vision that offers a policy agenda for the post-industrial age and its ramifications. It is about leveraging education and knowledge (even wisdom) as the common platform of highly renewable human endeavours in instituting sustainable alternatives to transform the world through sustainable education. That is, a world which is more just, equitable and enriched by the wisdom of Divine revelation within the *homo sapiens* (not merely *homo economicus*) that has been missed, if not failed, to nurture truly educated *insan* in the real sense of the word. In IUM, this will be the *homo Islamicus*.



“
Do not be fooled
by the one who recites
the *Qur'ān*. His recitation
is but speech, but look to
those who act according
to it.”

(Hz Umar Ibn al-Khattab RA)



INTRODUCTION

IIUM recognises that a curriculum is the heart of its being. Innovatively developed and creatively delivered, a curriculum serves as a catalyst that triggers dynamic processes that would shape narratives and effect changes in societies and nations.

To ensure the successful implementation of the framework, a comprehensive evaluation of the present practices in the existing curricula was conducted. The aims of this evaluation were to review, develop, and validate the efficacy of leading-edge changes to the University's academic programmes. In order to obtain this information, the following major activities were conducted:

1. perform a 360-degree assessment of the relevance and adequacy of IIUM's curriculum in terms of its goals, programmes and courses learning outcomes, content-standards and performance-standards, structure, delivery, assessment and implementation.
2. benchmark best practices and innovation in curriculum development and implementation, with a special focus on the delivery and the achievement of content-standards and performance-standards of the curriculum and courses.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The information for this report was obtained from a series of activities involving different segments of the University.

- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving course facilitators, students, administrators of each of the UniCORE courses, academic staff according to their kulliyah, postgraduate students and deputy deans in charge of postgraduate programmes in the kulliyahs, at different times.
- Graduate Attributes Survey 2019
- Academic Experience Survey 2019
- Post-Graduate Survey 2020
- Tracer Study 2018
- *Meeting of IIUM Great Minds Workshop*
- Student Feedback Survey 2019
- Academic Review Survey 2020

As such the report here is presented according to the order below:

- i. General perception
- ii. Academic programmes
- iii. UniCORE courses
- iv. Graduate attributes
- v. Tracer Study
- vi. Student Feedback Survey

METHODOLOGY

Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

The FGDs were led by skilled moderators leading a targeted group of informants through a semi-structured interview setting on a specific issue. Accordingly, in each FGD, all informants were allowed to voice their complaints, concerns and recommendation to the issues above.

Two sets of FGDs were conducted in this exercise, one related to kulliyah's academic programme and the other related to the University Required Courses (UniCORE).

At the Kulliyah level, a series of 12 FGDs were conducted. Each FGD was conducted at the different kulliyahs with the esteemed academic members of the kulliyah serving as the informants for the FGD. The general objective of this exercise was to identify and record the views of the academic members of the University about the academic programmes in IIUM. Specifically, in each FGD,

the precursor questions posed to the informants revolved around the issues related to their kulliyahs in terms of:

- their general feelings towards their academic programmes.
- the teaching methodologies employed at the respective kulliyahs
- graduates' attributes, and
- areas for improvement.

For the UniCORE, a series of six (6) FGDs involving members of staff and students as the informants (Table 3.1). The findings of these FGDs would help the University in designing the new academic framework as part of the effort of revising the University's academic curriculum, the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF).

The main objectives of conducting these FGD were to:

- determine the informants' views towards UniCORE courses
- identify the problems faced by the administrative offices, instructors and students in the implementation of UniCORE courses, and
- discuss potential measures that can be taken to further improve the implementation of UniCORE courses.

Table 3.1 Informants for FGD

Activity	Informants	Location
Focus Group Discussion (FGD)	Co-curricula Unit under Students Affairs and Development Division (STADD)	Gombak Campus
	Fundamental Inter-disciplinary Studies	
	Quranic Language Department	
	Students	Kuantan Campus
	Mixed-group of academic staff	
Students		

Surveys

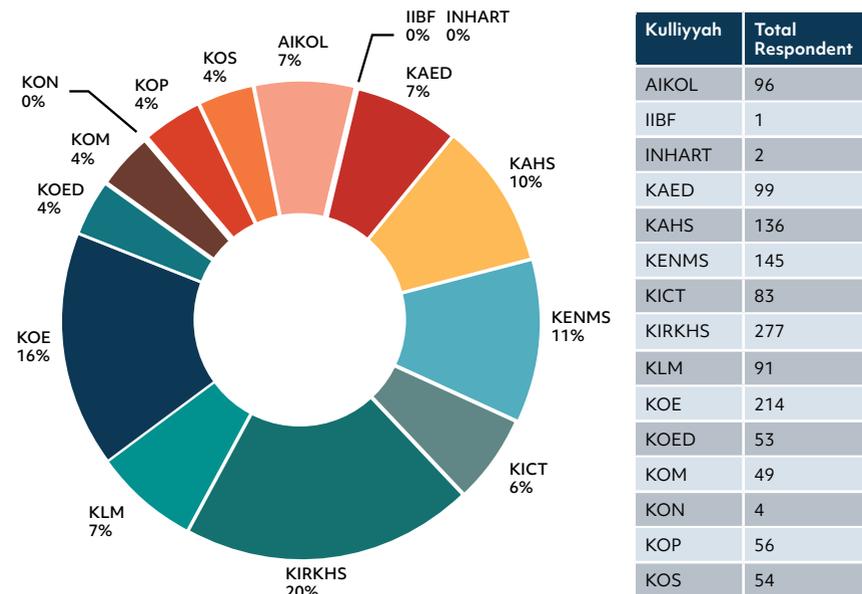
Academic Experience Survey: An open online survey on IIUM academic experience was conducted to get input from IIUM community and alumni in general. The main objective of the survey was to compare the expectation of IIUM management with the reality happening on the ground. The survey was administered after the discussion by the top level to review the University curriculum. The survey was opened for three (3) months via Google form. The survey was able to collect data from only 83 respondents.

To see the perception of current and past students and staff on the existing academic environment

To gather suggestion from current and past students and staff on improving IIUM academic experience

This survey indicated that, excluding the 'alumni' (7.2%), 92.8% of the respondents are still in the system. Some of them are alumni who either re-joined IIUM as an academic staff or as administrative and support staff. Their feedback is valuable since they could provide valuable information from the perspective of both a student and staff.

Graduate Attributes Survey 2019: A Graduate Attributes Survey was conducted during the 2019 IIUM Convocation. QR code containing a link to Google Form survey was pasted at graduates holding area. This allowed the respondents to have access to the questionnaire. A total of 1360 participated in this survey.



Academic Review 2020 Survey: Another university-wide online survey was conducted in March 2020 involving IIUM undergraduates. A total of 884 final year students voluntarily participated in this survey. The questionnaire in this survey comprised 12 items purportedly measuring the students' evaluation of the objectives, structure, contents, and delivery of the 20-credit-hour UniCORE courses. These items were constructed based on the findings extracted from the aforementioned FGDs, covering seven (7) indicators of the undergraduate academic curriculum. Each item was a suggestive proposition about an aspect of the UniCORE curriculum, to which respondents had to indicate their level of agreement based on a 5-point scale.

Post-Graduate Student Survey 2020: 400 current post-graduate students answered an online survey done to get their opinion on the post-graduate experience in IIUM.

Tracer Studies

The Graduate Tracer Study report presented the findings of a survey involving the IIUM graduates who attended their convocation ceremony. The graduates were requested to complete two online questionnaires - one constructed by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) and another by IIUM. The survey by the latter was constructed to evaluate whether the IIUM missions of Islamisation, internationalisation, and integration of knowledge were achieved from the students' aspect. The total number of respondents for this Tracer Study was 4,955. The following highlights from the survey conducted in 2018 provided a general view of the student development and the performance of IIUM graduates in the workforce:

- Evaluation of academic programmes and facilities
- Community service, and
- Employment

Meeting of IIUM Great Minds Workshop

The workshop in 2019 started the ball rolling on a full review of the academic activities of the University. It was attended by all the top management members (UMC), the Deans, the Directors, selected academic members of the Kulliyah, selected members from non-academic agencies, and also student representatives from all campuses. It was also attended by Professor Kamal Hassan as advisor to Centris. They were assigned to working groups - each comprising at least one UMC member, a Dean, a Director, kulliyah members, agency member, and student representative. They came up with a SWOT (strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis on academic programmes, human resource, facilities and community collaboration. They also came up with suggestions for improvements. These were then used as part of the basis for the Focus Group Discussions and the Academic Review Survey.

Student Feedback Survey

Student Feedback Survey (SFS) is a tool that helps to ascertain and monitor the quality of teaching and learning processes and outcomes. A total of 20,109 students participated in this particular Student Feedback Survey (2019/2020 Semester 1). The data from this survey serve as a basis for making informed decisions to enhance the teaching and learning processed in the University. Specifically, the data from this survey could be used to:

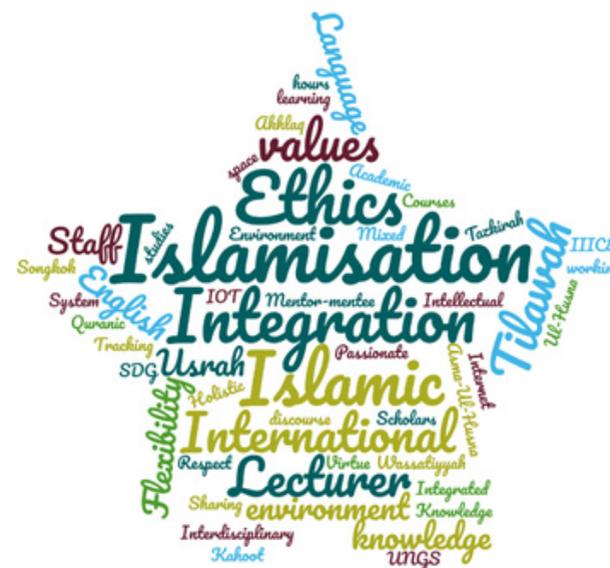
- evaluate the impact of teaching from the students' perspective;
- provide information for continuous improvement; especially in terms of teaching and learning;
- provide evidence for quality audit processes;
- assist in the professional development of academic staff.

FINDINGS

General Perception

The results of the Academic Experience Survey indicated that the respondents have had favourable academic experiences in IIUM. This could be illustrated by the keywords related to the aspects, concepts and ideas that they came across while in IIUM (see figure below).

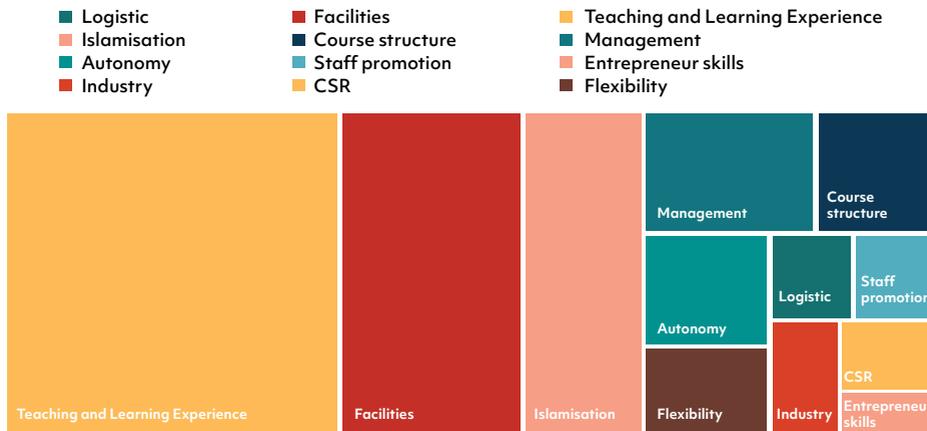
General perception of favourable academic experiences



When asked about the existing features they would like to be maintained, the survey results show that a large portion of the respondents described the Islamisation and Integration of knowledge as the key aspects to be continued in IIUM. The Islamic environment coupled with mixed local and international scholars are also among the features highlighted in the survey comments. There are also feedbacks that favour the availability of intellectual discourse as well as *Qur'an* course and *Usrah* (for students and staff) as an avenue to nurture holistic individuals. English Language as a medium of instruction is another element which is described as important to IIUM.

Respondents were also required to suggest any measures or ideas to improve the IIUM existing academic experience. The figure below illustrates the distribution of suggestions clustered in the 12 different categories.

A treemap on suggested categories for IIUM improvement



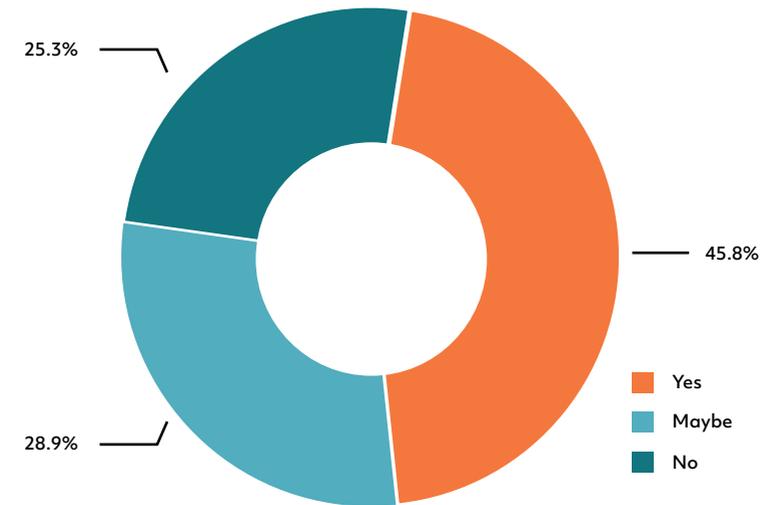
The “Teaching and Learning Experience” is the main category of experience that the respondents suggested needs improvement. Most of the suggestions made were on the conduct of the teaching and learning, including the:

- reduction of class size;
- balanced between the practical and theoretical studies;
- enhancement of student-centred learning environment; and
- use of blended learning in taught courses;

The next category of experience that needs improvement was “Facilities”. The respondents indicated that with the demand of online learning, the improvement needed include better and wider access to WiFi connection. In addition, there was also a need to improve classroom teaching and learning aids as well as to have modern learning space. Besides that, there were also suggestions on fixing toilets and potholes for *kesejahteraan* of IIUM community.

“Islamisation” in IIUM has a room for improvement as suggested by the respondents. The practice of *ukhuwah*, *ikhlas*, *istiqamah*, and *taqwa*, as well as spiritual development among IIUM community could be further improved.

Distribution of respondents on personalising students' study plan



The last question of the survey was on the study plan. Almost half (45.8%) of the respondents agreed that students should be given the opportunity to design their own study plan.

The 25.3% who disagreed explained that:

- students are less experience and might not know the nature of the programme, and how to design their own study plan;
- clinical programmes are more structured which required pre-planned study plan;
- a well-established study plan is required to ensure completion of study Graduate on Time (GoT); and
- the current IT system will not be able to cater for the change.

The remaining respondents who answered “Maybe” argued that:

- given proper guidance, students who have clear direction should be given the flexibility to choose their own courses;
- the allowance should only be given to mature students who are in their final years; and
- the system might not be able to process students’ applications.

When asked for any additional comments, it was interesting to read that respondents largely stressed on the needs to empower both students and staff.

Academic Programmes

General Issues and Challenges

This section presents the themes extracted from probes on the general feelings towards Academic Programmes obtained from the FGDs.

In terms of academic programmes offered at the kulliyahs, all informants reported positive views in that all the programmes were well received by the public and that they were accredited accordingly either by Malaysian Qualification Agency and/or by the relevant professional bodies. In fact, there were kulliyahs who claimed that the academic programmes that they offer were lauded by their respective regulatory bodies and even quoted as exemplars for other institutions.

However, some informants cautioned the University against focusing on the graduates' employability alone. They believed that some of the programmes or courses offered might not be about preparing students for the job market but simply for providing education and for educating people. Thus, academic curriculum review should be conducted regularly and critically with the right objectives in mind. The focus should be on strengthening and making academic programmes relevant rather than meeting the market demands only.

Teaching Methodologies Employed at the Kulliyah

Most lecturers were moving towards more contemporary teaching delivery modes. There was a general agreement among the informants that digital format materials were important and that they embraced the needs to change and adopt the new teaching methodologies.

Unfortunately, to the informants, there were issues that hamper their progress in using the state-of-the-art teaching methodologies. Some of these issues concern infrastructure and facilities while others concern the decisions made by the kulliyahs themselves. Most informants suggested obsolete computer facilities and software coupled with poor internet access as the main reasons for their difficulty in applying digital materials in class. Even when the necessary training was given to the members of staff, they would probably not be able to use the skills in the classroom as there were no facilities to allow them to do so. Specific to the medical-related kulliyahs, the informants suggested that the University invested in the purchase of virtual reality equipment, simulators and models to upgrade their quality of teaching. The informants also commented on the difficulty in getting financial allocations to replace furniture in the classroom.

There were also issues related to the decisions made by the kulliyahs such as, the changing or maintaining modes of teaching delivery, the assignment of assessment weightages, class sizes and the provisions for staffing and training.

Areas for Improvement

The comments in this section deal with matters that were not discussed in the other sections above. The informants suggested that there was a need to have a serious forum on the status of University curriculum given the present direction of the University and the feedback from the stakeholders. This involved the different required courses offered by the different units in the University and the kulliyahs. And whether they were a part of the formal curriculum or co-curricular activities. Another issue that received the informants' attention was the different understanding, and to a certain degree the misunderstanding, of terms and concepts related to IIUM academic framework such as University Required courses (UniCORE), free electives, minors, functions of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the future of Islamisation.

The informants seemed to be leaning towards allowing students to monitor their own academic progress and adherence to their study plan. The empowerment of students in this respect can only indicate the trust that the University has on IIUM students' integrity and maturity. As an alternative, if the University does not believe the students are ready for this, the financial allowance of respective Academic Advisors ought to be reinstated as the responsibility of advising students is not an easy task.

In terms of recognition from the public and the visibility of IIUM, the informants suggested that the University seek from the *Bahagian Kemasukan Pelajar IPTA* (UPU) the appropriate codes for our academic programmes. This will ensure the visibility of IIUM in the eyes of potential students. For international recognition, the informants recommended that IIUM embark on a more robust and aggressive marketing to bring in more international students.

Since the issue of finance related to the purchase of new items, maintenance of the existing ones and recruitment of new academic and non-academic personnel have been going on for a long time, the informants suggested that a fresh new discussion between kulliyahs and the relevant IIUM authority is needed. While it is generally accepted that IIUM, as other public universities do, is experiencing financial difficulties, it is also reasonable to recognise the requests from the different kulliyahs in terms of facilities and new members of

Abū al-Qāsim Khalaf ibn al-'Abbās al-Zahrāwī (936–1013) was a physician, surgeon and chemist, who was considered to be the greatest surgeon of the Middle Ages. His innovations in surgical procedures and instruments had an enormous impact in the East and West up until today.

staff. It is recommended that this discussion be structured and moderated in the spirit of win-win situation

The informants suggested that the Centre for Professional Development (CPD) plan the annual almanac of training to be disseminated to all academic members of staff prior to the beginning of every semester to make it easier for them to identify the trainings in which they want to participate. Realising that there were generic as well as specialised training, it was also recommended that CPD conduct a needs analysis assessment of training for all kulliyahs. This would ensure that at least the basic needs of training of all academic members of staff can be fulfilled.

It is worth noting here that contrary to the above, in actual practise, CPD posts all information for its annual almanac on its website at the beginning of the calendar year. CPD also announces its training, at least one month prior to the session for enrolment through the HURIS Step Application, with the exception of the training sessions that CPD conducted during the ERTL.

Feedback from CPD itself raised some concerns with regards to commitment levels in some of the participants. The lack of participation in CPD training and not staying throughout the training session is an indicator of low commitment among academics for reskilling and upskilling. Most of the time, around 30-40 lecturers would enrol, but only 10-15 would show up. And less than 10 stayed throughout the programme due to meetings, classes etc.

Perhaps the contributing factors to this unsatisfactory level of participation are (i) lack of recognition from the Kulliyah/University for participation in these programmes, (ii) lack of support from the kulliyah, in terms of time off to go for proper training, and (iii) the notion that they are doing fine without the additional training because they achieve more than 80% in their SFS. Only those who achieve below 80% for 3 consecutive semesters are required to undergo retraining.

The following presents evidence that substantiated the perceptions of the sample towards their academic programmes gathered from the Academic Review 2020 Survey.

Table 3.2 Percentage Distributions of Perceptions towards Academic Programme

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Are useful for your personal wellbeing?	6.8	22.1	71.1
Have been taught effectively by course instructor?	7.5	26.0	66.5
Develop your soft skill such as communication skills?	8.8	26.5	64.7
Have been efficiently organised?	13.9	26.4	59.7
Do not meet their objectives?	46.2	35.0	18.9
Have duplicated content with your foundation courses?	23.4	37.7	38.9
The load of the courses does not reflect the credit hour?	29.9	38.6	31.6

Table 3.2 summarises the percentage distributions of responses among the final year students. Of the 884 respondents, at least 60% endorsed the propositions that their undergraduate courses were “useful to their well-being,” “effectively taught by the instructors,” “develop their soft skills,” and “efficiently organised.” Almost 47% were in agreement that the courses fulfilled their designated objectives. However, the data revealed that more than one-thirds of the students indicated the occurrence of replication and mismatch between course workload and credit hour.

Learning Experience

To capture students' feedback on their learning experience, the questionnaire includes nine items related to the prevalence of unpleasant experience. Each item is a statement about teaching and learning issues, which has been extracted from the FGS sessions. The respondents were prompted to indicate the frequency to which they had experienced. Table 3.3 presents the results of data analysis.

Table 3.3 Students Learning Experience

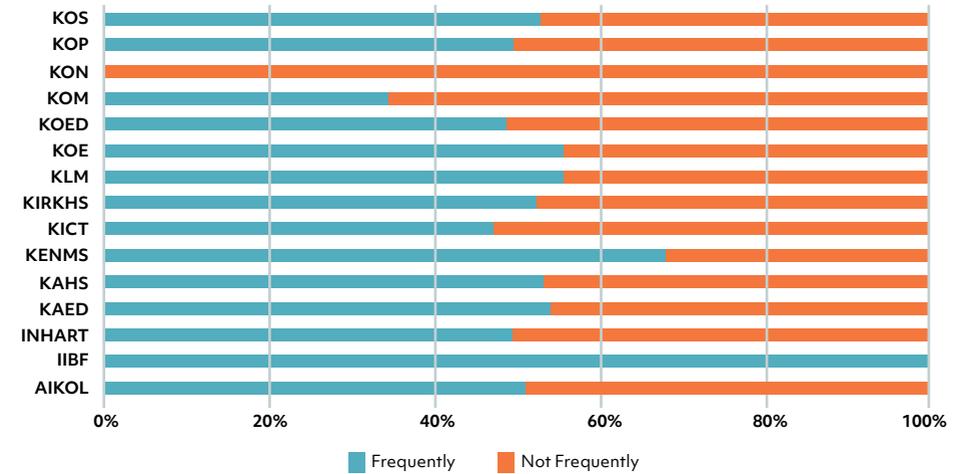
	Never	Rarely	Some-times	Fre-quently
Too much coursework/assignment	5.1	16.5	44.7	33.7
Mismatch between course credit and workload	12.1	23.5	38.2	26.1
NOT much exposure to the use of relevant technology, e.g. digital	9.8	26.9	39.1	24.1
NOT getting timely feedback on my performance	7.0	26.7	45.7	20.6
NOT allowed to register elective courses in other Kulliyahs	26.5	27.4	27.1	19.0
NOT allowed to take elective courses that I am interested in	24.1	28.3	29.4	18.2
Repeated contents across courses	9.4	30.8	41.9	18.0
Not knowing the relevance of the courses to my future career	12.1	21.4	50.1	16.4
Unfair allocation of marks across assignment and exam	33.0	32.9	34.0	0.0

The results showed that more than two-thirds of the respondents reported unfavourable learning experiences in terms of workload, exposure to relevant technology, knowing the relevance of the courses, and getting feedback on their performance. Also, more than one-half of the sample indicated the prevalence of repeated contents across courses.

The learning experience of current students and students who have recently graduated seems to be aligned. From the Graduate Attributes Survey, out of the 1360 respondents, only 19.1% students felt that they are not burdened with 'too much coursework or assignment' during their study period. However, 50% felt that there were "too much co-curricular activities".

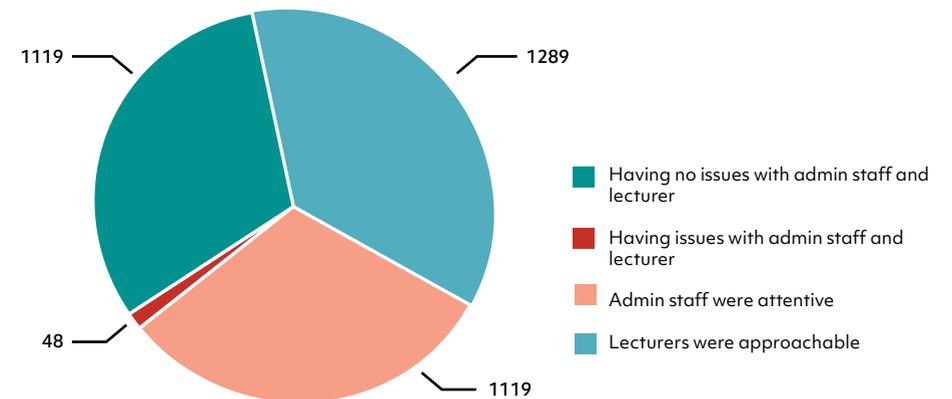
54% of the respondents confirmed that there is 'repeated content across courses' while taking their programme. From the tabulation in Figure 6, excluding data from KON and IIBF, KOM and KENMS students' feedback is skewed towards 'Not Frequently' and 'Frequently' respectively.

Students' perception on redundant content by Centre of Studies



Data also show that more than half of the students (51.7%) are frequently "not sure why some contents were taught" in their programme. Further analysis on the data has shown that these groups of respondents contributed 80.4%, 76.2% and 74.8% to the total feedback in which they experienced "unfair assessment", "unable to take elective courses that they are interested in" and "mismatch between credit hours and course workload" respectively.

Students' experience with IIUM staff



The figure above shows the overall students' experience with IIUM administration and academic staff. Overall, students were happy that their "lecturers were approachable" and that the "admin staff were attentive to their needs".

The triangulation from the different data collection methods strongly indicated the strengths and weaknesses of the IUM academic experiences. While generally positive, especially when it comes to staff-student relationships, and that the students/alumni appreciate the Islamic elements in the academic programme, there is still room to improve which has to be done at the programme review level. This is generally because the concerns seem to revolve more on the inadequate breadth in terms of content (e.g., duplicated content), skills (e.g., not much access to relevant technology) and choice.

UniCORE

Findings from FGD

From the FGDs with the kulliyahs, all informants appeared to be concerned about UniCORE courses and suggested the UniCORE curriculum, content, scheduling and, in particular the overall implementation be looked at. Many believed that the monitoring of UniCORE courses has not been done systematically. The concerns among informants revolved around the redundancy and duplication of the content of UniCORE courses and the content of courses offered at the kulliyahs, and as such, the informants requested that a reduction of hours for UniCORE courses be considered. Informants also discussed instances where UniCORE courses have to be held at night to avoid clashes in scheduling of classes.

Informants wished for UniCORE courses to be more hands-on rather than theoretical in nature and be less examination-oriented. They viewed UniCORE courses as the courses that would make students more resilient and capable with soft skills like creative thinking skills and communication as the highly needed ones by IUM students. The informants also wished for the selection and training of instructors for UniCORE courses to be given better attention as students informed them that there were instructors who did not seem to have strong beliefs or competencies in the content of courses they are teaching.

The FGD with the students and course providers provided slightly different themes.

Five (5) main themes were extracted from all the FGDs conducted with the course providers, namely the novelty of UniCORE courses; human resources and logistic; training on teaching methods and assessment procedures; moral support from IUM authorities; and other matters.

a. Novelty of UniCORE courses

This theme concerns the ability of the informants in making sense of the term UniCORE and the objectives for the offering of UniCORE courses. The FGDs conducted indicated that the informants had uncertain and different views towards UniCORE courses. Some of the informants were not sure of what

the term UniCORE stands for. Even when given the chance to define what UniCORE is, the “off-the-cuff” responses ranges from, the courses that will provide Islamic input to students, a certain “must” for IUM students, a way to differentiate IUM students from students of other institutions to “a collection” of courses that students must register as a graduation requirement. The responses given by the informants lack a clear and definitive interpretation of UniCORE courses and the objectives in offering these courses. This uncertainty is present in the comments by all informants in the FGDs conducted although it is more prevalent among the students.

There seemed to be no or a lack of briefing about UniCORE courses and the features of UniCORE courses to the IUM population. In spite of the fact that all informants were involved with the offering and implementation of UniCORE, their understanding of UniCORE was limited to their own responsibilities and scope of work. There was no clear indication of their concise knowledge of all the components of UniCORE in terms of structure, implementation and monitoring of concerned courses. This was even more serious in situations when there was an administrative reshuffle, where a staff who was previously located in a non-UniCORE-offering office was transferred to a UniCORE-offering office. This needs a further attention of the University as UniCORE courses function as the backbone of academic programmes, where all the courses serve to consummate students’ experience as IUM students.

Another concern that was observed during the FGD was that some informants did not perceive the presence of UniCORE courses as being useful to students. The words “previously” or “before this” appeared many times during the FGDs, which relate to the predecessors of the present UniCORE courses. Questions on the usefulness or success of the proposed UniCORE courses seem to conjure a comparison between the present UniCORE courses and the “old” university required courses. There was a view that suggests the “old” required courses were more capable in making an impact among our students than the present UniCORE courses. It was not known if this view is nostalgic, sentimental or objective in nature but it was noted.

b. Human Resource and Logistics

This theme revolved around the issues of time, number of students in a class, venues, equipment and the recruitment of instructors to teach UniCORE courses. Informants who were members of staff lamented the fact that the number of hours allocated to teach their subjects was too small, indicated by the small number of credit hours. Pedagogically, they suggested that without frequent face-to-face meetings, the students might not be able to have a good understanding of the knowledge and a good mastery of the skills that the instructors attempted to impart. They believed that they should meet their students more frequently per week and thus, their courses deserve a higher number of credit hours.

This issue was mentioned together with the number of students in a class. This was particularly the concern of those who were teaching *Mata Pelajaran*

Umum (MPU) and University General Studies courses (UNGS). There seemed to be an overwhelming dissatisfaction over the projection of students' numbers compared to the availability of venues, equipment and instructors. The complaints mainly revolved around the ability to secure well-equipped venues before the semester starts. While the informants somewhat relented over matters related to the venues and equipment, there seemed to be a general agreement among them that in order to maintain or to promote quality instruction, measures on finance need to be looked at with a view to appoint more instructors; part-time, contract or permanent one. This issue, in turn, was related to the amount and intensity of training provided to the part-time and contract staff prior to their teaching of specific courses. The informants suggested that the training was pertinent for the instructors to be able to deliver their teaching and assess the students in the best way possible.

c. Training on Teaching Method and Assessment Procedures

All informants in all FGDs unanimously agreed that they are in dire need for training to enhance the teaching skills and professionalism, particularly for the part-timers. At the moment there is no specific training in teaching and learning processes for UniCORE instructors. In terms of teaching methods, although the teaching informants have upgraded themselves, they still lack a formal training in developing and using appropriate teaching delivery.

The same concern was also applicable to the instructors' knowledge and skills in assessment procedures. Although some informants reported the use of up-to-date assessment procedures, they did not acquire the knowledge and skills from IIUM-organised training.

d. Moral Support from IIUM authority

The informants hinted that the UniCORE courses were perceived by the University population; students, lecturers and administrators alike, as "second-class" courses in terms of the courses' contribution to students' life and the contribution of the courses to the students' professional capability. In short, the major courses, referring to the degree, which the students were registered for, were viewed as being far more superior than the UniCORE courses. Instances recalled by the informants suggested that the UniCORE courses were also viewed as "wasting-time" courses.

e. Other Matters

There was also a need to look into all the courses offered in UniCORE as there seemed to be duplications of courses. When courses were duplicated there was a good possibility that elements related to the courses were also duplicated such as, the contents, methods of teaching and assessment procedures. This gave rise to our concern that a massive curriculum was needed to avoid duplication among UniCORE courses.

Another theme that raises concern was the monitoring of UniCORE courses, particularly in Kuantan Campus. It was not clear who was the authority in managing the courses. Instructors were reported to handle courses as they wished without following the prescribed course outlines. The informants suggested that there were cases where courses were being scheduled haphazardly and not according to the students' availability, which caused clashes in time-tabling.

Students' Evaluation of Unicore Courses

The students' feedback on the UniCORE courses were gathered from both the FGD and a survey.

During the FGDs, the students commented that when they enrolled in the University, they felt uncertain of UniCORE. They were not briefed appropriately about the UniCORE courses in terms of the structure, importance of the courses and the reason why they have to take the courses.

In terms of assessment, the students suggested that assessment procedures should be conducted according to the different contexts of the different kulliyahs. This would allow the knowledge and skills in UniCORE courses to be applied by the students in their unique areas of specializations, particularly courses related to *usrah* and UNGS. In addition the informants also wished that the assessment for some of the UniCORE courses be assessed based on pass/fail basis rather than grades.

The following section presents findings on UniCORE from the Academic Review 2020 Survey.

The respondents were indirectly asked whether or not they agree that the UniCORE curriculum implementation managed to achieve its objectives and the efficacy of its structure, which include the organisation and scheduling of classes. Responses from those surveyed are summarised in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Percentage Distributions of Perceived Effectiveness of Objectives and Structure

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Contents should be aligned to the Kulliyah's curriculum?	7.8	24.9	67.3
Enrich my knowledge on islamic worldview?	9.0	25.1	65.8
Class schedule of the courses should match academic programme structure?	7.5	27.6	64.9
Are useful for your personal wellbeing?	13.2	31.9	54.9
Develop your soft skill such as communication skills?	16.3	33.1	50.6
Section for UNGS courses is based on programme?	16.3	34.0	49.7

The data yielded several noteworthy results. First, at best only around one-third of the sample responded positively to the suggestion that the UniCORE, “enrich their knowledge on Islamic worldview, which signified the degree of the achievement of one of the main objectives of the courses. The results also suggested that only five out of every 10 final year students were in agreement that the UniCORE, (i) useful for [his/her] personal well-being” and (ii) “develop their soft skills such as communication skills.” These two objectives substantively underscored the UniCORE’s *raison d’etre*.

In terms of the students’ evaluation of the structure of UniCORE, the data indicated that less than one-half of the sample responded favorably. In fact, the majority (more than 60%) of the students were of the opinion that class schedule and course contents need to be reviewed and structured. Still at least one-fifths of the sample were non-committal. Their responses implicitly indicated neutrality or not having any view pertaining to the curriculum issues.

Perceived Effectiveness of the Teaching and Learning

The respondents also evaluated the effectiveness of the curriculum delivery, particularly with respect to various (five) aspects of teaching and learning processes. Specifically, the respondents were asked if they agree that the UniCORE programme enriches their spiritual engagement, has been taught effectively, aligns the course workload and its credit, contains duplication of contents, and has been efficiently organised. In addition, the questionnaire measures the respondents’ evaluation of the overall achievement of the UniCORE objectives. The responses from the sample surveyed are summarised in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Percentage Distributions of Perceived Effectiveness of Objectives and Structure

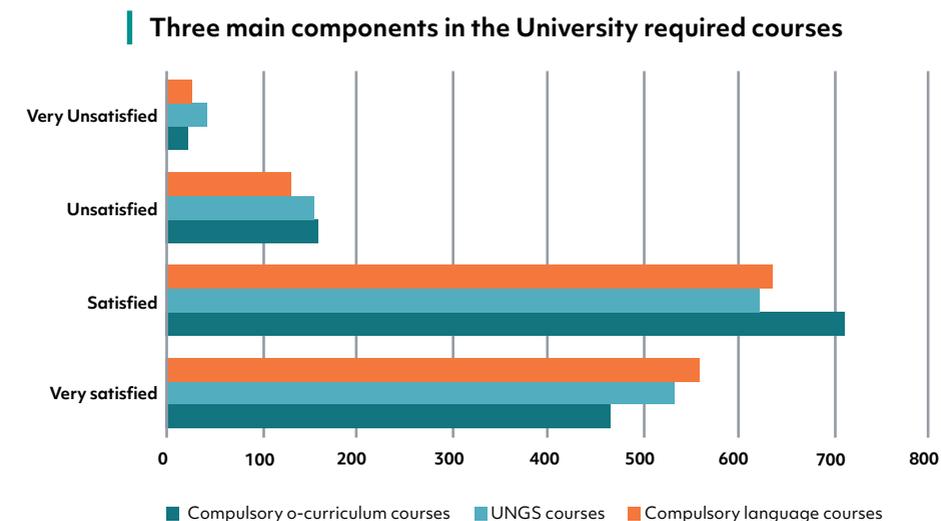
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Enrich my spiritual engagement?	17.0	36.0	47.1
Have been taught effectively by course instructor?	17.3	35.7	46.9
The load of the courses does not reflect the credit hour?	20.5	33.5	46.0
Have duplicated content with your foundation courses?	20.2	34.8	44.9
Have been efficiently organised?	30.3	35.9	33.8
Do not meet their objectives?	33.6	42.0	24.4

The results of data analysis showed that less than one-half of the students were in favour of the prevailing UniCORE curriculum practices. For example, only 47% were in agreement that the programme enriched their spiritual engagement while only one-third of the sample disagreed with the proposition that the UniCORE courses meet their objectives.

In a nutshell, the data suggested that the final year students were having difficulty to endorse the suggestions that the UniCORE courses have achieved their objectives, efficiently structured and organised, and effectively delivered.

However, the Graduate Attributes Survey presents a different take on UniCORE.

Students in this survey were also asked about the University required courses during their 3 to 5 years of study in IIUM. The figure below summarised the findings. Overall, students were found to be generally satisfied with the courses prescribed under the University required courses.



The conflicting findings seemed to indicate that while being a student in IIUM, the UniCORE courses were seen to be irrelevant and unnecessary, perhaps because these courses were not part of their core area of study. But upon graduation and having had to deal with a world that is more than just about their area of study, the graduates found UniCORE courses to be beneficial and contributing to their overall perspective.

Students' Preferences and Recommendations

The study also examined the final year students' reactions to policy intervention with respect to the IIUM's academic rules and regulations. The questionnaire proposes six possible changes to the current academic administration practices. And, the students were required to indicate their agreement for each proposal.

Table 3.5 Percentage Distributions of Student Who Would Recommend Changes

	NO	YES
Student to be given the ultimate freedom to choose their own skills courses?	5.2	94.8
That the courses to focus on practice (knowing how), not theory (knowing what)?	11.1	88.9
That the content and the learning outcome of the courses to be revised?	15.4	84.6
That the <i>Tilawah</i> to be taught before <i>Qur'anic</i> Language course?	44.1	55.9
That the curriculum of <i>Tilawah</i> courses should be revised?	45.1	54.9
That the <i>Qur'anic</i> Language to be taught before <i>Tilawah</i> course?	47.5	52.5

Table 3.5 shows the distribution of reactions towards changes in the six aspects of academic rules and regulations related to UniCORE. The results of data analysis indicated that eight out of every 10 respondents voted positively for freedom to choose skill courses, UniCORE to focus on practical skills, and that their contents and learning outcomes to be revised. Furthermore, the majority of the sample would recommend that the *Tilawah* course be taught before the teaching of *Qur'an* Language course.

Graduates Attributes

There was a mixed bag of comments from the informants when discussing matters related to IIUM graduates' attributes. In general, the informants recommended that IIUM maintains the uniqueness of its graduates. They believed that this was true due the creative and unique combination of contemporary and Islamic components in the curriculum structure of programmes and courses. In fact, informants reported that there were students who claimed that they have become better reciters and memorizers of the *Qur'an* and have become more proficient in public speaking in Malay and English because of the practice they received in their classes.

However, it must be noted that there was a huge room for improvement for our students and the University is encouraged to look into it. One area that needed immediate attention was the condition of our students' mental health. This issue was echoed by many informants during the FGDs. IIUM students were

seen as suffering from mental health problems such as depressions and anxiety that affect, among others, their resilience and hardiness in facing the day-to-day challenge as university students.

Another area that deserved attention was keeping a balance in IIUM students' competencies in specific hard skills and soft skills. Feedback from different stakeholders in this respect were mixed. On one hand, our students were demanded to have a deep understanding of hard skills, particularly those concerning their discipline of studies and, on the other hand, our students were also expected to display abilities in soft skills such as communication skills.

Graduates' Growth Mindset

Five-point Likert scale items were posed to the students concerning their mindset growth. It is promising to know that students agreed that "*effort is path of mastery*" and that "*failure as opportunity*" rather than something that would stop them from growing. Perhaps, that could be the reason as to why only 604 out of 1360 respondents seconded the "*intelligence and talent are born with*" statement. This could mean that students believed that 'talent' could be a result of a constant effort and getting back up from 'failure'. The two other target points have a surprising outcome. Students found themselves "threatened by others' success" and that they "often get angry when getting feedback" about their performance.

Mapping of 2019 IIUM Graduates' Mindset

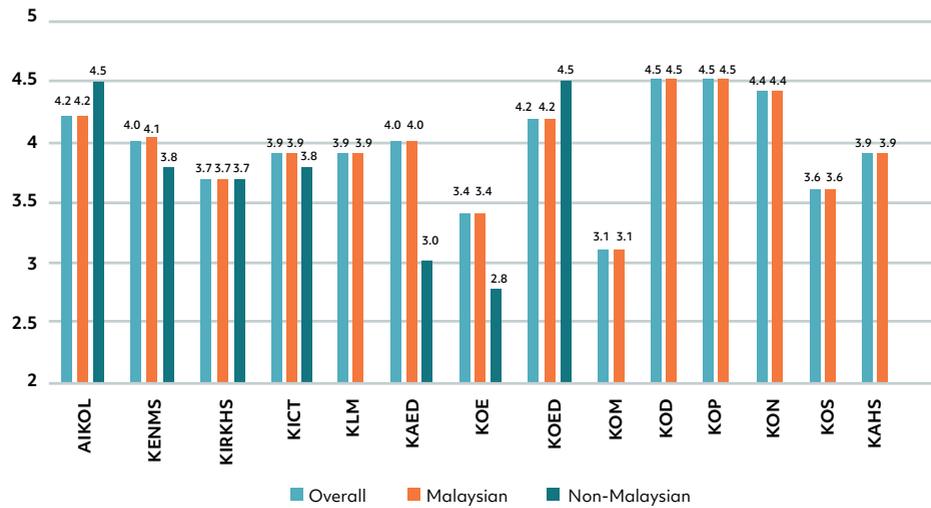


Tracer Study

Evaluation of Academic Programmes and Facilities

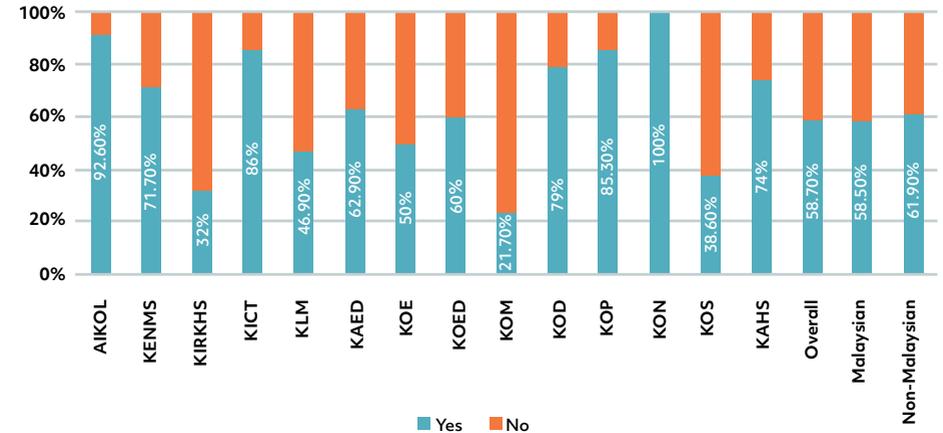
Graduates were asked to evaluate the helpfulness of their respective study programmes to their current jobs by rating them on a scale of 1 (extremely low or not helpful at all) to 5 (extremely high or extremely helpful). Overall, IIUM academic programmes were rated at 3.9. The rating significantly greater than 3.5 suggests that the graduates found that the programmes were helpful.

Helpfulness of study programme by Kulliyah



From the 2,382 graduates who had secured a job before graduation day, 58.7 percent were working in fields related to their study programmes. The result showed that all Kulliyah of Nursing (KON) graduates found work related to their field of study before graduation day. Due to issues related to housemanship placement for medical graduates, only 21.7 percent secured positions in hospitals before graduation day.

Employment in field related to study programme by Kulliyah



Graduates were also asked to evaluate the overall curriculum in terms of (i) suitability of the study programme, (ii) balance between the theoretical and practical components, (iii) internship programme, (iv) compulsory co-curricular programme, (v) compulsory subjects, (vi) variety of co-curricular activities offered, (vii) preparing students for working life, and (viii) whether the internship programme helped them obtain suitable employment.

Overall, the graduates were satisfied with the curriculum, as shown by the rating, which is significantly greater than 3.5. (Table 3.6)

Table 3.6 Evaluation of curriculum by kulliyah

	AIKOL	KENMS	KIRKHS	KICT	KLM	KAED	KOE	KOED	KOM	KOD	KOP	KON	KOS	KAHS	OVERALL
Suitability of Programme	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.6	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.3
Theoretical-practical balance	4.1	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.2	4.0	3.6	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.0	4.0
Internship	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.1	3.8	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.1	4.1
Compulsory co-curriculum	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.1
Compulsory subjects	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2
Variety of co-curriculum	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.0	4.5	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2
Prepare students for working world	4.0	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.6	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.2	4.4	3.9	3.9	4.0
Internship helps employment	4.2	4.3	4.0	4.3	4.3	4.1	3.8	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.0	4.1	4.1
Malaysian	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.1	3.9	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.2
International	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.9	N/A	4.0	N/A	N/A	4.5	N/A	3.8
Total	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	3.9	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.1

Soft skills include interpersonal communication, creative and critical thinking, problem solving, analytical, teamwork, inculcating and practising positive values, and awareness of general knowledge and current issues. In general, the graduates rated their soft skills as “very good” with mean ratings significantly greater than 4 (see Table 3.7). Among the soft skills listed, the graduates rated themselves slightly higher (4.3 and above) in teamwork and inculcating and practising positive values.

Table 3.7 Soft skills by Kulliyah

	AIKOL	KENMS	KIRKHS	KICT	KLM	KAED	KOE	KOED	KOM	KOD	KOP	KON	KOS	KAHS	OVERALL
Interpersonal communication	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1
Creative and critical thinking	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.2	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.1
Problem solving	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.3	3.9	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1
Analytical skills	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.1
Ability for teamwork	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.3
Inculcation and practising positive values	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.4
General knowledge and current issues	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1
Malaysian	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2
International	4.3	3.9	4.1	4.2	5.0	4.0	4.1	3.7	N/A	4.1	N/A	N/A	4.6	N/A	4.1

The levels of satisfaction with other facilities such as laboratories, health centre, lecture halls, classrooms, sports facilities, transportation, and accommodation were summarized in Table 3.8. Although the graduates were satisfied with the parking facilities provided, the satisfaction ratings were lower compared to other facilities. Graduates from the Gombak campus gave slightly lower ratings for health centre service and campus security. KOM and KAHS graduates' ratings for campus bookstore were lower as it is not offered at the Kuantan campus.

Table 3.8 Evaluation of other facilities and services

	AIKOL	KENMS	KIRKHS	KICT	KLM	KAED	KOE	KOED	KOM	KOD	KOP	KON	KOS	KAHS	OVERALL
Laboratories	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.0	3.7	4.2	3.9	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.9
Lecture hall/tutorial room	3.7	4.0	3.9	4.3	4.2	4.1	3.7	4.3	3.7	4.5	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	3.9
Sports facilities	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.0	3.8	4.3	4.1	4.4	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.0
Cafeteria	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.1	3.9	4.3	3.7	4.1	3.8	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.0
Accommodation/Mahallah	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.4	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.2
Transportation	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.8	4.2	3.5	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.1	3.9
Campus bookstore	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.6	3.9	3.6	4.1	3.3	3.6	3.7	4.0	3.6	3.4	3.8
Conducive study area	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.8	4.3	4.1	4.5	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.0
Health centre	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.6	3.9	3.8	4.1	4.4	4.5	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.2	3.9
Parking	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.2	3.8	3.4	3.7	3.4	4.2	3.9	3.5	3.5
Campus security	3.6	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.6	4.0	4.1	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	3.8
Online integrated learning system	3.7	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9	4.0	3.7	4.2	3.8	4.0	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.0	3.9
ICT services and facilities	3.7	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.8	3.9	3.7	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.0	4.3	4.0	4.0	3.9
Total	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	3.9	4.0	3.7	4.2	3.9	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.0	3.9

Community service

Graduate were asked about their participation in community service programmes organised under BUDI, STADD, kulliyah, or *Mahallah*. The activities involved are on social and welfare, mentoring, or *da'wah* based programmes. Overall, more than 80 percent students were involved in the social and welfare-type community services, an average of 32% on mentoring-type community services, and an average of 30% involvement in *da'wah*-type community services.

The graduates believed that their participation in the community service programmes provided a positive impact on themselves as well as on the communities involved.

Employment

Overall, the top three sectors 2018 IIUM graduates worked in were professional, scientific, and technical (17.2 percent), education (16.7 percent), and other services (11.8 percent). However, the sectoral concentrations differed across different kulliyahs. For instance, 28.6 percent of KENMS graduates worked in the financial and insurance or takaful sector while over 65 percent of KICT graduates, expectedly, was in the information and communication technology sector; almost 32 percent of engineering graduates were employed in the manufacturing sector, and 38 percent of KAED graduates were in the construction sector. Most KOP, KAHS, and KOD graduates predictably worked in the professional, scientific, or technical, or health and social services sectors. A diverse group were found among KOS and KLM graduates, who worked in various sectors (see Table 3.9).

Table 3.9 Top employment sectors by Kulliyah (UG)

AIKOL		KAED		KENMS	
Professional/scientific/technical	63.1%	Construction	38.2%	Financial/insurance/takaful	28.6%
Other services	23.6%	Professional/scientific/technical	12.9%	Professional/scientific/technical	15.3%
Real estate	4.4%	Other services	11.8%	Other services	8.3%
KICT		KIRKHS		KOE	
Information/communication	65.3%	Education	38.6%	Manufacturing	31.8%
Financial/insurance/takaful	6.3%	Other services	15.1%	Professional/scientific/technical	21.0%
Other services	6.3%	Financial/insurance/takaful	7.1%	Information/communication	15.4%
KOED		Overall		KAHS	
Education	78.8%	Professional/scientific/technical	17.2%	Health/social	41.2%
Other services	5.9%	Education	16.7%	Professional/scientific/technical	27.5%
Admin/support services	3.5%	Other services	11.8%	Other services	10.7%
KOD		KOM		KON	
Professional/scientific/technical	45.8%	Education	21.7%	Health/social work	92.5%
Health/social work	25.0%	Health/social work	17.4%	Professional/scientific/technical	5.7%
Other services	16.7%	Accommodation/food service	13.0%	Other services	1.9%
KOP		KOS		KLM	
Professional/scientific/technical	42.9%	Education	15.8%	Education	28.6%
Health/social work	33.8%	Professional/scientific/technical	15.8%	Other services	24.5%
Other services	13.2%	Other services	14.9%	Information/communication	16.3%

Interpretation and Recommendation based on Tracer study

In general, the University has been offering programmes that prepare students for the world of work. Many of our graduates work in the area appropriate to their studies. However, each kulliyah should do a more specific tracer study for their graduates. Our students were also sufficiently exposed to community services and Islamic oriented activities during their study years. Even though the students found the facilities acceptable, at an average of around 4.0, there seems to be a lot of improvement that could be done.

While the data presented provide generally good indicators that our programmes are creating a viable workforce that is in demand, there is still room for improvement and some cause for concern. It is not clear why Medicine (KOM), Dentistry (KOD) and Pharmacy (KOP) graduates do not identify themselves as mainly working in the health field. Of the categorized sectors, the percentage of Science (KOS) graduates who are in education and who are in the scientific sector are equally divided - and that figure is actually low at 15.8% each. There is also an indicator that going into the education sector is a popular option among the graduates, even for those not from Education (KOED).

Each kulliyah should use these findings to enhance their programmes and engage with their graduates - those who remain in the field and those who do not - for feedback as part of their critical review and to have a better understanding of the general patterns shown here. Again, while employment is not the sole indicator of a programme's quality, employability is; and more importantly, the impact the programmes have made of the graduates is of utmost concern - and this can only be done with more intense engagements with the graduates of each programme.



Student Feedback Survey (SFS)

There are four parts of questionnaires for this survey, the summary of the results are shown in Table 3.10.

Part 1 is on the lecturer's pedagogical aspects and his/her impact. Part 2 is an assessment of the course itself - in terms of its applicability and relevance from the student's perspective. Part 3 is on the facilities (teaching and learning and other resources) at the kulliyah level, and Part 4 is on the facilities provided by the University in general.

Table 3.10 Summary of the Student Feedback Survey (2019/2020 Semester 1)

Centre of studies	% of student rating at least "Agree" on lecturers teaching and Conduct (Part 1)	% of student rating at least "Agree" on Course (Part 2)	% of student satisfaction rating at least "Good" on Kulliyah facilities (Part 3)	% of student satisfaction rating at least "Good" on the University facilities (Part 4)
AIKOL	97.38%	97.39%	55.08%	54.75%
KENMS	96.27%	96.20%	66.32%	66.65%
KAED	96.48%	96.88%	68.31%	66.50%
KICT	95.33%	95.34%	80.90%	66.08%
KOE	96.08%	95.95%	62.83%	61.32%
KIRKHS	96.37%	95.84%	63.17%	65.85%
KAHS	99.26%	98.19%	78.87%	77.90%
KON	99.15%	99.09%	90.43%	85.15%
KOS	98.38%	98.27%	62.79%	67.13%
KOM	99.00%	98.37%	72.93%	74.06%
KOD	99.30%	98.99%	63.24%	66.85%
KOP	99.56%	98.23%	77.58%	72.74%
KOED	97.87%	98.17%	72.19%	69.81%
KLM	96.18%	96.42%	74.79%	66.09%
CELPAD	96.43%	95.68%	78.87%	78.16%
IIBF	97.27%	97.11	82.13%	77.14%
ISTAC	87.78%	100%	57.65%	46.96%

Part 1 of the SFS consists of fifteen (15) items relating to perceptions of students on how lecturers conduct their lessons. The overall results show that students are having the right impact of teaching, highly satisfied with the teaching and learning process.

Part 2 consists of 15 questions on the actual course itself. As in the teaching and learning experience, the results are also showing that the students are highly agreeable with the quality of the curriculum.

Part 3 and 4 pose the questions on the facilities at the Kulliyah and University with 17 and 23 items respectively. These items include classroom and labs, cafeteria and campus safety, IIUM website and transportation services. There are mixed reactions from the survey, with newer Kulliyahs scoring higher satisfaction ratings compared to the older Kulliyahs for both kulliyah and university facilities.

Interpretation and Recommendation of Student Feedback Survey

Students were extremely satisfied with the quality of the lecturers' teaching and conduct and the quality of courses, with more than 90% of the students rating these two aspects as satisfactory. However, students were not happy with the quality of facilities provided by the Kulliyahs and University, with less than 60% of the students rating the facilities as satisfactory. The University authority should address this perennial issue of unsatisfactory facilities if we really want to lead the way.



“
And there is no
creature on [or within]
the earth or bird that
flies with its wings
except [that they are]
communities like you.
We have not neglected
in the Register a thing.
Then unto their Lord
they will be gathered.”

(Qur'an, 6:38)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

UniCORE

The University is recommended to rationalise the structure and content of the present UniCORE courses (and the philosophy behind it) and the old version of UniCORE prior to formalizing the SAF. Following this, all members of staff need to be given a briefing on UniCORE so that they have a succinct and working understanding of UniCORE.

Given that UniCORE is an important element in SAF towards nurturing students imbued with Islamic values and strong empathy towards others and the environment, and while being critical and grounded in evidence, the marginalisation of UniCORE courses should cease. More efforts should be made to support the implementation of these courses to achieve their objectives.

UniCORE instructors, if given formal training in assessment, would be able to review the present assessment and to propose informed changes to their courses. Hence, a continuous professional development programme to this effect should be constructed and implemented. Above all, the University is recommended to provide continuous training for UniCORE instructors and to invest on the design of a handbook on teaching skills and assessment for facilitators and instructors.

As the University decided to maintain the UniCORE setup, concerted effort must be made to send strong signals to the University population that UniCORE courses are important to the students. We do not, in any way, suggest that all members of staff should know everything about the UniCORE courses, but they at least ought to be aware of the whole UniCORE structure. Morale support from the University, in this respect, must be done deliberately and visibly to the University population.

Instructors

The practise of prioritising hiring academic staff with a doctoral or professional qualification instead of the minimum masters qualification should continue. It is evident that their expertise in their area of specialisation is translated into the classrooms and the content coverage of the curriculum. Having said that, the opportunities for the academic staff to improve themselves should be made readily available either via the existing sabbatical attachments, invigorating the industrial attachment allocation, or continued series of workshops and seminars in various pedagogical aspects, and also in the Islamisation and the *Insān Sejahtera* concepts and practices. Teachers teach for the future in the formal settings, and they become role models beyond these formal settings, hence it is important that they be given the support and opportunity to fulfill these responsibilities, while also becoming the referral persons in their areas of expertise.

Teaching Materials

The University is also recommended to re-introduce the Production of Instructional Materials Unit at OCAP (this Unit was previously handled by them) to facilitate and advise UniCORE instructors in designing teaching materials, particularly those in digital formats. The services offered by this unit should be extended to other lecturers throughout the years. The University should note that, although more and more lecturers are becoming familiar with the state-of-the-art teaching materials, there are still those who possess the ideas but lack the skills and equipment to use or manipulate digital format materials.

Facilities

Satisfaction with facilities - be them teaching and learning, research or living facilities - has not been high across the various fact-finding tools. It is therefore important for the University management to look into this more systematically, and prioritise what needs to be up-graded or installed, even removed, to provide a learning, working and living environment that befits a university that is leading the way.

Alumni

The alumni has been largely an under-utilised segment of the University community. The past few years has seen an increase in the involvement of alumni in various university programmes, but it can be enhanced. The alumni should be engaged not just in intermittent programmes, but in the academic pursuits being done in the University.

Academic programmes

The academic programmes continue to be the backbone of the university. Generally, many alumni are happy with the formal education that they received. The University should continue its quest to offer the best programmes, instead of resting on its laurels. The first-year employment rate of our graduates could be improved, but doing so requires the programmes to undertake a critical review of their current practices. However, it is something all programmes should do, and SAF is a way to frame the critical review that they should undertake.

Islamisation

As a thrust of the University, Islamisation efforts have been felt, both during their tenure as students of the University, but perhaps more importantly, afterwards as these alumni make their marks in the world. A major take-away from the FGDs is the realisation that Islamisation should be at not just the domain of knowledge, but has to be in the behavioural domain, and perhaps more importantly, in the affective domain. Islamisation processes and Islamic values should be internalised by all the University community such that they are manifested in the behaviours and the thinking processes. In the academic programmes, UniCORE is only the base to begin this effort, and it then should be picked up and addressed in the core academic courses too.

POSTGRADUATE (PG) PROGRAMMES

Patterns of enrolment

Over the past years, the enrolment number of PG students ranges between 5,000 plus students to 6,000 plus students. The ratio between international and local students varies between 40-60%. In 2019, the highest number of international students comes from Indonesia, followed by Bangladesh, Oman, China and Algeria. IIUM's PG programmes have always been attractive to students around the region, Middle East, central Asia and African region.

Table 3.11. Enrolment of PG students by nation as of June 2020

POSTGRADUATE LIST (A-K)	
COUNTRY	TOTAL
AFGHANISTAN	5
ALBANIA	1
ALGERIA	124
AUSTRALIA	3
AZERBAIJAN	1
BAHRAIN	5
BANGLADESH	325
BELGIUM	1
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	3
BRUNEI	5
BURKINA FASO	5
CAMBODIA	12
CANADA	15
CHAD	5
CHINA	131
COMOROS	13
DJIBOUTI	4
EGYPT	59
ERITREA	2
ETHIOPIA	6
GAMBIA	4
GERMANY	1
GHANA	10
GREECE	1
GUINEA	39

POSTGRADUATE LIST (L-Z)	
COUNTRY	TOTAL
LAOS	2
LEBANON	1
LIBERIA	1
LIBYA	79
MALAWI	2
MALAYSIA	3326
MALDIVES	35
MALI	7
MAURITANIA	10
MEXICO	1
MOROCCO	11
MOZAMBIQUE	1
MYANMAR	15
NEPAL	1
NETHERLANDS	3
NEW ZEALAND	1
NIGER	2
NIGERIA	74
OMAN	327
PAKISTAN	72
PALESTINE	68
PERAK	1
PHILIPPINES	5
QATAR	24
RUSSIA	6
SAUDI ARABIA	64

POSTGRADUATE LIST (A-K)	
COUNTRY	TOTAL
HONG KONG	1
INDIA	111
INDONESIA	380
IRAN	24
IRAQ	62
IVORY COAST	2
JAPAN	8
JORDAN	30
KAZAKHSTAN	5
KENYA	4
KOSOVO	1
KUWAIT	64
TOTAL	1562

POSTGRADUATE LIST (L-Z)	
COUNTRY	TOTAL
SENEGAL	2
SERBIA	1
SIERRA LEONE	3
SINGAPORE	43
SOMALIA	84
SRI LANKA	18
SUDAN	58
SYRIA	33
TAIWAN	1
TAJIKISTAN	3
TANZANIA	17
THAILAND	48
TOGO	1
TUNISIA	6
TURKEY	56
U.A.E	30
UGANDA	6
UNITED KINGDOM	4
USA	12
UZBEKISTAN	7
VIETNAM	2
YEMEN	79
TOTAL	4653
OVERALL TOTAL	6215

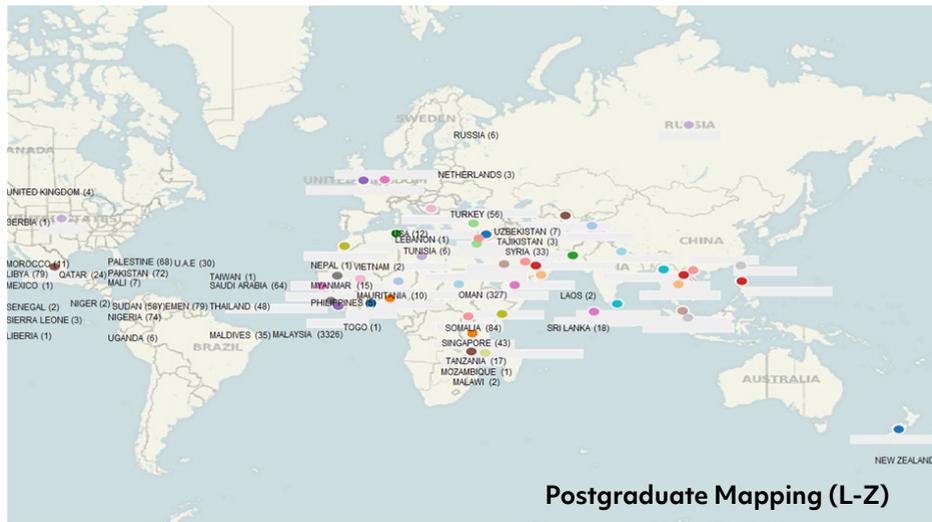
The top five popular Ph.D. Programmes are:

- i. Doctor of Philosophy (Education)
- ii. Doctor of Philosophy in Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage
- iii. Doctor of Philosophy (Law)
- iv. Doctor of Philosophy (Islamic Banking and Finance)
- v. Doctor of Philosophy (Engineering)

For Masters level, the top 3 popular programmes are:

- i. Master of Education
- ii. Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage
- iii. Master of Science (Islamic Banking and Finance)

Where IIUM PG students come from



Tracer Studies

The 2017 and 2018 Tracer Study Reports have allocated special segments to Master and PhD students. In 2018 Tracer Study Report, 516 Master's degree graduates and 178 PhD graduates participated in the Tracer Study.

About half of the Malaysian graduates, either at Master or PhD levels were self-sponsored as there is less opportunity for funding and sponsorship for PG studies. Majority of the students are mature and working students with about two thirds of Master graduates and about half of Ph.D. graduates were employed while studying. The graduation on time (GOT) figure for PG is not too satisfactory. Only 52.5% of those who pursue their Master degree by coursework graduated on time. The GOT for mixed mode or research mode is even more dismal – at 8.9 and 12.4 percent respectively. In research mode, none of the students from the science and technical centre of studies graduated on time. Whereas, in mixed mode study, none of the graduates from AIKOL, KOM, ISTAC, and IiBF graduated on time. For Ph.D. graduates, only less than 10% graduate on time. More than half graduate in four and a half years.

Overall, the PG graduates rated the study programmes as very helpful and relevant to their jobs. In terms of soft skills, graduates are generally happy with the ICT skills that they garnered during their studies. Students also reported positively of the soft skills which were obtained such as interpersonal communication skills, creative and critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, analytical skills, ability for teamwork, inculcation and practicing of positive values, and exposure to general knowledge and current issues. On the same token, the graduates rated highly their English and Malay language proficiencies. The proficiency in English language is the distinctive feature of IIUM students. The graduates also reported of satisfaction of the life skills IIUM inculcate to their students, indicating that the graduates are balanced graduates who are successful in their academic studies as well as life skills.

The satisfaction rate of IIUM students in terms of the degree obtained from IIUM is extremely high (91.9% of IIUM Master's degree graduates). To that extent, more than 90% of them are even willing to recommend IIUM to others. In social and welfare programmes organised by Kulliyahs, more than 60 percent of IIUM Ph.D. graduates were involved in social and welfare type of community service programmes and more than 20% were involved in mentoring and da'wah programmes. From these students, KIRKHS graduates were the greatest contributors in terms of participation. Most of the students valued their involvement in the community service programmes and consider them as giving invaluable impact even upon themselves.

The readiness of the students to embrace technology and social media in their teaching and learning is well reflected in their response in the tracer study. The Ph.D. graduates, being much older than their UG students, prefer more traditional social media like Facebook whilst the UG prefer Twitter.

Mental Health

PG studies can be quite stressful to students due to many reasons. Being away from family and beloved ones can take a toll on a person. What more when one is living on a budget or trying to stretch every single penny to make ends meet. Trying to maintain a good balance between working, family and studies is not something that not all PG students are capable of. Naturally, family commitments, death of close family members can cause depression or even cascade to bigger mental health issue. Over the past few years, the percentage of students seeking leave from studies on the basis of mental health issue has been on the rise. In 2015, the number of students granted leave on mental health issues only constitute one percent. This has accelerated to 4.8 percent in 2018.

Table 3.12 Students requesting study leave due to mental health issues (2015-2020)

Year and Mental Health Details	Count of Students	Total Percentage by Year
2015	4	1.10%
2016	8	2.04%
2017	8	1.97%
2018	19	4.88%
2019	19	4.12%
2020	5	1.75%

Sejahtera Academic Framework and the Current PG programmes

The Master programmes differ from bachelor programmes in that they are offered in 3 modes: (i) course work (ii) mixed mode (iii) research. Generally, the existing programmes offer specialization or in-depth studies in a discipline or niche areas of interest. As PG studies are principally taken by students to increase chances of employability with the additional skills and knowledge obtained, most of the PG programmes in IIUM aim exactly that i.e. to enhance career prospects or facilitate career change or to fit the practical needs of the industry. The design, field and nature of PG programmes are inherently specialized and focused to cater for adult learner level, so the course outline and delivery may not necessarily reflect the *Sejahtera* Framework. Members of the Board of studies also consist of experts in the professional field. As a result, most of the old PG programmes are not structured along the lines of the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework.

FGD: Issues and Challenges

A series of FGD were conducted at several Center of Studies between April to June 2020 to reflect whether the existing design of both Master and Ph.D. programs reflect the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework. From the feedback provided by KLM, INHART, KOE, KAHS, KON, KOM, KIRKHS, KICT and AIKOL the report is that the overall design of the PG programmes need to be revised to properly reflect the shift in IIUM's vision and mission, particularly the emphasis on SDGs and Education 2030.

However, both sustainable development goals and *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah* are portrayed heavily in funded research projects where graduate students are involved. From the total of research projects participated by PG students, about 205 of them are involved in projects that are aligned to these two missions. Although the research projects may not be attributing to any single research objectives on the IIUM mission and vision, yet the output of the research projects contributes to these ideal objectives.

Focus Group Discussions (FGD): Issues and Challenges

A series of FGDs were conducted at the Centre of Studies to seek their views of whether or not the existing design of IIUM PG programmes reflects the SAF. Feedback from the FGDs indicated that Islamisation as the IIUM philosophy of knowledge is sufficiently embedded into the PG taught courses and research. The remaining issue is whether the other core components of the SAF such as Education 2030, SDG and FPK have equally been considered as well. It has to be noted that even though IIUM's foray into SDG started only in the last one or two years, PG research analysing issues based on SDG has been done for many years albeit without any formal direction from the University.

UniCORE

The first two Master programmes were introduced in 1986 with the graduation of its first batch of economics and law students. Since then IIUM has introduced and run a total of 77 Master and 37 Ph.D. programs. As IIICE has been the backbone of academic programmes in IIUM, it has been embedded sufficiently in the program learning outcomes (PLOs) and course learning outcomes (CLOs) of PG taught courses and research programmes in IIUM.

Islamisation (and its variations) courses are considered by all Centres of Studies as core courses. At present, the Islamisation courses are offered in IIUM under different course titles and names depicting the level of mastery at the philosophical and theoretical construct, the difference of approaches and perspectives as well as depth and nuances of the methodologies adopted. The variety of names in which Islamisation-related courses are offered demonstrates that the content has been fine-tuned to address specific issues in the disciplines.

An exposure of Islamisation at its epistemological perspective would have been the most ideal form of training for graduates carrying the bandwagon of IIIICE. Inclusive in this narrative is to train the IIUM graduates to be able to articulate why Islamicisation of human knowledge is critical. Against that background, IIUM graduates must be able to integrate the Islamic values or perspectives into contemporary human knowledge, culture and civilization as well as relevantisation of Islamic revealed knowledge in all human sciences. This is the forte of the course Islamicisation of Human Knowledge taught at the International Institute of Islamic Thoughts and Civilisation (ISTAC).

A more advanced course on Islamisation is that taught at Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences. The course exposes the students to the various models of Islamisation of Knowledge as propounded by renown Muslim scholars such as Syed Muhammad Naquib al Attas, Ismail Raji al Faruqi, Taha Jabir al Alwani and Louay M. Safi. The course further offers a critique to the current approaches of Islamisation as well as proposing theoretical construct for the framing of suitable methodology for the relevant disciplines. For the Department of Arabic Language and Literature, for example, the process of Islamisation in linguistic studies is studied, whilst at the Department of *Fiqh* and *Usul Fiqh* students are exposed to selected jurisprudential issues such as *tajdīd*, *ta'sil*, *takyif* and *takamul* between sciences.

Issues in Islamisation of Knowledge, a generic course for the PG students at the KIRKHS, focusses on the intellectual content of Islamisation of Knowledge by examining methodological issues and comprehends the history of *'islāh* and *tajdīd*. The course digs deep into the conceptual and methodological issues of Islamisation of human sciences, whilst exposing the students at the same time the need to embark on the relevantisation of Islamisation to human sciences. For the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, the additional component is theory building in the form of social theory in *tawhid* paradigm.

Islamic worldview that focusses on individuals that understand his/her relation with his/her Creator, his/her relation with man, and his/her relation with universe could mould IIUM graduates' personality and character to someone that could effectively carry his task responsibly as a *Khalīfah* in this world. The Kulliyah of Information and Communication Technology (KICT) takes this angle in its *Kulliyah* core course entitled Islamic Worldview on ICT and Society. The course takes this theme deep to its heart in its appraisal of the nature, characteristics and foundations of the Islamic society in relation to ICT and values. The course further seeks to inculcate the highest Islamic values and ethics in arriving at an equilibrium in the application of latest developments in the domain of ICT. It seeks to mould the character of IIUM graduates to be of excellent professional conduct and code of ethics.

Muslim scientists of the past have left behind valuable scientific and technological developments that have formed the bedrock of the current modern science. By harnessing the contributions of the Muslim scientists of the past, IIUM graduates would be able to appreciate their critical role to continue

their struggle as well as to draw lessons that could solve the current educational and political crisis of the Muslim societies. The INHART course entitled Values, Technology and Society takes this angle as it is deemed critical that Muslims continue to come up with constructive solutions to human problem within the Islamic worldview and values.

For Kuantan campus, the practice is to offer a Unified Islamic Input for Postgraduate students from five Kulliyahs i.e. Science, Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry and Nursing. This course which has been developed by a team of academics from all the Kulliyahs in Kuantan is classified as both the Kulliyah and University course and is required for graduation. This course is quite comprehensive in its coverage, embracing within its ambit not only the historical development of Islam, Science and Technology and the achievement of the Muslim scientists in the past, but also dealt with Islamisation of the sciences itself, the inculcation of Islam's spiritual and moral values in the mind, personality and the conduct of the graduates. Among the Islamic virtues sought to be nurtured through the course is integrity, trustworthiness, perfection, manners and sincerity. The course also seeks in the first place to give the students with a grounded knowledge in the concept of Islamic worldview (Philosophy) that would be able to guide them in their future undertakings, not only in their personal life, but also in any endeavours between them and other humans, the whole society and humanity at large. As scientists, they are faced with many ethical and social responsibilities and the course seek to train them to make the most Islamically ethical choice. The ethical decorum that scientists have to foster extends also in their research, particularly that involving human clinical and animal researches). In tandem with the onslaught of climate change, the course aims to expose the students to the latest technological development in the area of green technologies.

The Kulliyah of Allied Health Sciences' Islamic Input for Health Professionals dedicate itself to train IIUM graduates to appreciate their role in enhancing and sustaining the Islamic beliefs, values and practices in their research and professional undertaking. In doing so, the course starts with an elucidation of the classification of Islamic science, before foraying into the historical contribution of the Muslim scientists of the past to modern medicine and public health as well as the importance of upholding high Islamic values and ethics in the profession.

Of particular mention is the AED 6000 course entitled Values, Ethics and Built Environment which has been designated as the core course for all the PG programmes at the Kulliyah of Architectural and Environmental Design such as the Master of Science (Built Environment, Master of Architecture (MAAR), Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP), Master of Science in Quantity Surveying and International Procurement, Master of Science in Building Services Engineering (MSBSE), Master of Science in Asset and Facilities Management and Doctor of Philosophy (Built Environment). The course aims to train the students to grasp the essence of Islamic Ethical Philosophy as derived from the two principal sources of Islam: the Holy *Qur'ān* and the Prophet's *sunnah*. At the end of the course, students should be able to understand the

implications of Islamic values and Ethics for the various specialisations within the Kulliyah of Architectural and Environmental Design and their own roles as professionals in their area. Of principal significance is the emphasis on the overwhelming importance of achieving the five objectives of the *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah* in any projects embarked upon by an IIUM graduates. The course also propagates for the peaceful coexistence with the environment and its implications for mankind's future developments.

It would be interesting to note that for some kulliyahs there is no overarching Islamisation course as the above. Two centres of studies adopted this approach i.e. the Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyah of Laws and the Institute of Islamic Banking and Finance. The rationale for this approach is to embed Islamic perspective in all the courses offered within the programme instead of dedicating a single course that dwells into the theories of Islamisation of the disciplines itself. In the Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyah of Laws taught Master in Comparative Laws and LL.M, the Islamic perspectives are well spread in the courses offered such as Islamic law of Transaction or Islamic Finance Contract. In IIIBF, a number of 14 courses are taught covering both the Western science as well as the Islamic perspective within the same course. These courses range from the financial system, economics, capital market, banking and wealth management.

The variety of which Islamisation and Islamic ethics courses are being taught bring into question whether there is a need for a single unified university required course (UniCORE-PG) known as Islamisation and Integration for the PG students that cuts across all disciplines. It is not possible to represent all the critical components of Islamisation courses in this short write up, but suffice to say that the wealth of analysis and studies on the epistemological basis, the theoretical construct, the methodologies, the history and evolution as well as contemporary relevance have been significantly and substantially extrapolated in these courses.

Elective Courses

In terms of elective courses, the master's degree (coursework mode) and (mixed mode) comes with a variety of electives. However, these electives are only open to the students in that particular kulliyah only. Free electives, as proposed to UG students throughout the university, have recently been pioneered by INHART in their MAHIM programmes.

Co-Curricular

In the domain of co-curricular, student activities can come in the form of (i) non-credited extra-curricular (ii) student clubs (iii) societies and (iv) sports. All of these forms of activities are available in IIUM and are heavily supported by the UG students. Because of work and family demands, PG students are not known to be overly active in student societies and student activities. In addition, PG students, by nature are more mature and independent and should be able to carry out activities, either of spiritual, sports, recreational or communal nature,

of their own accord with the least instruction from the university. Unfortunately, this culture is lacking in IIUM. To ignite more interest in co-curricular activities, there is a suggestion that PG students are treated like UG students in all the privileges and recognition such as star rating, gap year as well as special award for active involvement in co-curricular activities. It has to be acknowledged that as more and more students sign up for PG programmes immediately after graduation without any working experience, their exposure and training in co-curricular would be relevant for job seeking purposes as prospective employers still prefer graduates with well-rounded and balanced personalities.

As PG programmes are by nature require students to work independently, continuous engagement with the students in the form of activities would be able to mobilise the PG students' involvement in co-curricular activities. In light of heavy academic demands, it is advisable that co-curricular activities are kept as optional and non-credited. The suggestion is that extra activities can be conducted outside of the classroom to promote and create awareness on the IIUM Graduate attributes in the form of seminars, talks, and webinars including any other courses that prepare students for IR4.0.

All the Centres of Studies agree that there must be a more concerted effort to acclimatise the PG students into the IIUM ideals through student activities rather than through formal courses. An example of this is to have an annual compulsory *'ibādah* camp, flagship programmes, Service Learning Malaysia (SULAM) activities, community engagement, or sports activities where PG communities can meet and more importantly interact with each other. In addition, keeping in mind that some PG students may have minimal Islamic orientation and exposure, it is worthwhile to explore the possibility of offering *Qur'ānic* classes for selected PG students on an optional basis.

Survey Result

A survey was conducted on the SAF framework between June-July 2020 and a total of 484 PG students responded to the survey. The survey reveals that the students found the Kulliyah Required courses have been highly beneficial in enriching their spiritual engagement, knowledge of Islamic worldview and personal well-being.

Table 3.13 PG students' perception on UniCORE-PG

No.	Do you agree that, the University Required Courses;	Agreed and Strongly agreed	Disagreed and Strongly disagreed
1	Enrich your spiritual engagement?	77%	3.70%
2	Enrich your knowledge on Islamic worldview?	78%	2.20%
3	Are useful for your personal wellbeing?	75%	3.30%
4	Have been efficiently organised?	62%	7.50%
5	Have been taught effectively by course instructor?	73%	4.80%
6	Develop your soft skill such as communication skills?	68%	6%
7	Have duplicated content with your undergraduate courses?	35%	24%
8	Do not meet their objectives?	19.50%	48%
9	The load of the courses does not reflect the credit hour?	23%	39%
10	Class schedule caters to the need of postgraduate students?	52%	9.30%

Despite the lack of courses that focus on soft skills, due to the nature of PG programmes that require presentation as mode of assessment, more than 70% of the students found that the courses have been instrumental in developing their soft skills.

Table 3.13 PG students' perception on the core courses

No.	Do you agree that, your programme / Specialization Courses;	Agreed and Strongly agreed	Disagreed and Strongly disagreed
1	Are useful for your personal well-being?	75%	4.80%
2	Have been efficiently organised?	68%	6%
3	Have been taught effectively by course instructor?	71%	5.50%
4	Develop your soft skill such as communication skills?	72%	6%
5	Has duplicated content with your undergraduate courses?	32%	27%
6	Do not meet their objectives?	21%	49%
7	The load of the courses does not reflect the credit hour?	23%	61%

Most of the students agree that the curriculum should be revised to factor SDGs, FPK, *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah* and prepare them for the onslaught of IR4.0. The result of the survey indicates exactly that i.e. the majority of the students view the curriculum to be lacking in that sense and thus ripe for overall review.

Table 3.14 PG students' agreement on way forward for UniCORE-PG

No.	To what extent do you agree that your University required course should;	Agreed and Strongly agreed	Disagreed and Strongly disagreed
1	Integrate Education Sustainable Development in the courses?	70%	4%
2	Integrate <i>Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan</i> / National Philosophy Education in the courses?	57%	8%
3	Integrate <i>Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah</i> in the courses?	72%	4%
4	Integrate 21st century learning strategies in teaching and learning?	77%	2.60%

Whilst most respondents conveyed satisfaction with the academic component of the program, many are not happy with the lack of activities held for PG students, resulting them not being integrated into the kulliyah's activities. Quite a substantial percentage of the students are not happy with the class schedule which to them does not cater to the need of the postgraduate students.

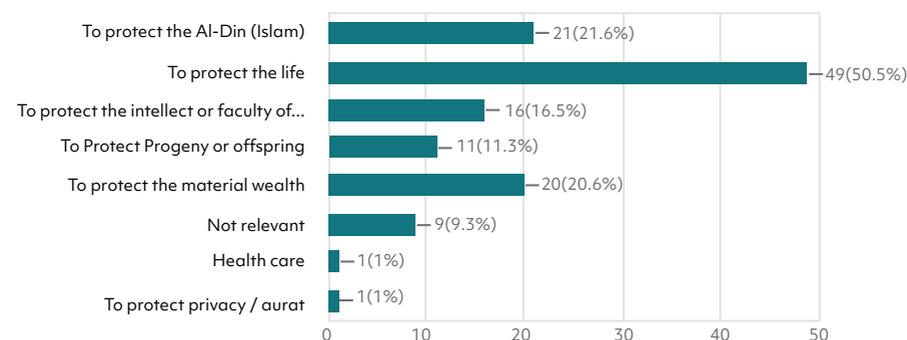
Table 3.15 PG students' agreement on potential UniCORE subjects

No.	Do you agree that the following courses are to be offered to ALL postgraduate?	Agreed and Strongly agreed	Disagreed and Strongly disagreed
1	Big data analysis	69%	7.30%
2	Coding	54%	14%
3	Virtual Reality	57%	9.80%
4	Fintech	50%	10.60%
5	Halaqah	53%	11%
6	Islamic Civilisation	68%	9%
7	Islamic Worldview	71%	6.60%
8	Service Learning Malaysia - University For Society	34%	8.60%
9	Tilawah	54%	12%
10	Usrah	48%	14%

Alignment of Research to *Sejahtera* Academic Framework

The massive promotion of the new direction of the University has somewhat been beneficial to the research focus of the PG students. In a 2019 survey, 97 research students admitted that SDG and *Maqāshid Ash-Sharī'ah* are portrayed heavily in their research. In the hierarchy of *Maqāshid Ash-Sharī'ah* for example, 50% of the thesis relates to protection of life; 21% relates to protection of faith, 20% for the protection of wealth and 16% for the protection of intellect.

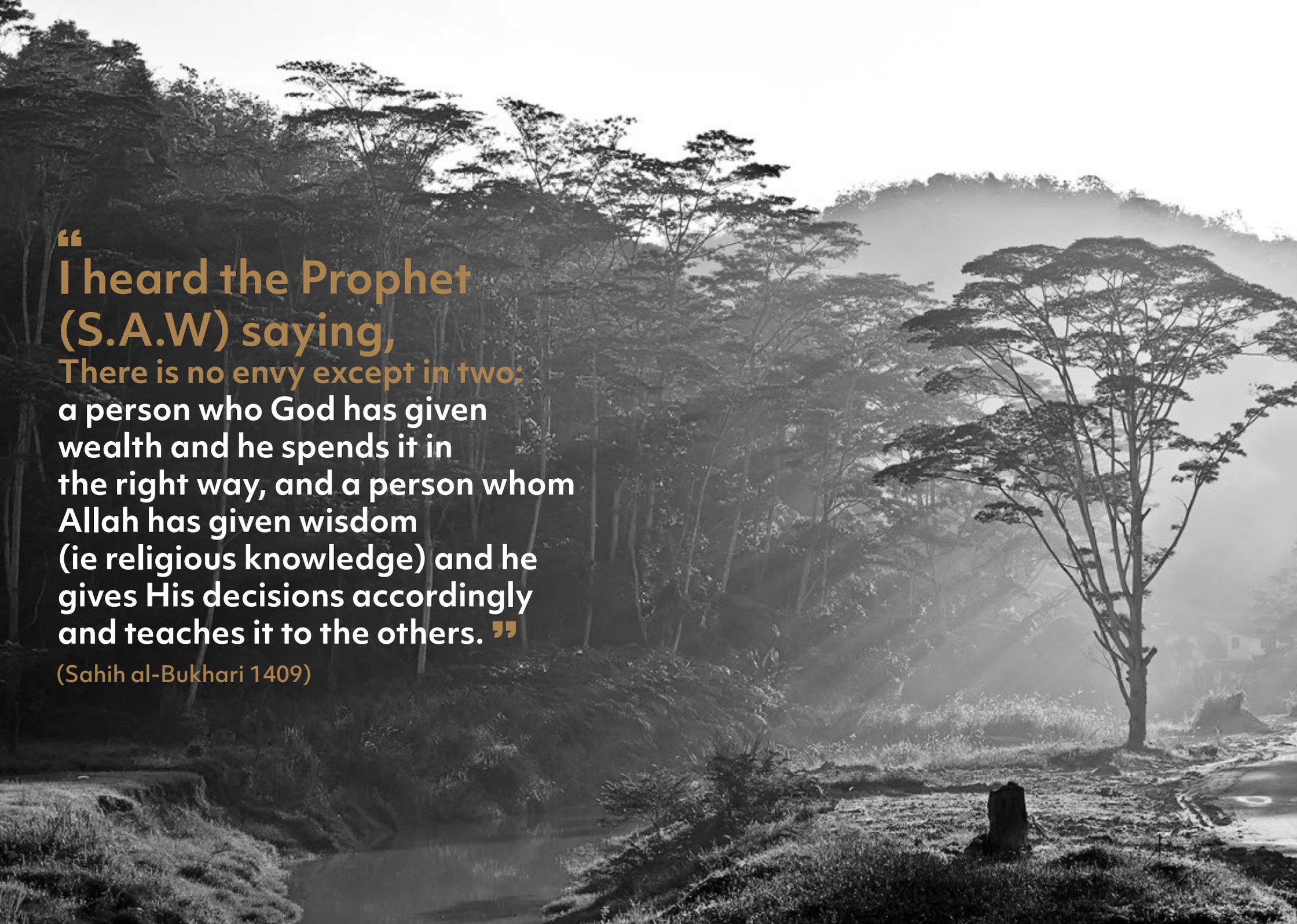
Maqāshid Ash-Sharī'ah is the Objectives of Islamic Law (Please select 1 objective that is closest to your research field)



In the same token, a substantial number of Master and Phd thesis can be ascribed to the SDGs with the highest percentage to good health and wellbeing (39.2%); quality education (22.7%) sustainable cities and communities (21.6%), peace, justice and strong institution (18%) and decent work and economic growth (16.5%).

Conclusion

The various environmental scanning exercises have provided a triangulation analysis that confirms what many in the University have known - that while our academic programmes are of good standard, they need to be enhanced to become truly an Islamic model of international standards. Academic and non-academic staff alike, and also the students, have to go outside of their bubble to be aware of the various opportunities for growth and development available to them. The University community also needs to leave the comfort zone of their silos and move towards a shared platform to materialise the shared vision and mission of the University. These findings have also identified both the existing major strengths and the major weaknesses. One of the major findings is the incomplete integration between students' campus experience inside and outside their classes, and the existence of pockets of initiatives by various agencies. Another is lack of adequate monitoring in UniCORE as it involves coordination among agencies. SAF is offered as a pathway towards this integration and towards pushing the University forward as an integrated entity in its pursuit of excellence - academic or non-academic, for now and for the future.



“
I heard the Prophet
(S.A.W) saying,
There is no envy except in two:
a person who God has given
wealth and he spends it in
the right way, and a person whom
Allah has given wisdom
(ie religious knowledge) and he
gives His decisions accordingly
and teaches it to the others. ”

(Sahih al-Bukhari 1409)

INTRODUCTION

The curriculum is a vital aspect of translating the vision and mission into a tangible process. However, it is only one part of the process. A curriculum document is meaningless without the right people implementing it the way it is designed to be.

The optimal curriculum itself is complex, but it has to be designed with the ecosystem (i.e., the supporting elements) in mind, especially the human factors. Hence, this section will present the guiding principles of the IUM curriculum arising from the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework followed by looking at the specific elements, particularly the pedagogy.

The overarching principle of the academic framework is a humanising principle i.e., **the belief in the potential of the human being and putting people first.**

Decisions are not made based on logistics or expediency, but on what is the most appropriate practice to make the learning experience a most impactful one for those involved. Structure must follow strategy.

The specific guiding principles in developing and implementing the curriculum are **empowerment, flexibility, innovation and accountability.**

Before going to these specific guiding principles, an explanation of SAF is given.

Guiding principles: Empowerment, Flexibility, Innovation and Accountability



EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment is the “authority or power given to someone to do something.” In the context of SAF, empowerment can be seen in various ways - the Senate empowers the Centres of Studies to make decisions pertaining to their particular programmes, and the Centre of Studies empowers the instructors, to make decisions pertaining to their particular course.

Properly implemented, empowerment would bring about an environment that enables everyone to be proactive and to take charge of their own study and work environment to effect positive changes to everyone, as befits the characteristic of a *khalifah*, or a leader.

Programme Owners and Lecturers

- The programme owner is empowered to develop a curriculum within the relevant standards that also upholds the SAF
- The lecturer is empowered to make decisions regarding the best practices for his/her classes especially with regard to pedagogy and assessment
- This includes the opportunity to develop new elective courses that are crafted to the lecturer’s interest and expertise

Students

- Students are empowered to decide on their academic pathway within the framework given
 - The free elective courses allow the students to explore their interests beyond the traditional boundary of their respective programmes
 - Whenever possible, students are given academic autonomy (instead of, for example, being dictated on what courses to take each semester)
 - Deciding on their own minor, and regulating their own learning to attain that chosen minor pathway
- Students should also be empowered to engage with external parties towards their self-development, e.g., organising their own career talks, hosting their own seminars, creating and running community engagement projects

Unless absolutely necessary, *rigid study plans should be gradually phased out.*

FLEXIBILITY

Empowerment can only be realised when there is flexibility in the curriculum.

Flexibility is not about bending rules, but it is about giving choices to both the students and the instructors.

Flexibility is the ability to be easily modified. The COVID19 pandemic has also brought home the point that universities need to have the flexibility culture ingrained in our system so as to ensure that we are able to face instant and unplanned disruptions without sacrificing the quality of education being offered.

What can be made flexible? A part of the curriculum structure – hence the **free electives**. The main aim of having open electives courses for IIUM students is to increase the breadth of their knowledge. It encourages students to pursue their other interests that, instead of distracting them from their main area of studies, would enable them to appreciate the complexity of the world around them, equipping them with more knowledge and skill sets to be an informed citizen in an uncertain world.

These free electives are a portion of the curriculum that is set aside that allow the students to choose from any of the Senate-endorsed courses offered by IIUM or by other recognized universities. It is no longer “above and beyond” the curriculum as per the pre-SAF practise. If the students so choose, they can plan these electives around a minor, enabling them to gain a deeper understanding and better skill set in another area of study.

The cross-listing of courses between different programmes is also a feature of this flexibility. The processes of exemption of related courses and transfer of courses will also be made less complicated administratively.

The **pedagogy** and **assessment** are also other elements that should be made flexible. As long as standards and learning outcomes are met, instructors should be allowed to run their courses and assess their students as they see fit, using the constructive alignment concept as their guide; including applying the blended learning approach.

Scheduling is also amenable to the flexibility principle. Courses may not need to run only according to the length of the regular semester, or only from 8-5. E.g., selected courses may be offered as modules, *tilawāh* classes may not need regular whole class meetings but work like tutorial sessions. Do what works best to achieve the learning outcomes, not what is easiest to manage.

Venue may be made flexible too. Face-to-face classes may not need to be held only in classrooms, or designated learning spaces for the entire semester.

Instructors are empowered to have their classes in other suitable venues befitting the learning activities of the day. The alternative venue is one that fits the need of the learning experience (e.g., a gardening class meets in the garden, a site visit for one of the class meetings for an architecture class, a factory visit for an engineering class, a shopping centre visit for a consumer behaviour topic, etc).

Team teaching should also become easier when the relevant information systems are made flexible. But to truly fulfill the spirit of SAF, team teaching means exactly that - **team** teaching, and not just a roster of lecturers going into a certain course presenting their own topics, without relating the part to others and to the students' learning experience. That method of team teaching should not be implemented. Instead, team teaching is chosen as a way to deliver a course because students will benefit from the presence of the various lecturers - who will together as a team continue to be available to the students throughout the running of the course. Collaboration is not worked out only at the lecturers' level - but is seen and experienced by the students in that course.

Again, when flexibility is adopted as a specific guiding principle, unless absolutely necessary, rigid study plans should be phased out.

As programme owners, lecturers, students and other staff are more familiar with the concept of flexibility, it is expected that more elements will become flexible from time to time, leading to the next specific guiding principle - innovation.

INNOVATION

The reason to empower the different parties and to provide a flexible structure is to encourage innovation, including social innovation.

Innovation is a new idea, method, product, etc. for a better outcome.

Empowering the relevant parties and providing a flexible structure should give rise to more innovation.

The innovation may be at the programme level, course level or even topic level.

In a transdisciplinary world, innovation may also mean coming up with new areas of transdisciplinary studies, or new transdisciplinary research projects. We may develop novel niche areas, making IIUM a dynamic centre of excellence, truly leading the way.

The innovation may also be to the pedagogy or the assessment, even to the ways of communicating. Innovative instructors will not simply apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired, but will also come up with new ideas, first befitting the needs of their own students and then expanding this others, perhaps leading towards the improvement of the higher education ecosystem.

Regardless of the form, the idea of innovation is to provide new ways or new solutions for a better learning experience for all parties leading to a better outcome for the students, and a more satisfactory educational experience for both students and instructors.

The COVID19 pandemic and its ensuing disruption is a case in point on how the decision to empower the lecturers to decide on their online platforms and the flexibility given to them led to innovations in the pedagogical and also assessment methods, and how these may also lead to some innovations by the students in their own learning pathway. Some lecturers explored various platforms so as to improve their online social presence, and some created their own social media channels that went beyond the content domain of their subjects, much to the benefit of their students, and others who followed them.

Innovation will lead to better problem-solving skills, and the existence of more out-of-the-box solutions. Particularly from the research-based programmes, the impact of innovation is not confined to the students' growth or the attainment of research patents, but being innovative is to be solving real-world problems facing humanity, providing the community with workable solutions, fulfilling our aim to become *Rahmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*.

ACCOUNTABILITY

All the three principles mentioned previously will only be able to fulfill their intended goals when there is accountability.

Accountability is being responsible and able to justify the decisions made as one is empowered to make those decisions.

E.g. When lecturers choose to use a certain pedagogical tool, they must also be held accountable for the success or failure of that tool.

When lecturers decide to have a site visit as a way to enable students to see a certain manufacturing process being done, they also have to consider the logistics and safety issues, and be accountable for this.

Being empowered, having the flexibility and being innovative should not mean doing as one pleases – instead it means being able to provide a learning experience that one deems the most appropriate for the students when all relevant factors are considered. One then is expected to be able to defend that decision, and provide evidence that it is not only implemented accordingly, but the impact is as intended.

Lecturers are accountable for how they run their courses, students are accountable for their own academic progress and their decisions to participate in the many experiences as students of IIUM, programme owners are

accountable for ensuring the programmes are run as per the standards set by the relevant bodies, Senate is accountable for ensuring that the programmes offered are the best that could be offered.

Hence, governance should continue to be strengthened. Good governance will lead to more empowerment, flexibility and innovations while ensuring accountability. Good governance is not about policing. It is about providing an environment where people are able to grow and develop while not on their ethics and beliefs. Good governance as envisioned in SAF is person-centred, but it is not individual-driven.

As the highest academic body in the University, the Senate is entrusted to ensure this good governance in academic management and policies are in place towards the realisation of SAF.

Accountability to Allah is deeply rooted in our concept of *amānah*. Whatever role we play in the University, discharging our responsibilities and duties to the best of our ability is part of our *amānah* to Allah.

A Different Kind of Impact Factor

The impact of these four (4) specific guiding principles and the general principle of a transformative educational experience should in time be manifested in the classrooms, the student spaces, the staff spaces, the Senate, to name a few. Classrooms become lively places to debate issues and exchange viewpoints. Research labs become active spaces to germinate ideas and provide solutions. Student spaces - the *mahallah*, the cafeterias, the libraries, the recreational spaces, the mosques - are buzzing with students extending their learning experiences beyond the classroom. Staff spaces are also buzzing with discussions on creating new and exciting educational or living experiences, or innovative ideas for research and community engagement. The Senate is alive with careful and informed deliberations on the innovative ideas presented to them, setting the tone for the rest of the academic community.

The administrative agencies are also alive - ongoing collaboration with relevant parties across the board is the norm as everyone seeks to find ways to provide the most effective services. Everyone is enthusiastic about helping each other become better while maintaining the integrity of their work. Just as the classroom goes beyond the walls, work is also not limited to the desk job; however the spirit is one of benevolence and *ukhuwah*.

In short, the *jami'ah insāniah* becomes a reality.

Potential Initiatives

Microcredential

One of the initiatives that will manifest itself from having this flexibility is the offering of micro-credential courses.

Microcredentials is a certification of learning of a smaller set of courses/module/training programme which are designed to provide learners with knowledge, skills, values and competencies in a narrow area of study and/or practice.

To be more competitive, students and working adults can look to micro-credentials to upskill and reskill, as well as create more value and demonstrate a certain level of mastery that would make them more attractive to employers.

It is designed in such a way to make learning and training very flexible, manageable, convenient and affordable. Many developments have enabled and accelerated the emergence and popularity of microcredentials. The knowledge economy of the 21st century intensified the demand for access to education on a lifelong basis.

The Millennium and Sustainable Development Goals called for more access to quality education for all throughout the lifespan of citizens to address socio-economic inequality (see also section 5.1). Open and distance learning which can be delivered through various means such as e-learning, fully online education and mobile learning can be provided to a larger audience overcoming and constraints of the geographical divide.

Given the expertise available in IIUM, and with the flexibility now afforded by SAF, IIUM should be able to position itself as a major provider of micro-credential courses; not just in terms of academic content, but also in terms of providing courses that change the person and advance the society.

MicroMasters

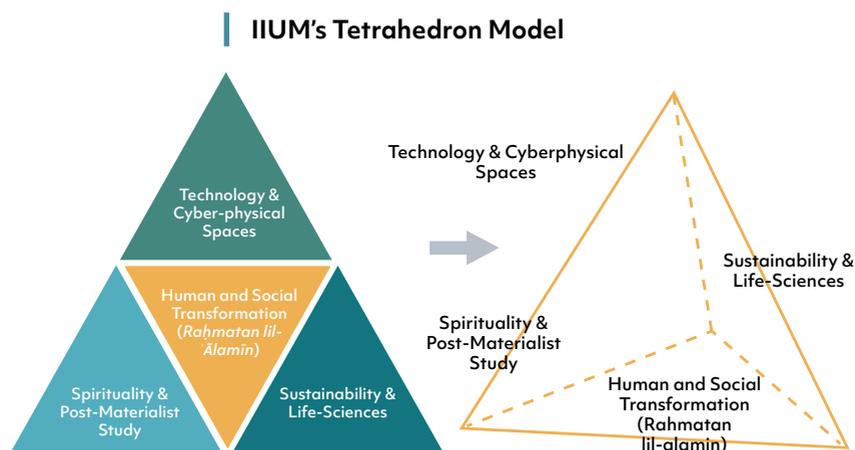
Another off-shoot of microcredential is the micromaster track. Courses offered as microcredentials may later be transferred to a Masters programme should the student decide to embark on a more traditional masters programme. The option of stackable microcredentials leading to a macro credential should be explored by the kulliyahs. The student learning experience could also come from microcredential courses taken in other partner universities. This approach not only allows potential students to embark on a postgraduate education journey in their own schedule prior to actually registering, hence reducing time to formally complete the degree, but also allows them to gain knowledge from experts in other universities at a fraction of the cost. The University should embark on this cross-cutting initiative.

Shared Platforms and Disciplinarity: Multidisciplinary, Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Programmes and Projects.

Another initiative that will also be made easier is inter-kulliyah collaboration. These various forms of disciplinarity may apply to programmes of studies, and research and consultancy projects, pushing forward the goals of ultimately offering transdisciplinary studies and our long-existing goal of integration.

The first level of collaboration is multidisciplinary - in which an issue is tackled from each area giving its own perspective on it. A more integrated approach is the interdisciplinary perspective - in which knowledge and methods from different disciplines are synthesised. A much more advanced approach in transdisciplinary - in which a new framework is developed beyond the disciplinary perspectives.

The tetrahedron model is the adopted framework for collaboration which goes beyond the kulliyahs, looking instead at the thrust of the areas of expertise, seeking a transdisciplinary approach.



The shared platforms become a basis to start a more organised collaboration and integration. Moving from an isolated perspective, academics in IUM are starting to work in multidisciplinary projects which will then move towards a transdisciplinary approach in pushing the boundaries of knowledge toward convergence, creating new areas of knowledge and partnering that are integrated and holistic, providing solutions towards humankind in a seamless journey in humanising education.

Value-added Electives

Most programmes have now adopted and offered free elective courses. A free elective course is a course open to all students in the University, is counted as part of the graduation audit, and is taken by students according to their choice,

not imposed on them. With the flexibility afforded by SAF, it is hoped that some of the courses will be extended to allow students to gain additional credentials. For example, the *tilawah* courses could become part of a competency framework for *tilawah* teaching certification, which interested and eligible students may embark on. These upskilling pathways could become a normal part of the IUM learning experience in the near future, as we equip students with more specific skills that will enable them to cope well in the uncertainties plaguing the world at large.

COMMUNITY CO-LEARNING (FORMAL+ INFORMAL) BEYOND CLASSROOM

The complex dynamics of global and local issues today have forced us to rethink and reevaluate our education system to remain relevant as higher education institutions. The constant change in the nature of issues on the ground demands us to be more involved and reorient our curriculum to not merely gaining knowledge from the textbooks or journals, but taking the community and nature as the teacher. The curriculum now should be able to address not just 'To Know' in the UNESCO's Pillars of Education, but extending until 'To Be', 'To Do', 'To Live together' and finally 'To become'.

In order to address this need, the reorientation needs to include soft skills such as systemic thinking, transdisciplinary cognitive skills, leadership skills, and communication skills as these skills are deemed important to answer the issues. Unfortunately these skills are not fully taught in formal classrooms and not easily acquired in lecture halls or laboratory settings. These skills are usually gained in the informal settings of co-curriculum. Realising the dire need to change this orientation, thus it is imperative that the role of 'used-to-be' informal learning get strengthened and embedded in the formal curriculum.

IUM in its journey to humanise education has decided to strengthen its curriculum through informal learning i.e community learning. This community co-learning is no longer an activity to fill up the weekend or voluntary in nature but rather become the mainstream curriculum. As much as focus is given to producing students to achieve academic excellence, IUM is more interested in shaping the students to achieve holistic excellence, an *Insān Sejahtera* who is balanced cognitively, emotionally, physically, psychologically, socially and spiritually. A graduate who will use their knowledge and skills not just to get to the Dean's list but to actually contribute to the betterment of society.

Community learning is not totally new in IUM. In fact, it has been in the system for more than 20 years. This is done through implementation of Study Circle or *Usrah Budi* which is part of university required courses. *Usrah* is an Arabic word literally translated to 'family', while *Budi* is a Malay word carrying the meaning of being courteous. The activity is popularly known as *halaqah* which carries a linguistic meaning of 'circle'. As a whole, students and facilitators are to gather as a family to address contemporary issues, especially those related to sustainable development, in a very dynamic way. Part of the course is to actually go to the ground and participate in community engagement programs.

In contrast to the conservative approach of religious discourse, *halaqah* is designed to link the fundamental teaching of Islam with society's current needs. It serves as a dynamic and progressive learning community. One example is the issue of poverty eradication and Islamic teaching about it and ways to solve it on the ground. All students must register to join a *halaqah* or *usrah* in 4 of their 8 semesters at university. As a whole, the *usrah* package is designed to integrate the cognitive, behavioral and affective aspects of Islam, such that the students will be able to develop their KhAIR attributes.

The community is also not confined to a selected segment of society. The community may be the learning community consisting of fellow students, the learned community consisting of professionals and academics, and the community-at-large consisting of others inside and outside the University.

UniCORE 2020 FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

The University Required Courses (UniCORE) is a set of courses that are required to be taken by all IIUM undergraduate students. The main objective of UniCORE is to imbue IIUM students with a solid foundation that speaks to the philosophy, vision and mission of the University. Specifically, the objectives of the UniCORE are:

- to deepen students' sense of purpose and meaning in life
- to nurture students with *adab*
- to develop students who are imbued with Islamic knowledge, values and ethics and able to relate with contemporary issues
- to expand the culture of *Iqra'*
- to inculcate awareness on the meanings and responsibilities as '*abid* and *khalifah*

The UniCORE is expected to lay a well-grounded foundation through understanding the fundamentals of oneself and how the formation of noble characteristics occur from the balance of all main elements in an individual. The result of realisation and comprehension from the essence of UniCORE produces students who know about themselves, their Creator, the Holy *Qur'an* as a guide in their lives, the Prophet (pbuh) who has become the source of morality and character, virtues to be implemented, and vices which should be curbed. The foundation will nurture an *Insān* of *adab* who realise the purpose and responsibilities of life and embrace the pursuit of knowledge.

The learning outcomes of UniCORE 2020 are that the courses will:

- Engage in continual learning activities and the sharing of ideas with the community at large
- Engage in continuous self-development based on the knowledge-seeking spirit
- Make informed decisions in life using strategic thinking and practical skills

- Practice *adab* in their behaviours
- Initiate projects or activities that will lead to the advancement of society
- Participate in intellectual discussion on religious and contemporary issues
- Be steadfast in performing fundamental religious duties
- Demonstrate inter-cultural competencies

The courses in UniCORE 2020 are categorised into:

- Islamic fundamental knowledge
- Leadership and Living Skills
- Education for Sustainable Development

The specific courses may change over time if the situation is warranted, but the initial distribution of courses according to the categories in the spirit of SAF is presented in the following table.

UniCORE 2020 Courses

No	Course Title	Credit Hours
ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTAL KNOWLEDGE		
1	Basic Philosophy and Islamic Worldview	3
2	Knowledge and Civilization in Islam	2
3	Ethics and <i>Fiqh</i> of Contemporary Issues	3
4	<i>Tilawah Al-Qur'an</i> 1	0.5
5	<i>Tilawah Al-Qur'an</i> 2	0.5
6	Introduction to Arabic for Quranic Understanding 1	0.5
7	Introduction to Arabic for Quranic Understanding 2	0.5
8	<i>Usrah</i> 1	0.5
9	<i>Usrah</i> 2	0.5
LEADERSHIP AND LIVING SKILLS		
10	English for Academic writing	3
11	Family Management	0.5
12	Leadership	0.5
13	Skill 1	0.5
14	Skill 2	0.5
15	<i>Bahasa Melayu</i> 1*	1
16	<i>Bahasa Melayu</i> 2*	1
EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT		
17	Sustainable Development: Issues, Policies and Practices	2
18	<i>Usrah</i> in Action 1 (SD: Community Profiling)	1
19	<i>Usrah</i> in Action 2	1
TOTAL		20

*only for students with no formal BM competency

Islamic Fundamental Knowledge

The Islamic Fundamental Knowledge courses have continued to be a core part of the formal academic programmes of the University. Envisioned to provide Muslims who not only have the competencies the public regarded are part of the good Muslim (such as *Qur'ān* recitation and congregational prayers leader), the main thrust of the Islamic Fundamental Knowledge courses are to provide a philosophical grounding on Islamic thoughts and principles, paving the way for Islamisation in their areas of studies, and a philosophical shift from a heritage Muslim to being an informed an active Muslim learner and scholar.

Abû Hâmid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazâlî (c.1056–1111) was an influential philosopher, theologian, jurist, and mystics of Sunni Islam. His writings on purification of the soul (*nafs*) and the heart (*qalb*) continue to be relevant today.

Tilāwah Al-Qur'ān is a competency based course, where a student needs to meet a minimum competency requirement. A student who has met the minimum competency requirement (based on *Tilāwah* placement test) will be exempted. A student who is exempted or has completed the minimum competency requirements is given the opportunity to obtain a certificate of competency by fulfilling entire competency level; that will be added value especially for those wishing to offer *tilāwah* classes to others. This *tilāwah* competency certificate may also be offered to the public.

The implementation of *Tilāwah Al-Qur'ān* course differs from normal courses in that fixed class meeting time will be transformed to a more open system where students will be assigned with a particular teacher until he/she reaches the required minimal competency. Assessment may be done on selected intervals (not just end of semester). Students progress at their own pace; hence they may complete this as fast as 1 assessment cycle, or as long as they are enrolled.

Arabic in IIUM is not just Arabic. The thrust of Arabic in IIUM is towards understanding the *Qur'ān* and related materials, with the aim of appreciating the Islamic linguistic elements. Towards that end, the UniCORE 2020 offers Arabic as Quranic Language, such that the knowledge gained via the courses become means to interact with the *Qur'ān*. As per *tilāwah*, the department is encouraged to extend their offerings for additional levels, with an option for additional types of certification.

Malay Language continues to be compulsory for undergraduates who do not have adequate competency in Malay language. Under UniCORE 2020 a major change is to offer the language based on competency and not on nationality. This will afford the department to offer other elective Malay language courses that may be taken by any student, either for the credit or for additional certification.

Tazkiyah an-nafs, or the purification of the soul, should be an on-going effort by all, more so if one is a practicing Muslim. As much as the students are young adults, they shall continue to benefit from a structured and safe environment to improve their relationship with Allah. Hence the *usrah* courses are part of their undergraduate experience. Having a formal *usrah* structure will enable the University an avenue to nurture the spiritual development of these young adults, some of whom come from less advantaged backgrounds spiritually. Towards this end, elements such as the selection of *nuqaba'* and the monitoring of the activities should be taken seriously by everyone. The *usrah* courses are not to be taken as a checklist to fulfill graduation requirements, but as a serious endeavour towards becoming better Muslims who will become more committed to their role of *khalifah*.

Leadership and Living Skills

IIUM has always prided itself on being an Islamic university that nurtures leaders at all levels of societies. From the family institutions to nations across the globe, our alumni have been prominent. This tradition will continue. Although leadership is a trait to be nurtured in all programmes, the University will also have designated UniCORE courses, if nothing else than to wake-up the slumbering leaders inside the students.

Skills and sports courses are to be taken as part of the University offering a holistic and balanced educational programme. This will nurture some of the JERIHAS elements in the students. At a pragmatic level, the skills courses may enable the students an alternative income avenue in the future should they so desire.

The credit for these courses may be earned by taking the courses in the conventional manner or by actively engaging in activities and projects directly related to the courses, e.g., student athletes who are in the University sports teams competing at a certain level, students leaders at *Mahallah* or University levels.

A major change in the approach of implementation of these courses will be offering modules on 3 levels of competencies: basic, intermediate and advanced, and being flexible in terms of the pathway taken to complete this and the scheduling of the classes.

It is aspired that this will also lead to additional certification of competencies, giving value-added to the students once they have graduated from the University.

Education for Sustainable Development

The Education for Sustainable Development category of the UniCORE is to especially undertake Mission 2 of IIUM, which is to produce better quality intellectuals, professionals and scholars by integrating the qualities of faith (*īmān*), knowledge (*‘ilm*), and good character (*akhlāq*) to serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress as well as sustainable development in Malaysia and in Muslim world.

It consists of three courses Sustainable Development and *Usrah* in Action (UIA) 1 and 2. Carrying the name of '*Usrah*-in-Action', these courses will be divided into two parts. The first part will be Community Profiling where the students are expected to build rapport with the designated community and run a need analysis on the issues in the community. The second part of *Usrah*-in-Action will take place in the next year of students' academic study years as they are more equipped with the knowledge and skills of their major course and now ready to contribute more to the community. The second part will be the implementation of a community engagement project based on the need analysis in the first part. Both courses of *Usrah*-in-Action will be preceded by an Introductory Course of Sustainable Development as the pre-requisite course.

The Unicore Agenda Beyond UniCORE

UniCORE only provides a basic foundation in the areas listed above. For the objectives of UniCORE to be truly fulfilled, students should be given various opportunities to extend and apply the knowledge and skills gained in these courses throughout their student life. This may be in the form of student clubs, student societies, course assignments, discussions and seminar (formal and informal), kulliyah activities -- the possibilities are endless. What this requires is a conscious effort by other members of the University to learn more about the content and implementation of UniCORE and be able to connect with their own areas of expertise or activities. Students should also be proactive in approaching lecturers and instructors and fellow students on ways to extend their knowledge beyond these UniCORE courses.

PEDAGOGY

As befit the overarching principle of humanising education, the pedagogical practices shall reflect more student-centred learning (SCL) rather than teacher-led instruction. An SCL environment is not an environment where the students are always right, and their desires are pandered to. Instead, it is an environment where they are engaged and take responsibility for their own learning. The instructors will provide the environment and opportunities towards this end. With both fulfilling their *amānah*, the classrooms (including labs, studios etc.) will become dynamic spaces buzzing with intellectual discourse and the genuine pursuit of knowledge and skills.

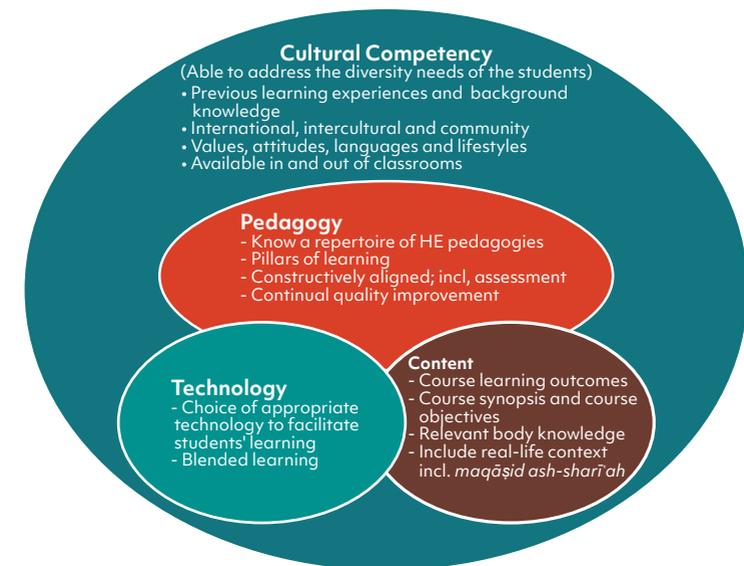
Towards this end, the University will not be prescribing specific pedagogical practices to be uniformly applied by all. Instead the University will provide the infrastructure and training necessary for instructors to create this dynamic learning space. This includes providing avenues for the instructors to acquire the teaching competencies needed.

Discovery learning, blended learning, transformative learning, flipped classrooms would be some of the terms that will no longer remain alien to anyone in the University, be them directly involved in the classroom or indirectly so. Intuitive learning and indigenous knowledge could form part of the approaches informing our pedagogy. The pillars of learning and the philosophy of education will continue to inform the instructors as they plan their meeting sessions.

Lecturers should leverage on the empowerment and flexibility given to them to expand on their repertoire of pedagogical practices, and to innovate and develop novel practices; all the while being mindful of their accountability. Lecturers should keep up on the pedagogical approaches for face-to-face meetings, and also the technological tools available to facilitate their remote learning practices.

A useful framework to base the murabbi competency is the ESD teacher competency framework (UNECE, 2019). The adapted version is presented below.

Murabbi competency framework Able to create and provide transformative learning opportunities for learners to develop as *Insān Sejahtera*



A handbook on Teaching and Learning based on this *Murabbi* competency framework for better implementation of SAF will be produced, not to be prescriptive, but to provide guidelines for best practices.

“
Eat and drink from the
provision of Allah, and
do not commit abuse
on the earth, spreading
corruption.”

(Qur'ān, 2:60)



ASSESSMENT

The IIUM recognises that assessment is an important component of effective teaching and learning processes. The quality of assessment is vital to the University's claim about the quality of its graduates, which defines the trust and confidence of stakeholders. Assessment determines the quality of student outcomes and shapes the learning that will take place - assessment is a catalyst for progress and reform in educational practices.

IIUM views the assessment of students' work seriously and as such, careful consideration is given to the whole process of assessment. The integrity of students' assessment is of paramount importance because it concerns the students' well-being and their future. As such, no students should be wrongly assessed and the assessment imposed on them should measure not only their knowledge, skills but, also to a certain degree, their worldview on how they will impact the community after they have graduated. Students ought to be appropriately assessed based on their performance in the formal curriculum as well as the co-curricular activities. This initiative is in line with IIUM vision and mission. While the world outside seems to view students as commodities or consumers, IIUM views students as individuals that can be developed as balanced and holistic human beings. In short, IIUM expects its students to be spiritually and professionally capable to function as responsible leaders and *khalifahs*.

Assessment in IIUM begins with the statement of assessment policy followed by the implementation of assessment processes and procedures, the training of members of staff as well as the monitoring review of the present assessment practices, including the best practices by other institutions and industries.

The quality of assessment process in IIUM requires substantial contributions and cooperation from many parties. For the aspirations above to materialise, IIUM demands concerted and collective effort from the different offices, office bearers and individuals within the University system from all levels including the top management, the academic staff and non-academic staff as well as the students.

The IIUM Assessment Policy (2018) underlines the University's commitment towards the implementation of a transparent and state-of-the-art educational assessment practices. The Assessment Policy applies broadly to all types of assessment in the University's undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. The policy covers multidimensional learning processes, accounting for the commonality, diversity, and distinctiveness of learning outcomes across programmes.

The Assessment Policy serves as a guide for assessment practices for all IIUM academic programmes. This policy informs instructors, students, and other stakeholders about approaches to assessment. The policy also spells out how the University develops and uses tests, examinations, and other means of

assessment techniques in making decisions about students' learning and capabilities. This enables IIUM to strategise, benchmark and set standards for the performance, monitoring, recognition, and evaluation of its assessment methods and approaches.

In general, the assessment practices are expected to:

- provide a fair, reliable and valid basis for the assignment of grades or awards for students' work and performance;
- promote students' mastery of concepts and skills by providing adequate modelling, practice, monitoring, and feedback on students' performance;
- direct progressive development of complex learning outcomes, which include the attainment of generic competency, i.e., language competencies, communication, information literacy, research and inquiry, personal and intellectual autonomy, and the understanding of professional, social, moral, and Islamic values through the use of meaningful and authentic assessment tasks;
- record and aggregate student achievements against the predetermined learning outcomes;
- assist instructors in evaluating the effectiveness of their teaching;
- facilitate the revision and improvement of the curriculum, courses, and programmes; and
- define and protect academic standards (including autonomy) deemed necessary for the purpose of accountability

The assessment activities consummate the teaching and learning experience in IIUM. Appropriate assessment techniques are used formatively and summatively throughout the teaching and learning process. The formative assessment occurs during instruction. It is normally flexible and ongoing, and its primary aim is to determine the extent to which IIUM students have achieved sufficient mastery of specific concepts, skills or competencies. On the other hand, the summative assessment takes place towards the conclusion of instructions. It is normally formal and structured, and its primary purpose is to certify students' achievement in different courses.

In terms of test formats, IIUM recognises the importance of using different and multiple test formats depending on the needs of different areas of specialisations and kulliyahs. Tests in IIUM range from paper-and-pencil to computer-based, direct to indirect and from discrete to integrative tests. In addition, test formats that stem from alternative assessment frameworks such as practical-based and performance-based tests are also finding their ways

in IIUM classrooms. Apart from the traditional “sitting-in” examinations, IIUM also acknowledges the existence and utility of other types of examinations such as open-book and take-home examinations.

Over time, it is expected that examinations and tests are no longer the “go-to” assessment method of the majority of the lecturers. Given the innovations in pedagogy that are expected to happen, the assessment methods used will also change so as to remain constructively aligned to the learning outcomes and the pedagogy. To be able to conduct authentic assessments, IIUM lecturers shall have a repertoire of assessment methods at their disposal. If nothing else, the COVID-19 experience should convince the lecturers of the need to master other assessment methods besides examinations and tests.

In order to inform and update the IIUM population of the latest trend of assessment processes and procedures, basic and specialised training sessions on assessment are to be conducted regularly. Assessment training may be organised centrally or by the different kulliyahs and institutes.

In IIUM, assessment is a systematic process that is designed to make an informed judgment of each students’ quality. Students in IIUM are evaluated on a whole array of abilities ranging from oral, listening, reading and written skills, presentation skills, computational-related skills, creativity and performance-based tasks. In order to be fair to lecturers and students alike, tests and measurement are designed according to certain standards that would yield reliable and valid results and hence, represents a good assessment practice.

One potential innovation is competency assessment that gives the level of outcomes attained using the 360-degree approach. It attempts to “gauge” the behavioural change that the students have undergone in learning to translate the knowledge acquired in a collective fashion for the desired impact, and not on what an individual could do and retain as conventionally carried out. The students are equipped with theoretical as well as practical dimensions so that they can draw on the interplay of the various main factors to effect change in the community. Students are able to identify the constraints and opportunities present in the community, as well as engage and empower the community to arrive at the most desirable ‘solutions’.

A revised IIUM Assessment Handbook will be produced, again not to be prescriptive, but to provide guidelines for best practices.

RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH

Responsible research is multifaceted. It involves adherence to ethics, upholding values and principles, engaging communities, and sharing of knowledge in conducting research. While it is natural for universities, IIUM included, to demand their staff to conduct research, the way forward is to promote and ensure that the research projects are responsible ones.

Ethics is a precursor to responsible research. Research must, first and foremost, be grounded on ethics and morally acceptable actions. Researchers must avoid actions such as plagiarism, claiming credit to work which is not his/her own, reporting on false data and analyses, and the likes. While these may seem like feeble issues to raise, they still occur in the world of academic research worldwide. From Anas r.a., he reported that the Prophet s.a.w. said, “There is no faith in a person who is not trustworthy” (Mohammed Farid Ali Al-Fijawi, 2020). In the case of Muslim researchers, deliberately misrepresenting their work can be equalled to them discarding their faith.

Research must also be based on the right values. From an Islamic point of view, these would be the values as propagated by the Islamic teachings. Research must not lead to destruction, wastefulness, injustice, and other harmful effects to the world and its inhabitants be it human, animals and the environment. Instead, research, especially in IIUM, should be strongly grounded on the principles of the *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah*. To show the seriousness of the University in ensuring research projects are responsible, it may be a good idea to introduce requirements for researchers to demonstrate the ‘responsible-ness’ of their research in the research proposals. This can be simply a mapping of the research work to the principles of *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah*.

Responsible research also refers to research that engages the community. In other words, responsible research ‘requires involving the community and public at large in the processes of research’ (Dzulkifli Abdul Razak, 2019, p.58). This is to ensure that research benefits the community and the *ummah* at large by addressing societal problems and contributing towards elevating the quality of life of present and future generations. This will make research purposeful rather than merely to fulfill the requirements of key performance indicators or any other rating and ranking requirements.

Among the aims of responsible research is the generation and sharing of knowledge. Under the concept of responsible research, new knowledge must be shared in the spirit of *Raḥmatan lil-‘Ālamīn*. Sharing of knowledge for the betterment of the *ummah* and the world should be seen as *sadaqah*. Abu Hurairah r.a. narrated that the Prophet (pbuh). said, “Whoever is asked about some knowledge that he knows, and then he conceals it, he will be bridled with the bridle of fire” (Mohammed Farid Ali Al-Fijawi, 2020).

Islam prohibits the acquiring of knowledge solely for worldly advantage, but rather for the blessing of Allah. Indeed, knowledge which is shared will continue to benefit the sharer (researcher) even after he/she leaves this world. Abu Hurairah r.a. reported that the Prophet s.a.w. said, “When a man dies, his deeds come to an end except for three things: *sadaqah jariyyah*, a knowledge which is beneficial, or a virtuous son/daughter who prays for the deceased” (Mohammed Farid Ali Al-Fijawi, 2020). To promote sharing of knowledge, it is therefore important that IIUM researchers do not only publish their work in indexed journals but also in reputable open access platforms including newspaper and television so that the knowledge will be able to reach more people.

In the context of SAF, responsible academic research can be linked to formal and informal education. For instance, the UniCORE courses such as the *Usrah* in Action 1 and 2 provide ample opportunities for findings from research to be implemented on the ground to benefit the society. In the case of *Usrah* in Action 1, research findings can become the basis or problem statements for community selection and to initiate their profiling. In *Usrah* in Action 2, research findings can become inputs or the how-to in solving societal problems or elevating quality of life of the society.

As part of continual quality improvement, lecturers should partake in scholarship of teaching and learning. Reflective teaching is necessary to learn from one’s own practices (otherwise also known as action research). With the innovations in pedagogy and assessment that will be coming under SAF, it is imperative that lecturers document their practices and the impact of these practices, and share it to the wider scholarly community beyond the University, to share their knowledge and to help others nurture their own students.

The push for research that is responsible is part of the whole institution transformation (WIT) initiative of the IIUM (OSIC, 2019). Under WIT, the focus of research performance in IIUM should no longer be only about increasing the number of research or accumulating larger amounts of research grants, but also ensuring research projects are responsible and impactful, and are accessible to a greater number of audiences, locally and globally. While the world is beginning to embrace responsible research, IIUM should lead the way in advocating Islamic perspectives to shape and define responsible research.

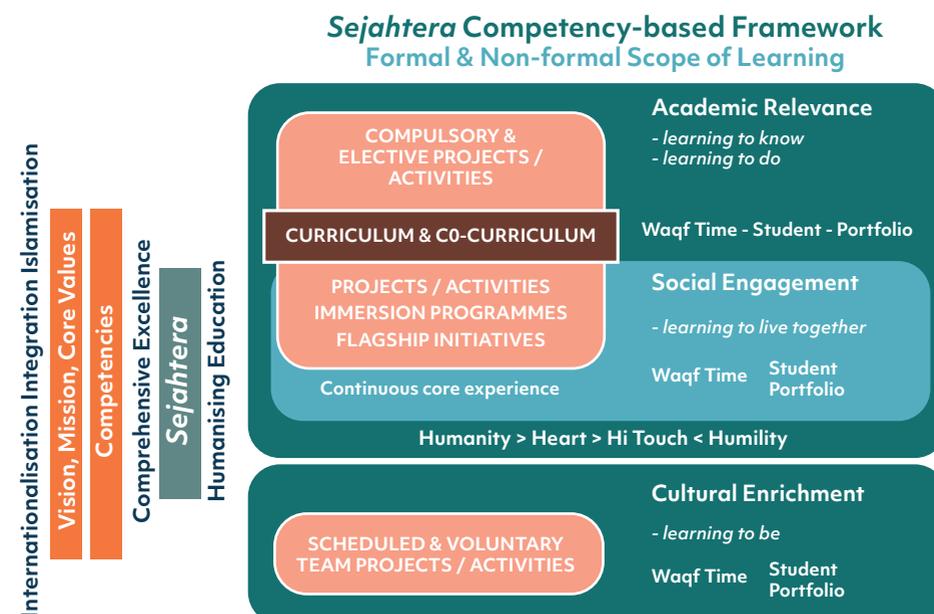
THE FORMAL CURRICULUM

The formal curriculum itself then should take into account these elements of SAF. A curriculum should be more than just a collection of courses. It is at best a road map which outlines the ultimate outcomes of a learning process while allowing the instructors and students to create academic experiences that fit their particular needs within the parameters given.

In IIUM, regardless of the curriculum model any programme wishes to adopt, the curriculum has to be constructively aligned, and it has to fit the SAF. It will also have to comply with the relevant programme standards, but ideally, it will go beyond the programme standards.

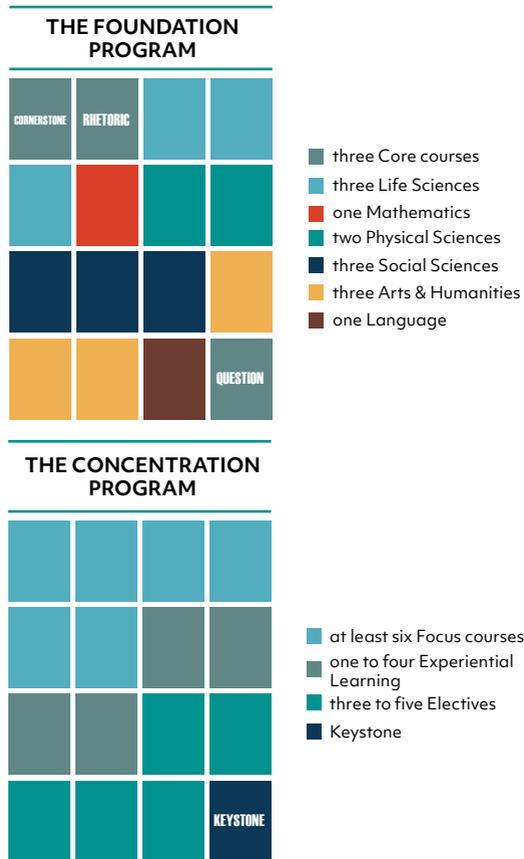
SAF does not prescribe a specific curriculum model. The ensuing models are presented to suggest some potential models, for us to start imagining the possibilities that we may embark on in our quest to provide not just cutting edge knowledge and skills, but also a cutting edge holistic educational experience.

Model 1. *Sejahtera* Competency-based Framework IIUM



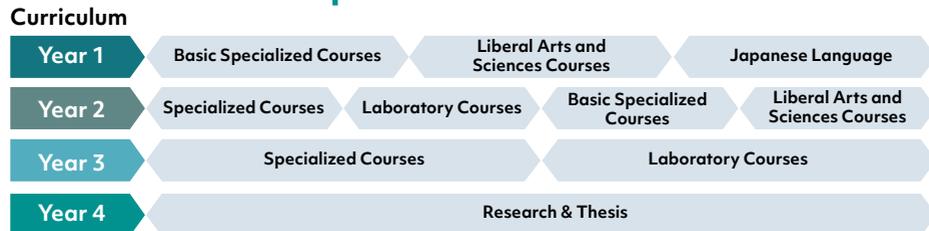
Source: Dzul kifli Abdul Razak, Meeting of IIUM Great Minds 2019

Model 2. Quest University, Canada
Foundation Years 1 & 2; Concentration Years 3 & 4



source: <https://questu.ca/academics/build-your-degree/>

Model 3. 3+1 model



source: Nagoya University Global 30 International Programs

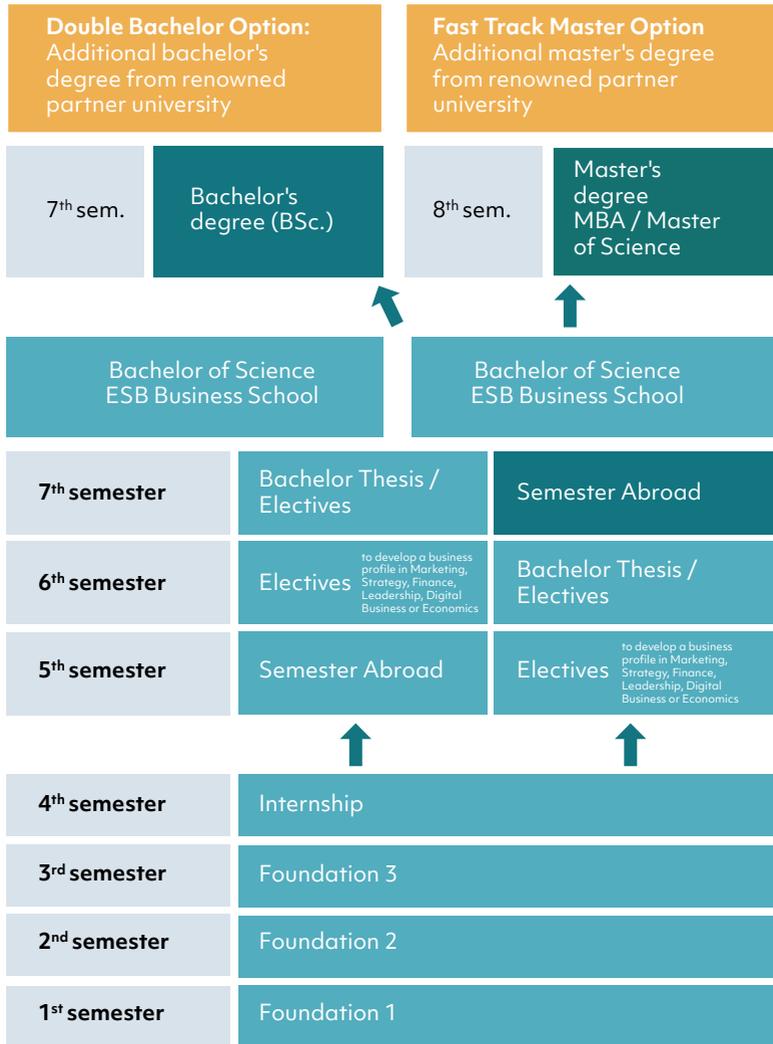
Model 4. 2u2i model

DURATION OF STUDY	MODEL	MODEL STRUCTURE							
		SEMESTER							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4 years	2u2i	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	3u1i	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3 years	2u1i	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	1u2i	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
2 1/2 years	1u1i	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	2u1i	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

● CLASS
 ● INDUSTRY

Model 5. Smart partnership with semester abroad model

Programme structure



source: ESB Business School, Germany

Model 6. Clinical post-graduate integrated model

METHODIST UNIVERSITY DOCTOR OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY CURRICULUM MODEL



source: <https://www.methodist.edu/otd/curriculum-design/>



“
**The intelligent
person’s tongue is
behind his heart:**

when he wants to speak, he first thinks. If [his words] will be in his favour, he says them, and if they will be against him, he does not speak. And the ignorant person’s heart is behind his tongue: when he merely thinks of saying something, he says it, whether it is for or against him. ”

(Hasan Al Basri)

WHOLE INSTITUTION TRANSFORMATION

SECTION 5

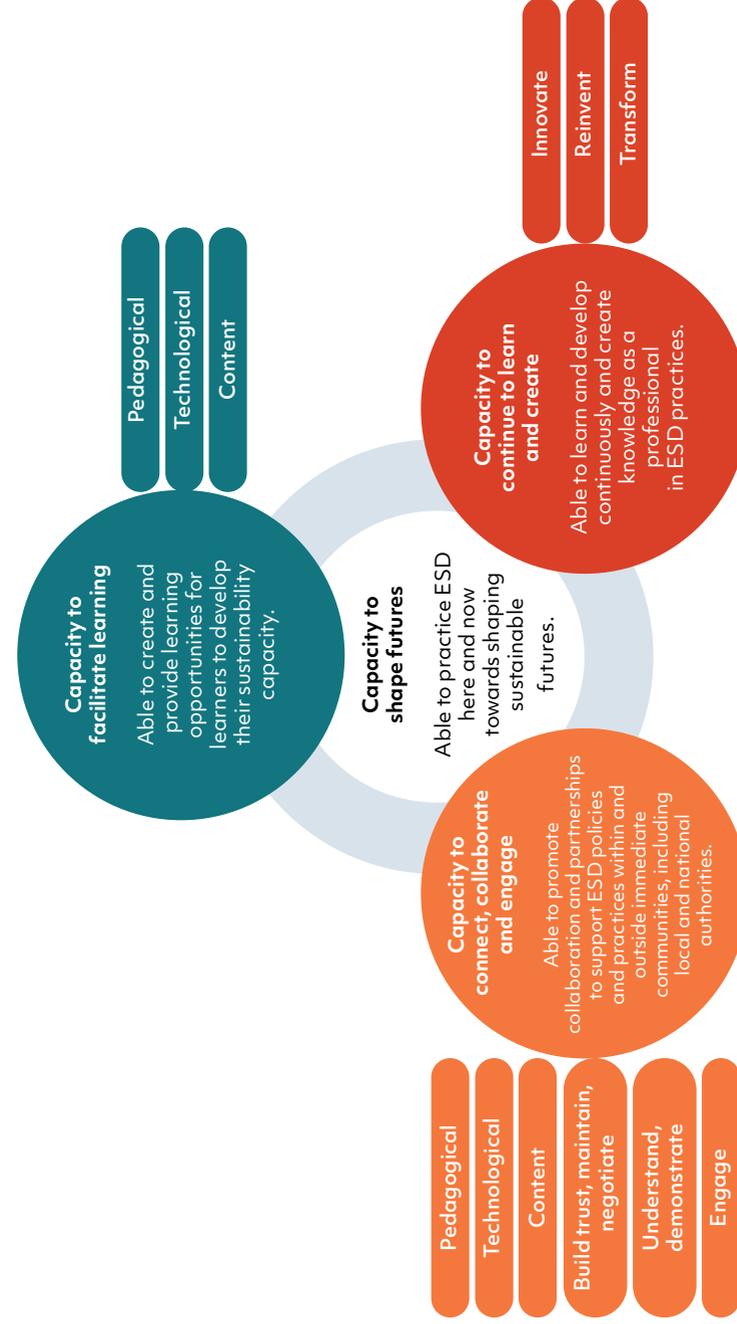
INTRODUCTION

Since 2019, IIUM has embarked on a Whole Institution Transformation (WIT) in order to consolidate its vision of becoming a leading international centre of educational excellence. This is reflected in the IIUM Roadmap 2019-2020 (OSIC, 2019), with its strategic direction of 'Humanising Education through *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharīah* and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)'. The Roadmap seeks to reinvigorate the operationalisation of the University's seven (7) mission in the context of present and future scenarios, while standing firm on the foundations of the University.

The philosophy of IIUM is framed on two main tenets; that human is the servant of Allah and that man is the vicegerent (*khalifah*) of Allah on earth (M. Kamal Hassan, 1983). This is refined to mean the philosophy of IIUM emphasises the objectives of human existence, namely to serve Allah swt (*ubudiah*) and to develop the world as His vicegerents in accordance with His will (M. Kamal Hassan, personal communication).

In the context of IIUM as a university, this philosophy leverages heavily on the roles of knowledge in achieving the totality of human development, both physical and spiritual, consistent with Allah's creation of body and soul (*jasad* and *rūh*). Thus, knowledge imparted at IIUM must also be total, complete and inclusive of intellectual, spiritual and moral dimensions. Education at IIUM must be laden with values in line with the *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharīah* and operationalised through SDGs.

ESD teacher competency framework adapted from: UNECE 2019



* Education for Sustainable Development

WHOLE INSTITUTION TRANSFORMATION

The WIT is a transformation approach that involves everyone at the University. It is a University-wide transformation approach in which changes and transformation are made in totality rather in piece-meal or ad-hoc nature, leaving no one behind, including the surrounding and far-off communities impacted by the existence of the University (Dzul kifli Abdul Razak, 2020).

WIT is an overarching, but for the purpose of this book, only selected strategies of WIT will be discussed to demonstrate WIT linkages to IIUM *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF).

WIT AND SAF IMPLEMENTATION

SAF is one of the initiatives of WIT that seeks to connect and integrate various knowledge elements to address the physical and spiritual aspects of human development. As such, values become an integral part of education under SAF.

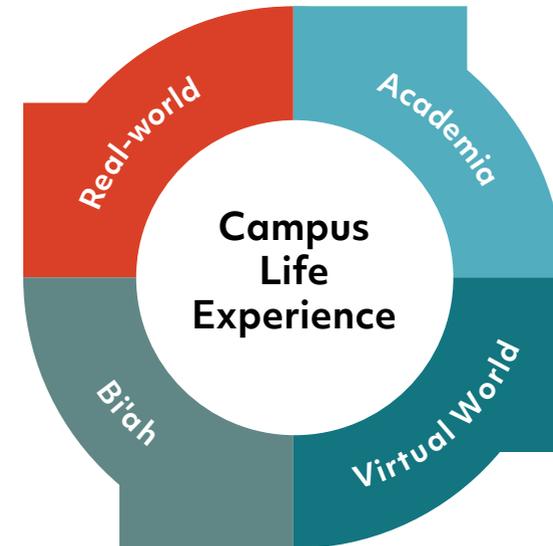
In WIT, strategies are commonly linked to one another to create wholeness in transformation. As such, successful implementation of one strategy is often dependent on the success of the implementation of other strategies. Similarly, in terms of implementation, WIT and SAF relationship is mutually supportive. For WIT to succeed, SAF must also be a success and *vice versa*.

CAMPUS LIFE

By now, it is clear that the IIUM WIT agenda involves everyone in the IIUM community especially the students. It is also apparent that one of the WIT objectives is to provide a complete nurturing environment for the university community. Therefore, it is only imperative that the students' life be considered and put into perspective in fulfilling IIUM's quest for a transformative learning ecosystem.

It has usually been the case where students' life definition in curriculum is largely confined to their space within the context of attending the formal class. Little attention is given to the other aspects of student life, for example, their well-being in the students' residential (*mahallah*), as well as their interaction with the community at large. In fact, with the vast internet access, a student's life expands beyond local community and borders as understood from the concept of life-wide learning (LWL).

A student's life sphere in IIUM



A *Murabbi* ecosystem is what IIUM aimed to achieve for the students. With intakes being the main throughput, it is vital to identify and recognise the different aspects of students' life that may influence the outcome of the nurturing process of *Insān Sejahtera*. This process can be seen as a sub-cycle - "from the student, to the student".

With SAF, the four (4) elements in the figure above are the major milieus of student life. The students are active participants in which they are not only taking in information but also actively providing feedback. Hence, these milieus are vital towards the development of the JERIHAS domain in students.

As can be seen in the graduate's attribute survey reported earlier, the 2019 IIUM graduates have issues in the 'mindset' section of the survey. They felt threatened with others' achievements and were unable to handle criticism. In Ibn Khaldun's "The *Muqqadimah*" (1377), he specified that the environment (*bi'ah*) has a direct effect on an individual mindset especially *Bi'ah solehah*. In fact, many published literatures have reiterated the impact of *Bi'ah solehah* in nurturing *Hamba Allah* who is well-balanced not only in Academia aspects as per the FPK (*Jasmani, Emosi, Rohani, Intelek*) but also in the Real-world (*Sosialisasi, Alam sekitar*). In the case of IIUM, the *masjid, kulliyah, mahallah, café*, and recreational centres are among the main points of influence to our students.

One of the agenda for *mahallah* is to instill the sense of belonging to IIUM. The *mahallah* should not just be a place for students to rest and sleep. Prof Emeritus Kamal himself mentioned that the design of the *mahallah* having four

compartments per room to accommodate four students is to allow students to interact with one another while maintaining their own personal and privacy space. The mahallah should be seen as the students' first IIUM new family. Foreign students especially should feel at home with *mahallah* mates to support them whenever they are homesick.

Mahallah must rise up and play greater roles in nurturing students. The standard of student activities at *mahallah* must be raised and linked to the University's aspirations. Activities should no longer be confined to *mahallah* level only, but also seek to put IIUM on the global stage. New activities with new concepts should be created, created if necessary, rather than just relying on or continuing the current activities or traditions. Activities should be implemented due to their impacts, and not because they are inherited from previous years. Current activities which are non-impactful should be discontinued and replaced with better ones. All students, rather than a select few, must be involved in students activities at *mahallah*.

Mahallah must also provide a surrounding that instills values and *adab* amongst students. Students must be taught the lifestyle of respecting one another and respecting the environment. *Mahallah* must encourage students in terms of intercultural dialogues, and understanding and respecting each other's culture. Wastage and excessiveness must be eliminated, especially in relation to use of resources like electricity and water. The culture of cleanliness must be ingrained in each student.

The Academia which is centred at the kulliyah is a place where students are able to find their strength as well as to grow their self-esteem. Kulliyah becomes a platform for the students to explore their strength further and facilitate them in securing opportunities that would be beneficial for them in a real world. Outside the confines of the classroom, informal interactions with *murabbi* are necessary towards the holistic development of the student.

Community engagement enhances students' leadership skills while promoting awareness and compassion among students which are also the main characteristics in good *Khalifah* and *Hamba Allah*. Students would then be more encouraged to work and live together as a community in solving the community issues at hand.

In this millennium, what transpires in the virtual environment should not be taken for granted. The University is now taking in undergraduates who are considered "millennials" - one characteristic of which is that they are digital natives. Social media is not just a part of their life, in many cases, it is a huge part of who they are. The University should leverage, rather than lamenting, on this by engaging the students in various ways via the virtual environment. The *murabbi* does not have to be physically present, but a good one will make their presence felt - and sought after - virtually. The students should have safe spaces in their virtual world - a place they feel comfortable and validated - and that will support their quest to become better Muslims without being over-bearing nor punitive.

The students shall among themselves become supporters of one another virtually, and in this volatile world, this is invaluable. Mental health has steadily become a major issue for more students over time. It is imperative that the students' life provided by IIUM, physically and virtually, allows the students to develop into mature and resilient individuals; for only as people who can care for themselves will they be able to care for others. The system to support the students' mental health shall be put in place. This shall encompass preventive and proactive measures in addition to intervention and treatment. The mental health framework shall also be based on Islamic principles, in addition to empirically proven approaches, to be aligned with SAF.

Structure Follows Strategy

Strategy implementation must be supported by strong and appropriate structure. Thus, new administration and execution models must be put in place, even at the expense of age-old ones, if the latter do not facilitate or align to the current strategy implementation. In the case of SAF, several measures have been undertaken to ensure the right models are put in place to support SAF implementation.

Several task forces have been established to look into some key aspects of SAF. The main responsibilities of these task forces are to review, realign and, if necessary, reconceptualise *ta'aruf* (orientation for students), university core courses (UniCORE), community engagement and mental health initiatives into a framework that is in alignment with SAF, as well as with the University vision and missions.

SAF aims, among other things, to deliver values-based education through both formal and informal education at the University. To prepare students for this, *ta'aruf* has been reconceptualised to condition the mind and outlook of the new students. Through *ta'aruf*, they must be made aware that once enrolled in IIUM, they will experience education that puts values and intellectual competencies on equal importance. Thus, new *ta'aruf* modules have been developed to internalise the vision and missions of IIUM, and to carry the pursuit of balanced graduates and *Insān Sejahtera* into the activities conducted during *Ta'aruf* Week. The first round of these modules implementation was carried out with success during the Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS) *Ta'aruf* Week (2020/2021). Similarly, this reconceptualised *ta'aruf* was introduced to the new undergraduate and postgraduate intakes for 2020/2021 at the University's other campuses with enhanced modules appropriate for the higher level of studies as compared to the CFS.

Whilst values-based education should be prevalent in all forms of education at the University, SAF gives greater emphasis to its delivery through the UniCORE. The UniCORE has been a staple of IIUM undergraduate programmes since the inception of the University. Its essence was to provide an adequate understanding of Islamic fundamental worldview to enable the students to

embark on a journey of integration and Islamisation that would distinguish them from students of the same discipline from other universities. UniCORE are seen as one of the major platforms for education transformation under SAF. Therefore, some aspects of UniCORE have been strengthened and realigned, especially towards humanising education and promoting education for sustainable development imbued with Islamic values. The revised UniCORE was offered beginning with the 2020/2021 student intake.

Another important feature of IIUM WIT is the increased emphasis on community engagement, towards realising the concept of *Rahmatan lil-'Alamīn*. WIT seeks to present the various IIUM community engagement initiatives in a more structured framework to ensure that they will be more meaningful and more impactful not only to the nearby communities, but also to IIUM students and staff involved.

SAF sees community engagement as another important platform where education transformation can take place. Under SAF, community engagement shall be linked to formal education by design. The learning output of community engagement initiatives conducted must be related to the academic curriculum offered in kulliyahs, so that theories learnt can be realised on the ground for students to understand the concept of *ilmu, amal* and *Rahmatan lil-'Alamīn*. At the same time, linking community engagement to formal education also promises exciting experiential and life-wide learning experiences to students.

Values and intellectual capacity are very much affected by the state of mental health and wellbeing. As highlighted in the *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan*, one has to be at peace with oneself, or be an *Insān Sejahtera* first and foremost, before one will be able to contribute to the *kesejahteraan* of family, community and the nation. The issue of mental health and well-being is even more heightened during and post-COVID-19 episodes. To combat mental health problems, students and staff must be equipped with skills to manage stress and building resilience (Muhammad Faris Abdullah, 2020).

In line with the adoption of SAF, mental health related services and academic programmes will be synchronised through a university-wide mental health strategic plan and policies. These would not only reinforce the delivery of mental health related services in the University, but also remove duplication and thus avoid wastages, especially of resources. Having all service providers and experts working in sync would also enhance the University capacity to champion mental health issues at the national and global level.

Collegiality/Shared Responsibility

Collegiality relates to the working environment that promotes shared responsibility among staff of the organisation. It involves everyone working together to achieve common goals, and in the process display mutual respect to one another as well as being receptive of each other's ideas and opinions for the betterment of the organisation.

Collegiality is one of the main IIUM WIT strategies. The IIUM Roadmap provides various platforms to promote working together and eliminate silo working environment. IIUM Flagships and other shared initiatives, for instance, were developed as platforms where campus community can work together beyond Kulliyahs and Offices boundaries.

In the context of SAF, every staff of IIUM has roles to play in the delivery of education at IIUM. **Under SAF, education is no longer solely the responsibility of the academics, but also the administrative staff especially in providing the much needed support to SAF implementation.** Facilities and support services must be mobilised and shared to ensure the success of SAF. For instance, experiential learning cannot be fully implemented if transport cannot be provided for students to visit sites and communities outside of the campus. Online and flexible learning cannot be realised if network and internet facilities are not up to standard. Thus, everyone must understand what the appropriate learning requirements are under SAF so that everyone can offer the best services of their own.

Shared responsibility also means sharing of facilities and space for co-learning to take place. Given the current financial climate, where funds are limited, facilities and spaces for education purposes must be shared optimally to ensure efficiency. kulliyahs should no longer limit their buildings only for use by their own students and staff. Similarly laboratories, studios, classrooms and other facilities should be shared whenever possible. Nevertheless, a systematic mechanism to monitor the sharing of facilities must be developed and adhered to in order to ensure usage and maintenance issues are addressed. Shared usage also means shared maintenance.

Sharing of space and facilities can also help in the provision of outdoor learning space, which is one of the key features of SAF. *Masjid*, for instance, must also function as a common learning space, not just for spiritual knowledge but also socio-technical courses when possible. Real-living laboratories and galleries, for example, should also serve as learning space to students from various kulliyahs. This means creating partnerships with knowledge-based sites are encouraged in order to expand knowledge vistas.

Institutional Readiness

Institutional readiness means that the University must be ready to implement and support SAF. Apart from providing the necessary facilities and resources, it is imperative that the University ensures all of its staff understand the strategic goals and elements of values-based education, the meaning of balanced staff and students, and what *Insān Sejahtera* entails. To achieve this, the University has develop *Insān Sejahtera* training modules which must be attended by all staff. The *Insān Sejahtera* training aims to provide understanding among the staff members on *Maqāsid Ash-Sharī'ah*, *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan*, SDGs, and the vision and missions of the University.

Institutional readiness also includes the element of sustainability-led campus, which is important in the context of SAF, as well as IIUM's Mission Statement No. 2 Sustainability-led campus will lead to a conducive learning environment

for SAF to be implemented and flourish. Green campus, for instance, will be able to accommodate outdoor classroom activities, provide informal learning space for students and instill environmental values in the campus community.

SAF is essential as it puts together in one framework how each of the agencies in the University contributes towards the transformative education process. For example, the IT facilities should be a state-of-the-art - not just in the classrooms or the labs, but also in the supporting environment. What can be automated should be automated so that the humans involved are able to spend more time in growth-type of activities, not routine ones. The system should be flexible enough to capture the flexibility of the current academic programmes and the changes that will occur in the future.

Human resource (HR) matters should be focused on assisting the academic programmes such that the students continue to receive the best there is to offer. There should not be disruptions due to retirement, and unforeseen major disruptions (such as the COVID-19 pandemic) should be efficiently dealt with. All staff should be seen as talents to be nurtured, in this uniquely Islamic environment. The HR framework should be a growth framework, nurturing and protecting staff when needed; but also one in which all staff will internalise the Islamic work ethics leading to everyone striving to be the best and being accountable for their actions. This is not the work of only one agency, hence the need for WIT.

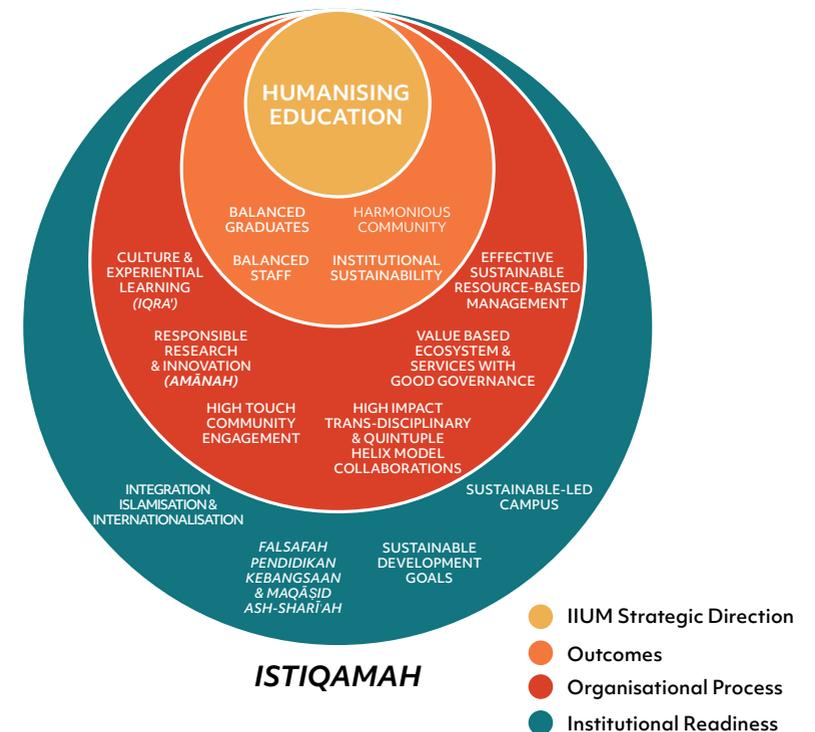
In Malaysia, university plans for institution transformation can be made difficult by the imposition of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are imposed by the various authorities and agencies. This reportedly is the case of *Universiti Sains Malaysia*. The emphasis on intangibles and immeasurable Key Intangible Indicators (KII) has been overtaken by the demands to fulfill KPIs and other measurable indicators in an oversimplified and naïve manner. This includes citation count and number of publications in particular types of journals, that are commonly used to tabulate university rankings. Learning from this, the emphasis on assessing the performance of staff is recommended to be based on KII. The KII may be made possible by using a specially designed *Humaniversity Competency Framework*. There is no “ticked box” exercise of which the institution transformation does not conform neatly. Rather “success” is based on a 360-degree approach together with the project partners based on a range of stated domains. The ‘competency model’ is intended to provide ‘a structured guide enabling the identification, evaluation and development of targeted behaviours in individuals’. It encompasses ‘a set of observable, measurable and improvable behaviours comprising knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics, including values (KSAV)’. The competency model, as designed, is to enhance further community engagement based on desired behavioural qualities and values, using core domains that mirror the *Insān Sejahtera* attributes.

Following this, various opportunities for research and innovation will be created, opening other windows for learning and co-creating ‘new’ knowledge, while (re) discovering the old from within the community (indigenisation). In this respect, the aspect of knowledge diversity – with a special emphasis on local/traditional/religious knowledge – is an important dimension in humanising education. This

could not only further unlock the wisdom of ages from the community in our collective quest for viable (sustainable) solutions to our shared concerns about environmental preservation and sustainable economies, but also, more importantly, lead to an abandonment of the delusory assumption that there is a single universal path to progress.

Institutional readiness is part of the IIUM *Sejahtera* Strategic Ecosystem, which was originally depicted in IIUM Roadmap 2019-2020, and also refined and adapted in IIUM Roadmap 2021-2022. The strategic ecosystem consisted of three (3) crescents leading to IIUM’s strategic direction of ‘Humanising Higher Education through *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī’ah* and SDGs’. The crescents are made up of three layers of operational components identified as critical strategies. Firstly, institutional readiness as the foundation to embark on the process. One aspect of the readiness is a strong understanding among the IIUM community on the concept of *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī’ah* to ensure it is consistently embraced and embedded through the entire execution and evaluation process. Secondly, the specific organisational processes that will bring in the changes needed to achieve the outlined vision, missions and strategic direction. Thirdly, the four (4) main stakeholders of the university - staff, student, neighboring community and the institution itself – to achieve the state of balance and harmony as illustrated in the following diagram.

Sejahtera Strategic Ecosystem



“
If a Muslim plants a
tree or sows seeds,
and then a bird,
or a person or
an animal eats from
it, it is regarded as
a charitable gift
(sadaqah)
for him.”

(Bukhari)



A WHOLE NEW TRANSFORMED EDUCATION

SAF is seen as a major breakthrough from WIT point of view towards revamping the concept of education at IIUM. SAF helps to tie up the different aspects of WIT which aims to humanise education. Through SAF implementation, education will be values-based, which is of paramount importance in the pursuit of balanced graduates. SAF is also key in the quest of "humaniversity." Linking formal education to community engagement in a more objective and structured framework will ensure the potential of students' involvement in transformational change is realised (Galimberti, 2020).

Education under SAF is also comprehensive, both in terms of knowledge and delivery. As aforementioned, education will no longer be the sole ambit of academics, but everyone in IIUM. In other words, everyone will have roles to play in the delivery of education and also in the shaping of the ecosystem nurturing students to become balanced graduates and ultimately *Insān Sejahtera*. Teaching and learning will not only be confined to the classroom, but also through daily interactions between staff and students, between students and the communities, and between students and their surrounding environment. Thus, everyone and every KCDIOM must begin to explore how best they can contribute and facilitate this transformation in education. Staff and KCDIOM must not rest on their laurels, thinking that they have done their best and there is nothing more that they can offer. Status quo must be challenged and red-tapes must be eliminated, so that SAF can be successfully implemented.

Students must also take part and play their roles in ensuring the success of SAF. Students must be willing to go the extra mile to harness their skills and competencies. They must be free of the spoon-feeding mentality, instead strive to put forward their own ideas and opinions. They must be steadfast in adopting and practising values and ethics as a Muslim imbued with KHAIR attributes.

RCE GREATER GOMBAK AS A NEW MODEL OF A 'JAMI'AH INSĀNIAH'

The continuous changes in the higher education landscape especially for the past 20 years have forced universities to respond with a diverse model of university to make themselves relevant. The pressure is getting stronger when university activities are put to almost complete halt by the COVID-19 pandemic. Now every single university in the world is searching for a new model that is very resilient not only to withstand any disruption but more importantly a model that can transform the challenges faced into a learning platform and

opportunities. An RCE with its structure of a very close collaboration vertically, horizontally and diagonally, among some of the internal and external stakeholders namely community, university, government agencies and industries can serve as a perfect co-learning platform and ecosystem for any real-world issues – a *Jami'ah Insāniah*.

IIUM, as the centre of the RCE, has long been striving to promote such a concept of learning environment within its institution and with the surrounding community. The living and learning in IIUM have been designed to align with and for Islamic practices which by default encapsulate the concept of *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah*. The introduction of the sustainability concept is perfecting the ecosystem of the university. With the WIT, IIUM views the campus operations and facilities management of the university as not just a physical operation but rather part of an academic tool to provide learning opportunities to its students' and staff' daily routines. It is undeniable that the student learning time spent outside the formal curriculum is relatively higher. Thus, in IIUM, all routine operations and facilities which have been usually taken for granted need to be adjusted so that it should be translating and showcasing a sustainable lifestyle. In realisation of this need, it is not an overstatement to propose that until and unless this model is fully adapted and adopted, the effort to achieve institutional sustainability will not be successful. The success of the RCE agenda of education for sustainable development starts inside out whereby it is so much dependent on how IIUM as a sub-community can function as a sustainable community itself before extending its internal culture to the surrounding community.

In a more general implication of RCE's framework, the whole university's functions, from the formal graded courses to extra-curricular activities, the various research activities, and everyday operation in administrative offices, cafeterias, hostels and every place in the university should be geared and re-oriented towards sustainable development-oriented ecosystem with the implication of *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah* reinstated in all appropriate occasion. For instance, any course on environmental education would emphasise on the negative consequences of plastic usage but this lesson will be of limited value when the university communities encounter cafeterias that are still offering plastic straws and mineral water bottles are still readily available for purchase everywhere in the campus without any notices and reminders on their environmental impact. The WIT approach implies the integration of sustainability aspects in every aspect of university governance and administration and the delivery of the three fundamental functions - teaching and learning, research and development and community engagement - in a more structured and pre-designed way. Concurrently, with the integration of *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah* into the university strategies and performance measurement, the IIUM community is sensitised and realised that all the environmental practices are very well aligned with the teaching of Islam and the concept of Islamisation that the university has been advocating for the past many years.

The RCE framework requires a WIT of IIUM. As previously mentioned, the WIT approach is a pragmatic way to develop a person who uses their head or specifically their cognitive ability to know, their hand to do or their psychomotor domain for mastering skills, and their heart to be, which refers to the affective domain in forming values and attitude which will later translated into actions. These three components make up a person, which will then learn to live together with others in harmony, respectful and peaceful society. This is in line with the four pillars of learning set out in a report for UNESCO by the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century in 1996 which

Abu Rayhan al-Biruni (973 – after 1050) was a polymath during the Islamic Golden Age. Well versed in physics, mathematics, astronomy, and natural sciences, he was also a historian, chronologist and linguist. Among other things, he was considered "founder of Indology", "Father of Comparative Religion", "Father of modern geodesy", and the first anthropologist.

emphasise on the four pillars that make up education throughout life; which are learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together. Most of formal education only stops at learning to know which focuses on numeracy, literacy and critical thinking, and learning to do which concerns more of skills and competency. Little emphasis was given onto learning to live together which involve the development of social skills and values, and learning to be, which foster personal development to act with creativity, judgment, and responsibility. Putting it together, the head, the hand, and the heart must integrate to

materialise learning to live together (Dzulkifli Abdul Razak, 2019). Here is where the IIUM model of university, as one of the stakeholders in RCE, distincts itself from the other teaching and learning models while serving as the epicenter for the university in community.

As an Islamic university, IIUM is strongly grounded by the fundamental and teachings of Islam in all of its functions and operations. In the teaching of Islam, the concept of education is more rightly defined as tarbiah (nurture) - to develop a person to be a human being, not just a human capital. The 'knowledge' imparted and possessed is just a piece of information until it is being applied to benefit others or it gives meaning to oneself. With this definition, two critical equal concepts of sustainable development are implied; one, application of knowledge and second, transfer of knowledge. And the same concept is being advocated in the Humboldtian model of education (that is - the integration of teaching, learning, and research) and integrates it with service to humanity. In other words, knowledge is not acquired just for the sake of knowledge, but rather because education strives for a higher ideal

of applying that knowledge to address human needs, concerns, and problems. It is exactly for this purpose that mainstreaming the humanising of higher education is imperative towards meeting sustainable development goals.

Specifically, the main implication of RCE on IIUM's education process is to structurally nurture students who are balanced and harmonious (*Insān Sejahtera*) as stipulated in the *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan* crafted on values-based holistic and integrated education for sustainable development (Education 2030) through the teaching and learning that provide conducive shared learning (culture of *iqra'*) ecosystem geared towards the convergence of knowledge founded on the *Tawhīd* approach towards realising "comprehensive excellence". Together with these functions, the IIUM research agenda is to engage in research and innovation that are relevant to the *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah* and in meeting the United Nations' SDGs aimed at mercy for all (*Raḥmatan lil-Ālamīn*).

Contrary to the belief that being recognised as RCE means a total reconstruction of the university's direction, the recognition serves as a booster to strengthen the curriculum, efforts and initiatives towards sustainability which have been fully embedded in the initial establishment of IIUM. The mission towards sustainable development had been explicitly stated in IIUM Mission Statement No 2; To produce better quality intellectuals, professionals and scholars by integrating the qualities of faith (*īmān*), knowledge (*ilm*), and good character (*akhlāq*) to serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress as well as sustainable development in Malaysia and in the Muslim world.

An RCE is a network of existing formal, non-formal and informal organisations that facilitate learning towards sustainable development in local and regional communities. Community is part and parcel of the university learning ecosystem, not just to serve as a venue for co-curricular activities. The purpose of an RCE is to connect the formal education institutions with the local stakeholders in the efforts towards sustainable development, hence, the concept of university in community. The term community is not only limited to the neighbouring community but society at large in different areas beyond the locality of the campus, either in the region or internationally where the community is facing with sustainable development challenge. This RCE network is very global that it can serve as another platform to fulfill the IIUM Mission Statement No. 6 and Mission Statement No. 7, which are "To enhance intercultural understanding and foster civilisation dialogues in Malaysia as well as across communities and nations" and "To develop an environment that instills commitment for life-long learning and a deep sense of social responsibility among staff and students".

As a working framework, there are four (4) main components of RCE that contribute to its function as a platform for education for sustainable development namely governance, collaboration, research and development, and transformative education. The details of each components are as follows;

1. Governance - addressing issues of RCE management and leadership to steer the learning ecosystem
2. Collaboration - addressing the engagement of actors from all levels of formal, non-formal and informal education to ensure diverse learning experiences
3. Research and development - addressing the role of research and its inclusion in RCE activities, as well as contributing to the design of strategies for collaborative activities, including those with other RCEs to optimise linkage between different disciplines
4. Transformative education - contributing to the transformation of the current education and training systems to satisfy ambitions of the region regarding sustainable living and livelihood

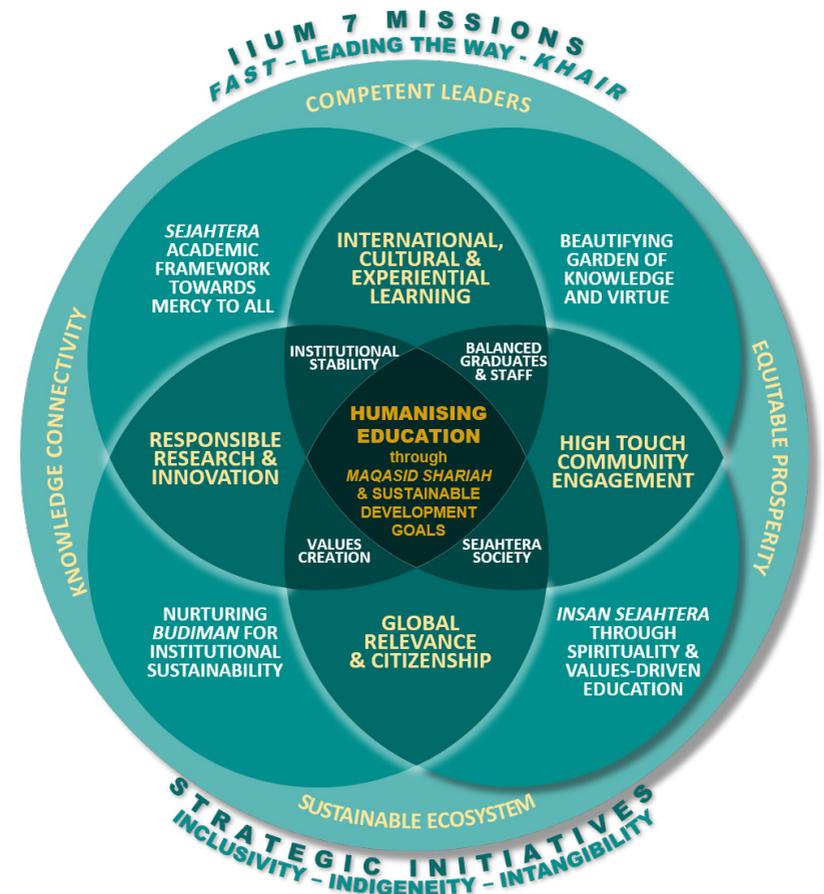
Through these four components, it is hoped that it can create a synergistic co-learning ecosystem that will optimise the learning experiences of not only IIUM students but community members as well. Rather than a total reconstruction, transformative education that is taking place is part of revamping the current curriculum to be more structured in the realisation of sustainable development.

In a nutshell, the recognition of RCE Greater Gombak is a platform to synchronise all aspects of curriculum, research and development, and campus operation towards sustainable development, apart from widening the university's global network in implementation of Education for Sustainable Development. Deeply rooted with tawhid and *Rahmatan lil-'Ālamīn* components, RCE Greater Gombak will continue to 'Leading the Whole Community Transformation through Spirituality and *Sejahtera*'.

With the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework in place and fully implemented, the various manifestations of ESD and Community Engagement in SAF will provide more impactful avenues for IIUM to continue driving the RCE Greater Gombak, truly becoming a model of how an Islamic university may become *Rahmatan lil-'Ālamīn*.



IIUM Roadmap 2021-2022



MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER IN SAF

Dzulkifli Abdul Razak

SAF (the acronym for *Sejahtera* Academic Framework) literally in Arabic means a “straight line” – ranks and file. In the *Qur’ān* (*Surah* 61:4), it refers to “a row as though they are a [single] structure joined firmly.” In congregational prayers, the *saf* is of prime importance to epitomise unity, unison and unified higher purpose in the devotion to the Almighty.

The *surah* encourages Muslims and urges them to perfect their faith and trust in God and to defend the Truth no matter what the cost would be. It encourages them to struggle and fight in the cause of God and gives examples from the lives of prophets Moses and Jesus and their struggle and appeal to their people. Lastly it ends with a glad tiding of victory and that the belief in God will prevail.

At the outset (61: 2-3), the believers are asked: O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do? They have been warned that in the sight of God, it is hateful indeed for those who say one thing and do another. He loves those who fight in the cause of the Truth, “standing like a solid structure, against the enemies of God.”

Figuratively, this volume reflects the same in many ways. Namely, it is intended to align the various aspects of SAF as discussed without losing their connectivity in bringing out transformative changes using the whole institution approach. It is akin to “single structure joined firmly” as described in the *Surah*. This is to ensure that Truth is defended at all cost which is the true purpose of knowledge-seeking in IUM, and Islam generally. And that is consequent to the faith and trust in God, which is also alluded to by the FPK.

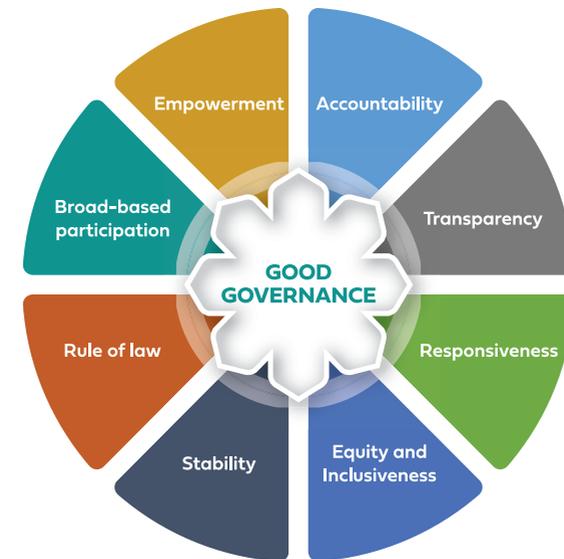
The contrast is also clear, in that, not doing what is being advocated. In the case of SAF, it refers to the aims and goals as spelt out at the outset in *Humanising Education for Raḥmatan lil-‘Ālamīn*. This includes the nexus of concepts, frameworks, principles and approaches enumerated in the volume. Thus, walking the talk “in the cause of Truth.” From the organisation viewpoint it could take on other dimensions as well in arriving at the Truth. One such practice relates to good governance as articulated by the International Bureau of Education (IBE), an agency of UNESCO. Being an educational institution that aspires to be active internationally, such an understanding is imperative.

It cannot be overemphasised that IBE recognises “the various sources of systematic barriers within education systems that could derail the design, development, and implementation of quality curricula. Even the best curriculum can be undermined by systematic constraints such as poor governance [and] insufficient consultation with stakeholders in the decision-making process.”

Good Governance in Education

IBE defines the concept of governance to represent “the norms, values and rules of the game through which public affairs are managed in a manner that is transparent, participatory, inclusive and responsive.” In addition, it refers “to structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation.” In a broad sense, governance is about the culture and institutional environment in which citizens and stakeholders interact among themselves and participate in public affairs. It is more than the organs of the government. It therefore can be subtle and may not be easily observable, a point that is often missed when one is fixated to the rule of law, or the exercise of authority or power, as some understand what good governance is conventionally.

Eight elements of Good Governance



More interestingly, IBE cited that governance has also been interpreted as ‘power relationships,’ ‘formal and informal processes of formulating policies and allocating resources,’ ‘processes of decision-making’ and ‘mechanisms for holding governments accountable.’ (emphasis added). In this regard, it is crucial to differentiate “governance” from “management” so as to avoid confusion and the tendency to equate the two. From the IBE standpoint, “management” refers primarily “to the planning, implementation and monitoring functions in order to achieve pre-defined results. Management encompasses processes, structures and arrangements that are designed to mobilize and transform the available physical, human and financial resources

to achieve concrete outcomes. Management refers to individuals or groups of people who are given the authority to achieve the desired results.” In contrast, “[g]overnance systems set the parameters under which management and administrative systems will operate. Governance is about how power is distributed and shared, how policies are formulated, priorities set and stakeholders made accountable. The term ‘good governance’ is also frequently used as a necessary pre-condition for creating an enabling environment in meeting outcomes related and sustainable human development in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and more recently the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Table 5.1 below summarises the main differences between governance and management:

Governance	Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Set and norms, strategic vision and direction and formulate high-level goals and policies. · Oversee management and organisational performance to ensure that the organisation is working in the best interests of the public, and more specifically the stakeholders who are served by the organisation’s mission. · Direct and oversee the management to ensure that the organisation is achieving the desired outcomes and to ensure that the organisation is acting prudently, ethically and legally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Run the organisation in line with the broad goals and direction set by the governing body. · Implement the decisions within the context of the mission and strategic vision. · Make operational decisions and policies, keep the governance bodies informed and educated. · Be responsive to requests for additional information.

Realising the discrepancy between the two based on the ideals that SAF espouses and what is “not” carried out or aligned to the values system is an important “reality-check.” It could be the much-needed brief moments to better prepare oneself at times when moral and ethical dilemmas are being subtly put to test. This will go a long way to merely play safe and gradually fails to put KhAIR in its proper place. Over time it gets worse when no one is willing and able to keep the saf true to its meaning and purpose in a disciplined way. Ultimately, the Whole Institution Transformation, complemented strongly by the Whole Curriculum Transformation (SAF) in tandem to the institutional one will also suffer.

REACHING TO THE PREFERRED SCENARIO

The *Sejahtera* Academic Framework is both “old” and “new”. It is “old” in the sense that the core values and the vision and mission of the University continue to be the bedrock. It is “new” in that it weaves together the current and future major agenda while demanding each and everyone of us - at both the individual and organisational levels - reflect on our roles and responsibilities to move the University into the future.

And what is the future?

Chronologically, the “future” is a specific time ahead that we are planning for. So what are we planning for? This is where foresight studies may help us understand the possible futures. For the purpose of the foresight studies, 2040 is chosen as the next “station.” UNESCO has put 2030 as its time goal for its 5 pillars of learning. With SAF launched in 2020, coupled with Education 2030, 2040 is a good time period to expect the full manifestation and impact of these 2 major initiatives reflected in IIUM.

Moving ahead to 2040, there are several probable scenarios*.

Scenario 1. The University community in 2020 has chosen not to change, for we seem to be doing well, and things have been working, though not flawlessly, but things get done - students graduate, staff get promoted - the University has even won several awards at both the national and international level. With that choice, in 2040, it is expected that the University will become a “Museum of Yesterday” - the Garden of Knowledge and Virtue is essentially a deserted and abandoned garden. No longer competitive programme-wise and not willing to change organisational-wise, the University no longer attracts much less retain the brightest minds, it is merely existing, as long as the government continues to fund it. Meanwhile, the world outside continues to change, at times exponentially.

Scenario 2. The University community in 2020 has chosen to change marginally. Everyone understands that some things have got to change, but the changes are done only as and when needed, why rock the boat too much? Just row the boat ahead but don’t rock it. With that choice, in 2040, it is expected that the University will transform into a *Sejahtera* community. This does not seem like a bad decision to have made in 2020 then. Until the details are looked into and we see that is it essentially a stagnant community that is resistant to change, and everyone continues to be in their comfort zone - textbook and exam-oriented pedagogies, low-impact research done mainly for getting promotions, technology-slave and follower culture - these images permeate the assembly-line setting. There is still too much bureaucracy and too much emphasis on maintaining legacy or heritage blindly. The “*Sejahtera* Transformer” in this *Sejahtera* community remains more of a litany and a concept than the reality, for in the end, it continues to be about the paper qualification and instant self-glorification.

Scenario 3. The University community in 2020 is happy with the achievements and wants to continue leading the way, while maintaining the concept of “ummatan wasatan,” hence they have chosen to take the adaptive change route. With that choice, in 2040, IIUM becomes “The Sanctuary” and the aspired university. The University is seen not just as a place to seek knowledge, instead it generates knowledge at a viral level. It humanises and Islamicises Artificial Intelligence for the benefit of humankind. It offers a personalised education where students choose what they want to learn and earn a series of certifications leading to a degree. The IIUM Culture is like a family where you feel wanted in a nurturing, warm, honest and welcoming environment, and people keep coming back for support and advise. The teachers are Murabbis, nurturing self-learning. There is green-tape governance, and diversity is embraced. The 7 missions are in place once again in navigating the required changes. The Garden of Knowledge and Virtue is also now a sanctuary.

Scenario 4. The University community in 2020 feels blessed with the achievements and is thirsty for more. KhAIR and the 7 missions are well-grounded in the IIUM community. The COVID19 disruption shows that more needs to be done - sooner rather than later - hence they have decided to go for the radical change. With that choice, in 2040, IIUM becomes an oasis of knowledge. With the metaphor of the rising phoenix, IIUM leads the renaissance of knowledge, in the Islamic world and beyond. This is achieved by becoming a hybrid global university. The global aspect of the mission is achieved - there are scholars and students around the world, engaged in knowledge seeking, impactful research that generates knowledge while improving societies around the world - all under the IIUM mantle and high standards. The scholarly community and the public flock to campuses - those virtual ones, and the physical ones - for the environment is both a sanctuary and a verdant garden of knowledge and virtue. No longer relying on government funding, as well as fully autonomous, IIUM is able to move forward faster than before. IIUM is the preferred choice, and it is borderless, and inclusive - all languages are spoken in IIUM, and they all speak the same language - that of mercy to all the worlds and glorification of Allah.

The Preferred Scenario (IIUM 2040)

With the 4 possible scenarios presented above, it is clear that change is a must. Not changing is not an option. So the question is how much change, and what kind of change. It is perhaps also clear by now that marginal change is insufficient, not if we want to be leading the way, not simply just to remain relevant. The preferred scenario combines the best of being radical yet adaptive. The metaphor of IIUM 2040 is the good tree. The details are subject to further consultation as the scenario is cascaded to the community and extensive engagement with all is done. In general, in 2040, it is envisioned that IIUM graduates will truly be -the khalifahs - nurtured in an inclusive, green and happy environment, going through an academically rigorous yet meaningful and flexible programme, with the best facilities and having instructors who

are murabbis - the IIUM graduates will continue to bring goodness and positive changes to their respective communities. Administratively, the University continues to adapt such that there is optimum efficiency with full transparency and accountability to materialise the various University agendas (including the Roadmap 2021-2022), designed for optimum positive impact. The *Sejahtera* Academic Framework has become one of the major catalysts to move things forward, and it can be seen in full-swing by 2040.

*from the IIUM Foresight Series of Workshop (Nov-Dec 2020)

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“
Occupy yourself with
every good deed
and hasten to do it
before something
prevents you from
doing so.”

(Imam Ahmad Ibn)

GLOSSARY

<i>Abd</i>	Servant or creation of Allah
<i>Adab</i>	Islamic etiquette or Islamic behaviour
<i>Akhlaq</i>	behaviour; ethics
<i>al kawn</i>	the universe
<i>al-'Alaq</i>	Chapter 96 of the Holy <i>Qur'ān</i>
<i>al-mal</i>	Wealth or properties
<i>al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm</i>	the true path
<i>amānah</i>	trust or upholding trusts
<i>an-nafs</i>	life
<i>an-nasl</i>	lineage
<i>'aqīdah</i>	belief or creed
<i>'aql</i>	Reason
<i>Biah</i>	Condition Premise Environment
Co-curricular	Activities that complement students' learning in University
Electives	Optional courses
<i>Falah</i>	holistic well-being
<i>Falsafah pendidikan Kebangsaan</i>	National Philosophy of Education
<i>Fasad</i>	relating to corruption
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
Free Electives	optional courses offered by one kulliyah that can be taken by student from other kulliyahs
<i>hifz ad-din</i>	Faith
<i>'ibādah</i>	practices of worship
<i>Ikhlas</i>	Sincerity
<i>'ilm</i>	knowledge
<i>iman</i>	faith
<i>imārāt al-kawn</i>	construction of the universe
<i>Inṣāf</i>	realisation of the truth
<i>Insān</i>	human being
<i>insān kāmīl</i>	perfect human being
<i>iqra'</i>	To read
<i>islah</i>	reform
<i>islamicise</i>	bring under influence of Islam
<i>Istiqamah</i>	Steadfastness unwavering resolute
<i>Jasad</i>	the body flesh
JERIHAS	a Malay acronym of <i>Jasmani emosi rohani intelek hamba Allah alam sekitar sosialisasi</i> ; Physical Emotional Spiritual Intellectual
JERIHAS	Servant Environment Socialization a Malay acronym of <i>Jasmani Emosi Rohani Intelek Sosialisasi Alam Sekitar Hamba Allah</i>
KhaAIR	an acronym of <i>Khalifah Amānah Iqra' Raḥmatan lil-Ālamīn</i> ;

<i>khalifah</i>	a ruler or a leader
LLL	Life-long Learning
LWL	Life-wide Learning
<i>mahallah</i>	hostel or students' accomodation
<i>maqāṣid shari'ah</i> or <i>Maqāṣid Ash-Shari'ah</i>	the purpose of shari'ah
<i>masjid</i>	Muslims' place of congregational prayer
MPU	Muslims' place of congregational educators
<i>murabbi</i>	Faculty; Centre of Studies
Kulliyah	courses taken by students but bear no credit hours such as clubs, societies and sports activities
non-credited extra-curricular	master or creator of the universe
<i>Rabb al-'ālamīn</i>	mercy to all the worlds
<i>Raḥmatan lil-Ālamīn</i>	an important purpose for one's being
<i>raison d'etre</i>	Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development
RCE Greater Gombak	the spirit or the soul
<i>Rūḥ</i>	Giving of alms or charity
<i>Sadaqah</i>	<i>Sejahtera</i> Academic Framework
SAF	Sustainable Development Goals
SDG	Sustainable Development
SD	Students Feedback Survey
SFS	Islamic law or religious precepts based on the <i>Qur'ān</i> and the prophets
<i>shari'ah</i>	piety or the state fear towards Allah
<i>Taqwa</i>	a form of balance in the world
<i>tawazun</i>	the concept of oneness of God or monotheism
<i>tawḥīd</i>	Recitation of the <i>Qur'ān</i>
<i>Tilawah</i>	Brotherhood or solidarity of Muslim society
<i>Ukhuwah</i>	brotherhood or muslim society
<i>ummah</i>	University General Studies courses
UNGS	University Required Courses
UniCORE	relating to Bachelors' Degrees programme
Undergraduate Studies	relating to Master's and Doctoral degree programme
Postgraduate	divine revelation
<i>wahy</i>	Whole Institution Transformation
WIT	human being
Homo-sapiens	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO	

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*We are also hugely indebted to the entire IIUM community, past and present,
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ISBN 978-967-467-018-4



SEJAHTERA ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK

Humanising Education for Raḥmatan lil- Ālamīn
post-COVID-19 disruption

saf

/ʃaff/

Quranic

صف /ʃaff/

in 'solid' ranks (ʃaff), as if they were a solid cemented structure

سورة الصف 61:4

English

row /rɔʊ/

a number of people or things in a more or less straight line

Malay

baris /ba.ris/

satu deret yang merupakan susunan memanjang

Arabic

صف /ʃaff/

سَطْرٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ



**First Print, 2021
IIUM**

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Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia

Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Sejahtera Academic Framework : Humanising Education for Raḥmatan lil- Ālamīn post-COVID-19 disruptions /

Edited by Lihanna Borhan, Amelia Wong Azman, Gairuzazmi Mat Ghani, Muhammad Faris Abdullah, Zainurin Abdul Rahman, Zulkefli M. Yusof.

ISBN 9789674670184

e ISBN 9789674670191

1. International Islamic University Malaysia.
 2. Education, Higher--Aims and objectives--Malaysia--21st century.
 3. Sustainable development--Malaysia.
 4. Islamic universities and colleges--Malaysia--21st century.
 5. Government publications--Malaysia.
- I. Lihanna Borhan. II. Amelia Wong Azman. III. Gairuzazmi Mat Ghani.
IV. Muhammad Faris Abdullah. V. Zainurin Abdul Rahman.
VI. Zulkefli M. Yusof.

Published in Malaysia by

**Office of Knowledge for Change and
Advancement (KCA)**

International Islamic University Malaysia
P.O Box 10, 50728 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Tel : +603-6421 6781/6783/6787; Fax : +603-6421 6789
Email : kca@iium.edu.my

Printed in Malaysia by

Rekacetak Sdn. Bhd.(810382-U)
No. 12 & 14 Jalan Jemuju Empat 16/13D
Seksyen 16, 40200 Shah Alam
Selangor Darul Ehsan

SEJAHTERA ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK

Humanising Education for Raḥmatan lil- Ālamīn
post-COVID-19 disruption



LEADING THE WAY
KHALIFAH · AMĀNAH · IGRĀ · RAḤMATAN LIL-ĀLAMĪN



PHILOSOPHY OF KNOWLEDGE

The University shall be guided by the philosophy and principles which shall include the following:

- A. the meaning and spirit of *surah Al-'Alaq*, verses 1 to 5 of the Holy *Qur'ān* as the fundamental constituent principle of the University;
- B. the acceptance of *tawhīd* in recognising Allah as the Absolute Creator and Master of the Universe
- C. the ultimate source of knowledge is the acceptance of Allah as the Absolute Creator and Master of Mankind;
- D. the propagation and advancement of knowledge is a trust (*amānah*) and shall be in conformity with the purpose of Allah's creation of the universe;
- E. knowledge shall be utilised by mankind as the servant (*'abd*) and vicegerent (*khalīfah*) of Allah on earth, in accordance with the will of Allah;
- F. the quest for knowledge is regarded as an act of worship (*'ibādah*); and
- G. the University shall be Islamic and international in character.

VISION

Inspired by the worldview of *tawhīd* and the Islamic philosophy of the unity of knowledge as well as its concept of holistic education, the University aims at becoming a leading international centre of excellence in education research and innovation which seeks to restore the dynamic and progressive role of the ummah in all branches of knowledge for the betterment of human life and civilisation.

MISSIONS

Towards actualising the University's vision, IIUM endeavours:*

1. To undertake the special and greatly needed task of reforming the contemporary Muslim mentality and integrating Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences in a positive manner
2. To produce better quality intellectuals, professionals and scholars by integrating the qualities of faith (*īmān*), knowledge (*ilm*), and good character (*akhlaq*) to serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress as well as sustainable development in Malaysia and in the Muslim world
3. To promote the concept of Islamisation of human knowledge in teaching, research, consultancy, dissemination of knowledge and the development of academic excellence in the University;
4. To nurture the quality of holistic excellence which is imbued with Islamic moral-spiritual values, in the process of learning, teaching, research, consultancy, publication, administration and student life
5. To exemplify an international community of dedicated intellectuals, scholars, professionals, officers and workers who are motivated by the Islamic worldview and code of ethics as an integral part of their work culture
6. To enhance intercultural understanding and foster civilisational dialogues in Malaysia as well as across communities and nations
7. To develop an environment that instills commitment for life-long learning and a deep sense of social responsibility among staff and students

The Mission Statement of the University may be summarised as the following four core elements:

- Integration
- Islamisation
- Internationalisation
- Comprehensive Excellence

(*these mission statements are not hierarchical)

EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Graduates

Nurture graduates who are balanced and harmonious (*Insān Sejahtera*) as stipulated in the *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan*, crafted on values-based holistic and integrated education for sustainable development (Education 2030)

Teaching and Learning

Provide conducive shared learning (culture of *Iqra'*) ecosystem geared towards the convergence of knowledge founded on the worldview of *Tawhīd* (affirmation of the absolute Oneness of Allah swt) in realising comprehensive excellence

Responsible Research and Innovation

Engage in research and innovation relevant to *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah* and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) aimed at mercy for all the worlds (*Raḥmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*)

Insān Sejahtera and *Khalīfah*

The main outcome of the Educational Goals is to nurture *Insān Sejahtera* (a balanced and harmonious person), equipped with useful knowledge and specialised skills, and committed to Islamic values and practices imbued with integrity, *Amānah*, *Īmān*, *Akhlāq* and *Taqwā* towards the realisation of virtuous civilisation

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FOREWORD

I am delighted to write the foreword for the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF) book that outlines essentially the future academic direction of IIUM. This is central to IIUM survival and growth. Over the years, the world has changed drastically in more than one way, not least due to the socio-political and technological advancement, and so have the functions of academic institutions globally. IIUM, as one of the academic institutions, must work earnestly towards addressing the changes to stay active and relevant as a responsible member of academia.

After more than 37 years in existence, IIUM finally embarks on a systematic effort to re-strategise and re-formulate the framework of its academic programmes and effectively, the IIUM outlook towards education. This, however, does not mean that SAF neglects the past, which has in many ways, deepen the notion of IIUM as the Garden of Knowledge and Virtue. This massive endeavour is a result of careful planning, reflecting the collective effort by all agencies within IIUM to ensure that all components in an academic framework are addressed and appropriately dealt with. It is a 360-degree effort that takes into account the views of students, academic, administrative and support staff as well as the present and past leaders of IIUM.

The publication of this *Sejahtera* Academic Framework book is both a statement and a re-affirmation of IIUM roles in the present world today from here onward. This volume is neither written based on the whims and fancies nor it is conceptualised for convenience reasons. It is a concise compilation of ideas which delineates clearly the information about IIUM ideals, the principles that guide the components of SAF, the explanation of the SAF and finally the elucidation of how the SAF can impact campus' life through the Whole Institutional Transformation initiative. This initiative, started in 2018 and has proven to be beneficial in enhancing the *raison d'être* of IIUM as a global player. This in turn has opened wider vistas in addressing the uncertainties of the future through the exercise of scenario planning.

I believe that the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework is crucial to keep IIUM abreast with the development in the present world and the demands of the future. In fact, IIUM should be spearheading the massive concerted effort to respond to the present coronavirus pandemic, a manifestation of IIUM motto, "Leading the Way". This move is imperative to ensure that IIUM positions itself in the forefront of academia internationally and creates impact in the community as well as the world at large. I sincerely urge IIUM to embrace SAF as one of the ways to make positive changes in this world community in humanising education for *Rahmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*.

Congratulations to IIUM on the publication of *Sejahtera* Academic Framework and may SAF continue to be the guide for IIUM in aligning itself to realise a better world for many years to come.



**HER MAJESTY
SERI PADUKA BAGINDA THE RAJA PERMAISURI AGONG
TUNKU HAJAH AZIZAH AMINAH MAIMUNAH ISKANDARIAH
BINTI ALMARHUM AL-MUTAWAKKIL ALALLAH SULTAN ISKANDAR
AL-HAJ**

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P.K.C., P.K.T., P.J.K.

THE PRESIDENT OF IIUM

The university has requested me to say a few words about the publication of the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF) book, which I have graciously accepted. In my mind, this book is long overdue given the myriads of changes happening around the world; economically, socially, politically and in education. The SAF book contains information about the planning, designing and the maintenance of academic programmes in IIUM, a guide that is useful to new and seasoned members of staff alike. I'm not hesitant to say that the SAF and this book means a lot to IIUM.

For over 37 years IIUM ideals have led to the development of IIUM and its populations as well as IIUM reputation around the world. IIUM was founded under ideals that are unique and unparalleled to other academic institutions. IIUM was established under the guidance of noble philosophy, vision, mission and educational goals stemmed from the spirit of *Iqra'* and based on surah *al-'alaq*. IIUM demand that education be seen as a religious as well as social responsibility rather than a mere business venture. The entire management of IIUM academic programmes is geared towards developing the ummah and treating the members of staff and students as Allah's creations, which is equivalent to humans in today's term. All elements of IIUM ideals are maintained, reinforced and included in the SAF Book.

The methods of achieving IIUM ideals may take different and sometimes long and winding roads but so long we hold steadfast to our ideals and objectives, we will continue to be an institution that the world must recognised. As we move rapidly towards the future, which is now, we have to strengthen our statement and commitment towards IIUM collective goals and this is where I see the SAF comes into play.

In a big picture, SAF is a consummate framework that encompasses all elements related to the management of academic programmes, institution and more. The main business of IIUM is to create changes in life through education and SAF provides a guide that can facilitate the accomplishment of this objective. SAF proposes the alignment of all elements in the rubrics of IIUM ideals and aspirations, academic programmes management, facilities as well as supports and services in order to provide conducive teaching and learning environment, which in turn will produce graduates desired by IIUM.

At its core, SAF insists IIUM academic programmes must be recognised and continue to provide knowledge and skills that are of different natures; religious, contemporary, hard skills as well as soft skills for shaping future generations. At the same time, IIUM must also be cognizant of its quality of graduates. IIUM graduates must be ones that possess good *syahsiah* and fear Allah SWT, give respect to and deserve respect from others, are versatile and are willing



IIUM PRESIDENT
DATUK DR. MOHD DAUD BAKAR

to make good changes in societies, as individuals or as part of the workforce. Hence, brings relevance to the tagline of this book, which is Humanising Education for *Rahmatan lil-'Ālamīn*.

I believe that IIUM population should embrace SAF and through this framework let us bind together as a solid working team to achieve IIUM ideals. Let us continue the ties that we have built and enjoyed all these years and create new and better cooperation as one big family; the students and members of staff, the academics and non-academics, and the present and the past. We should make ourselves visible to the world but still deeply-rooted to our fundamentals.

I congratulate IIUM on the launching of the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework book and may Allah SWT protect us from Covid-19.

INTRODUCTION

The higher education world is currently populated by faculties and staff who grew up in a different kind of environment. But these are also the ones who were behind the many innovations and disruptions the world went through. The impact of the research and development; plus policy-input from those in universities around the world cannot be marginalised. So far from being “dinosaurs in ivory towers,” universities have been at the frontier of knowledge.

However, the impact of the innovations may have gone beyond the expectations of the innovators. For example, thirty years ago, the internet was a nascent element of society, it is now ubiquitous, and the technology advancement has been gigantic. Society has embraced this, yet society is also struggling to handle its impact. This includes the higher education world. On the positive side, there is a wider knowledge web, that is accessible by many and no longer the elite few, and everyone can learn so much. Yet on the other hand, there is rampant plagiarism, and perhaps the rise of “fly-by-night” experts. This is just one example of the complexity of the world today, from the innovations whose roots can in some ways be traced back to universities.

As the world was discussing the IR4.0 disruption and its impact on society, including higher education; another unexpected non-technological disruption occurred in the form of the COVID19 pandemic. And once again, society has to grapple with its impact. Universities may choose to manage, or universities may choose to lead.

Disruptions will continue to occur, at a rate faster than previously experienced; and universities will need to continually make the choice - are they going to just manage and adapt, or are they going to lead the way? And how to do so without sacrificing the soul of the university?

It is with this in mind that the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework was crafted - to enable International Islamic University Malaysia to not just manage or adapt, but to lead the way - foreseeing the incoming disruptions, coming up with our own innovative solutions, while maintaining true to our vision and mission, especially on serving Allah and bringing good to the world (*Rahmatan lil-‘Ālamīn*) - in short, educating in current students “now” to face the future, regardless of what the future might be. Hence, the need to provide an environment that is transformative, that develops both the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and most importantly - values that will bode well for the graduates and the society. This mandates a change in the delivery processes beyond the curriculum delivery but on the management of the University.

For change we must. But we change not to simply adapt, we change to also affect the changes that we want.

The SAF is not a definitive answer cast in stone for perpetuity, for the specifics will continue to change as needed, but it has been developed to allow the University to move ahead in unison while maintaining our core values. SAF is envisioned to be a platform for the various parts of the universities to speak together in a common language that speaks to contemporary and future issues, allowing everyone to develop and fulfill our potential.

Hence, a thorough reading of this volume is recommended. SAF is our beginning to a more integrated collaboration, and it is hoped that this will be the start of more dialogues and discussions that will enrich our lives - the students, the staff, and the larger community.

May Allah ease and bless all our efforts.

LIHANNA BORHAN

DZULKIFLI ABDUL RAZAK

PREFACE

IUM has been growing rapidly since its establishment in 1983. And with any institution, the larger it becomes, the challenges and strategies vary, and the accompanying narratives also vary. The lessons and experiences that IUM has gained along the way become a backdrop of who we want to be while maintaining our core identity. All these are put together in the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF), as described in this volume.

The main objective of SAF is to nurture holistic human beings who have been entrusted on us in a “*jami’ah insāniah*” environment. IUM refuses to be the factory that “produces” simple minded mass productions who are only skilled at what they have been assembled for, void of human values and virtues.

The curriculum has been carefully embedded with important elements, which have been carefully put together to ensure that values are being infused in all grains of knowledge imparted and shared by the scholars in IUM.

The planning and the implementation of SAF are guided by the IUM’s vision and mission, the most pivotal one - the students’ growth in attitude, worldview, personal psychological well-being in a flourishing sustainable Islamic environment.

The first guiding principle in the development and implementation of SAF is empowerment. The revisions in the curriculum took into consideration of the views and attitudes both the lecturers and students have of the old curriculum. This is a proof that the IUM community is given the authority to make decisions and changes according to their own experiences. By doing this, redundant and outdated contents and methodologies are taken out, the “old” one is improved while also coming out with new ones.

SAF pays a greater attention to create a flexible teaching and learning environment for the lecturers and students. Courses are revised and constructed with a space for modifications and further improvements. Flexibility encourages innovative thinking. Academics are motivated to adapt and adopt new ideas, methods for better products and outcomes at all levels.

Having said that, everyone has the responsibility to justify their decisions and innovations that they have been empowered with.

It is significant to highlight that decisions made regarding SAF is not made based on administrative and financial factors. We keep in mind that curriculum should be giving a meaningful and impactful teaching and learning experience for both lecturers and students.

The adoption of SAF is a turning point towards the university’s Whole Institution Transformation (WIT). All agencies in the university must work together in ensuring the success of SAF. Without enhancements or transformation in the facilities and support systems, what has been planned will not be successfully executed. This volume is the beginning of that transformation. It is hoped that with the publication of this volume, the major roles of each one of us - both as the people and the agency - are made clear, and will drive all of us to reflect and re-work our activities, such that we will be able to deliver the transformational educational experience to all.

The Office of Deputy Rector (Academic and Industrial Linkages, later renamed to Academic and Internationalisation) are committed to continue driving this initiative forward, but it can only successfully do so with the continued support of everyone in the University, not just the agencies reporting directly to the Office. We look forward to this continued support, may Allah bless this effort, and may we be able to nurture the *khalifah* who will lead the future.

This volume is already a testament of the commitment of so many people in the University, working together in addition to their already huge portfolio of work, but forging ahead to ensure that the University community not only has a framework to tie our major goals together, but a commitment that they will also be pushing this through together. This is a “work in progress” not in the sense this is unfinished, but a “work in progress” because we will never rest on our laurels, and there are always room for continual improvement, to keep offering the best that we can, and to be the best we can be.

May Allah ease our way.

**PROF DR ISARJI HJ SARUDIN
(DEPUTY RECTOR ACADEMIC & INDUSTRIAL LINK 2017-2020)**

**PROF DR AHMAD FARIS ISMAIL
(DEPUTY RECTOR ACADEMIC AND INTERNATIONALISATION
2020-CURRENT)**

A misty mountain landscape with a house visible in the foreground. The scene is hazy, with layers of mountains and dense forests. In the lower-left foreground, the dark silhouette of a tree branch is visible. In the lower-middle ground, a house with a tiled roof is partially obscured by trees. The overall atmosphere is serene and quiet.

“
There are two blessings
which many people lose:
(They are) health and
free time for doing
good.”

(Sahih Bukhari)

INTRODUCTION

Although initially small in terms of student enrolment, from its inception, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) has always dreamed big. From a humble beginning of 153 students as its first intake in 1983, IIUM now has almost 30,000 students from foundation to doctorate levels, from more than 100 countries. From one small temporary campus of 11 hectares, IIUM now spans around 700 hectares in its 3 campuses of Gombak, Kuantan and Pagoh, another 200 hectares in its Gambang campus hosting the Centre of Foundation Studies and a more modest Kuala Lumpur campus. A full-fledged preparatory campus of our own is testimony to how far IIUM has grown.

Almost 4 decades since its establishment, IIUM has been offering academic programmes that are of high quality and international standards. IIUM alumni have gone on to work in prominent positions across the globe, to be respected academics, to be social activists and to be pillars of society, among others.

The academic programmes have been crafted based on an understanding of the Philosophy, Vision and Mission of the University. However, developments in the local and global arenas, especially disruption in technology and life post-pandemic, require that these programmes be reviewed to continue making IIUM a prominent player in higher education across the world. Specifically, IIUM graduates

should continue to make waves as leaders for positive change and advancement in their society in addition to their areas of expertise.

To that effect, the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF) is developed. Re-establishing the 7 mission statements as one of the backbones of our *raison d'être*, the framework seeks to offer a comprehensive educational experience for IIUM students that will equip them with useful knowledge and specialised skills, while committed to Islamic values and practices imbued with integrity, as befit a *khalifah*, even in a volatile and uncertain world.

The academic review should not be done piecemeal at the programme level, as per the regular curriculum review. A university level academic review is not simply about doing simultaneous curriculum review of all programmes. It has to go beyond. It requires critically looking at what has been done, reflecting on what is currently being done, to be able to identify our strengths and weaknesses - as a university. It requires being confident enough to innovate in our pedagogical and assessment approaches. It requires the willingness for non-academic agencies to also participate and change, if need be, in order to realise the educational goals set forth. It requires a change of attitude on the role of academics and students, and administrative and management staff alike. In short, it requires a unification such that an organisation as large as the IIUM will be able to move all its elements in tandem in pursuit of yet more excellence, beyond the normal academic goal posts.

Much has been discussed on various platforms but they have not been tangibly translated into how our academic programmes are being run. A large part of that is due to the non-existence of a framework connecting these parts together, and perhaps the reluctance of certain quarters to adapt to the way and the pace needed to continue leading the way.

A framework is only worth its while if it is fully embraced - both intellectually and also in the actions of those involved. Hence this book does not just present what the framework is about (Section 4), but it discusses some of the action plans needed to make it work. The *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF) for IIUM academic programmes is informed by current practices (Section 3), and among other things they emphasised not only the necessity of critically reviewing the existing programmes, but also demands a transformation of the whole institution (Section 5).

The University counts among its alumni prominent figures in various nations, but we cannot rest on our laurels. Disruptions, in its various forms, continue to happen in the world. Our graduates should not be trained only to function in the world that they know now, but they should be equipped to handle the various disruptions on multiple levels in their future. In fact, if a positive disruption (e.g. an innovation that eliminates poverty) is initiated by any one of our alumni, then we can indeed be confident that the University is leading the way.

MOVING FORWARD WITH THE PHILOSOPHY, VISION AND MISSION

The University level academic review is braced by the Philosophy, Vision and Mission of the University which seek to reform the Muslim *Ummah* by Islamising Human Knowledge, integrating Revelation and Reason, such that every action is an act of worship (*'ibādah*).

The philosophy of the University was inspired by the recommendations of the first World Conference on Muslim Education held in Mecca in A.H. 1398/ A.D. 1977. The spirit of this philosophy is based on the Holy *Qur'ān*, in particular the five verses revealed to the Prophet Muhammad SAW namely *Al-'Alaq*, verses 1 – 5:

*Read! In the name of thy Lord and Cherisher,
Who created Created man, out of a leech-like clot
Read! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful
He Who taught (the use of) the Pen
Taught man that which he knew not*

According to this philosophy, knowledge shall be propagated in the spirit of *Tawhīd*, leading towards the recognition of Allah as the Absolute Creator and Master of mankind. The spirit behind this recognition of Allah as the Lord of the Worlds (*Rabb al-ālamīn*) represents the apex in the hierarchy of knowledge. Thus, all disciplines of knowledge should lead towards subservience of this truth.

This is because knowledge is a form of trust (*amānah*) from Allah to humankind, and hence man should utilise knowledge according to Allah's will in performing his role as the servant and vicegerent (*khalīfah*) of Allah on earth.

In this way, the seeking of knowledge is regarded as an act of worship.

Colonialism and secularisation that inundate Muslim *Ummah* which have systematically challenges Islamic institutions, beliefs, and practices, divorcing revelation from everyday activities necessitate the University to reintegrate the three sources of knowledge: revelation (*waḥy*), reason (*'aql*), and the universe (*al kawn*) (Abu Sulayman, 1989).

The strength of the *Ummah* is Islam. Colonialism and the process of secularism in the Muslim world isolate Islam from everyday life of every Muslim, weaken and disintegrate the *Ummah*. Indeed, the world has witnessed the disastrous consequences of the moral failure of secularism, secular modernity, secularised knowledge and secular-humanistic modern civilisation grounded upon the epistemology of autonomous human reason and the ontology of naturalism and materialism (M. Kamal Hasan, 2013).

Secularism and colonialism have demoted the great principles inherent in Islam that is of an active, motivating, and inspiring in directing the spirit and lives of Muslims into a rigid formalism that was incapable of inspiring or of directing the spirit and lives of Muslims. They have impaired Muslim unity and distracting its scholars from the original sources and unsullied fountainheads of Islam. Isolating Islam from everyday life, and twisting it into a dogmatic labyrinth, ensnaring the hearts and minds of many Muslims, reshaping its thinking and clouding their Islamic vision (Faruqi, 1988).

At the intellectual level, the intellectual incursion, change, and disruption that was introduced by secularism, especially in the social sciences and the humanities, was of such enormous proportions as to make the Muslims either overlook Islamic thought and legacy or, at best, to simply study it and treat it as an ancient phenomenon neither needed by nor relevant to contemporary life. Establishment of these sciences was in accordance with Western circumstances and goals and rooted in its ideological worldview. Hence, these sciences reflect the Western-centric values, concepts, and beliefs, upon which all Western aspects of behaviour, activity, and social institutions are established. While these disciplines are acceptable and compatible with Western objectives, they may not be compatible with Islamic values (Abu Sulayman, 1989).

IIUM is to reverse the secularisation process, to Islamicise human knowledge by reintegrating Revelation and Reason such that every action is an *'ibādah*.



Abdul Hamid Ahmad Abu Sulayman, IIUM second Rector defines Islamisation of Human Knowledge (IOHK):

"as a plan to reformulate Islamic thought, using as its starting point Islamic beliefs and Islam's humanitarian, global, and civilizational principles based on tawhid and deputation. The plan aims at recapturing the positive, comprehensive Islamic vision, with a view to reforming the approach to education, built on an indissoluble integration of divine and human knowledge. The plan addresses the reality of human life on earth with the aim of realizing the purposes of Islamic Law [*Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah*] – namely, conciliation and welfare – and observes the principles of reason and the divine laws of the universe. It thus, provides the necessary tools to purify and refine Islamic culture and remove the distortions, and the superstition, charlatanism, impurities, and illusions that have infiltrated it. Ultimately, it will provide sound educational and cultural inputs to reform the mental and psychological constitution of Muslim individuals and of the *Ummah* and raise generations endowed with strength, ability, and productivity" (AbuSulayman, 1989).

Mohd. Kamal Hassan, the third Rector of IIUM, added it is important to reiterate that the processes of Islamisation of Human Knowledge at IIUM entail a two-pronged reformatory approach, namely:

- the reform of the curriculum of the University, and
- the refinement of the character and work ethics of the students, scholars and administration staff of the university

The process of intellectual reform of Islamisation of Human Knowledge requires the inculcation of Islam's spiritual and moral values in the mind, personality and conduct of the Muslim academic, administrator and scholar as expected in an Islamic university. It is to provide the necessary alternatives to those secular or agnostic or atheistic paradigms of knowledge which have produced remarkable advancements in science and technology. These advancements which on one hand are beneficial to human society, have also precipitated or are perhaps even responsible for the unparalleled spiritual crises, moral decadence, global economic and political and injustices, disastrous and unprecedented ecological problems of grave proportions.

The great Islamic scholars of the past are well-known for integrating profound scholarship with excellent moral and spiritual attributes such as piety, humility, aversion to self-glorification or self-centred egoism or conceit, disregard for human adulation or flattery, and constant vigilance against worldly temptations and other diseases of the heart.

Reintegration of revealed values, norms and ethics (*'aqidah, shari'ah and akhlāq*), in the social sciences, human sciences, professional sciences, and also in aspects of the natural sciences that emphasise the unity of "Signs of Allah" in the *Qur'ān* and "Signs of Allah" in the Universe, leading to *'islāh* (reform), *tawazun* (balance) and *falāḥ* (holistic wellbeing or *Sejahtera*).

The enhancement of the integration of *'aqidah, shari'ah and akhlāq* is reflected in the new academic framework introduced, the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF). SAF's overarching principle is a humanising principle, which is the belief in the potential of the human being and putting people first. The educational endeavours are efforts in nurturing human persons that understand his/her relation with his/her Creator, his/her relation with other humans, and his/her relation with the universe.

IIUM should not be content being a player only within the Islamic world. Now entering its fourth decade of existence, IIUM should also be more prominent in the non-Muslim dominant countries. This means pushing the integration and internationalisation agenda further. These two agenda cannot be fully attained if we choose to maintain working mainly among the Muslim countries or to be apprehensive and suspicious of measures that supposedly originate from the non-Muslim communities.

However, when we go out into the truly international arena, we have to be able to sift through the many scenarios and ideologies and offer them viable alternatives via the Islamic perspective. This means the **Islamisation** agenda has to be strengthened and offer **pragmatic solutions** to the entire world, not just the Islamic nations, in tandem with *Raḥmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*.

IIUM will only be able to truly lead the way if we are comprehensively excellent. This includes offering undergraduate programmes that are relevant to the needs of the community such that our graduates will become highly sought-after, as they also become our true ambassadors to the external community of what the 7 missions embody.

The required actions to realise the vision to reform the Ummah is elaborated in the 7 mission statements. Each programme should ask itself in what way does it support the 7 missions? For programmes that have been running for some time, what has been their impact towards IIUM's *raison d'être*? Will this impact continue to manifest itself when evaluated against the 7 missions? Given the changing situation in the world, if the programme does not make any substantial changes, will the programme remain relevant while being able to fulfill the 7 missions, contributing towards the realisation of our vision?

These are not easy questions to answer. They require not just a glut of empirical data, but also a lot of soul-searching. But answer them we must, if we are to fulfill the *amanah* inherent when we choose to join this organisation called the International Islamic University Malaysia.

A RENEWED NORMAL

Humanising the world of education

Just like in the pre-industrial days of the 1700s when education (or what was left of it) was disrupted into an assembly-line model of the 4Ms (Manpower- Mind-Machine-Money), the next wave of educational disruption is to humanise education yet again, in an increasingly inhumane environment, where schools have become mere factories for mass production of human capital or workers as input for further production process (*homo economicus*). This is an outcome of the secular conventional model that is not acceptable in the nurturing of the "wise" person as reflected by the notion of *homo sapiens*. Consequent to the re-emergence of *homo sapiens* against the background of the Anthropocene era, the change must, by and large, present a long-term solution to the current precarious state of affairs, following on from the Holocene era. In IIUM context, it is perhaps also not inappropriate to extend this concept further to *Homo Islamicus* - the holistic human person or an *Insān Sejahtera* who has the wisdom and the competencies to contribute to the betterment of society, which has been the vision and mission of IIUM.

Activities that are regarded as anthropocentric in substance, namely those that further deepen the Anthropocene, will have no place in reshaping the future. They are, on the contrary, a threat to humanity and its survival. As such, the nature and meaning of "work-live-play," as we know it today, will have to be drastically redefined, not unlike the introduction of slavery or forced labour at the height of the industrial revolutions with their long-standing dehumanising consequences, and has become more relevant with movements such as "Black Lives Matter" and the Hong Kong protests. View this within the context of the pandemic (which tends to be no less dehumanising enforced through lockdowns and physical distancing for instance), this is one lesson that must be taken seriously to heart. There is simply no room for another myopic mistake in the name of progress and development that glosses over what is unknown or unanticipated, intentionally or otherwise. This time, the competencies to predict, forecast and build scenarios are imperative before putting lofty ideas into action. It is one of the new skill sets that must not be missed in the futures of education.

Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (573—634) was the first caliph. He was the Prophet's closest companion and adviser. He spent his wealth in the service of Islam; divesting himself from his riches when he was elected caliph.

IIUM since two years ago, has adopted "humanising education" as its main strategic goal. It is well documented in the IIUM Roadmap 2019-2020 translating into a model of *Insān Sejahtera*, which are well-aligned to the vision and mission of IIUM. Among other things, the mission statements included an explicit statement on the need for sustainable development whereby the desired result is a state of society where living conditions and resources are mobilised to meet human needs without undermining the integrity and stability of the natural ecosystem. The aspiration is civilisational.

The pandemic is a reminder that disruptions will occur - and the disruptions may be either positive or negative. IIUM graduates then, should be equipped to face an uncertain world - not just in terms of knowledge and competencies, but also attitude. IIUM graduates should be able to cope with adversity to come out better than ever. If ever their adversity quotient is measured, it would be high.

In this spirit of humanising education in the IIUM mold, the tagline of the university reflects the characteristics of the people in the university - be they students or staff. The core elements of "*Khalifah. Amānah. Iqra'. Raḥmatan lil-Ālamīn*" (KhAIR) are further adopted as our **graduate attributes**.



KHALĪFAH

A *khalīfah's* role is to lead humankind to the right path of Allah which is *al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* as well as to become an exemplar to others. All human beings regardless of their beliefs and religions are appointed as *khalīfah*. One of the important tasks for *khalīfahs* to do then is the *'imārat al-kawn* (construction of the universe), to administer, manage, develop, and flourish.

AMĀNAH

The world is an *amānah* that Allah has given humankind to be fulfilled, bringing peace and harmony to the world. *Amānah* is also an adjective to describe our graduates who are ethical, trustworthy and conscientious in executing their responsibilities in any sphere of life.

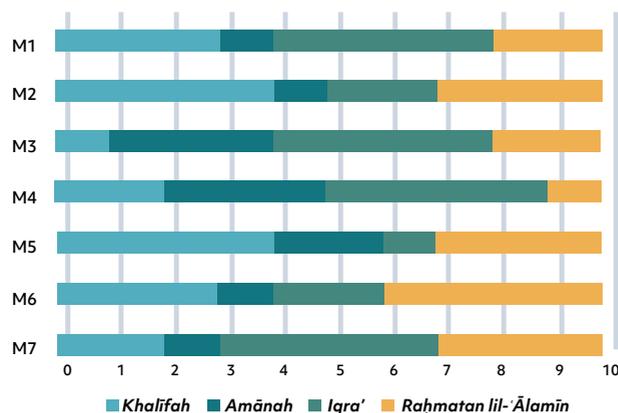
IQRA' BISMIRABBIKALAZI KHALAQ

The pursuit of knowledge in the name of Allah is sacred. The learners who fulfil the *amānah* of knowledge become scholars, who should be the inheritors of the prophets. *Iqra'* is not just about being knowledgeable in a specific area of study, but this attribute also pertains to one who expands on the culture of *iqra'*, spreading knowledge to others, and imparting *hikmah* wisdom.

RAḤMATAN LIL-ĀLAMĪN

Essentially, this attribute speaks to the nature of the graduates who effect change and advancement in humanity via the knowledge, wisdom, and skill sets that they have gained. IIUM graduates aim to do good, and will do good, to all people regardless of creed; and to do good for all the worlds - nature, animals and the built environment.

The graduate attributes acronym of **KhAIR** is Arabic for "good." The *Qur'ān* has used the term "*al-khair*" or its plural form "*khairaat*" in many instances, emphasizing that doing good is a mission for everyone.



KhAIR and the 7 IIUM Missions

A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE

Preamble

Sejahtera is a multi-faceted Malay term that does not neatly lend itself to the simple English translation of "well-being." It is a delicate balancing of the 10 SPICES that make up *Sejahtera*: spiritual, physico-psychological, intellectual, cognitive, cultural, ethical, emotional, ecological, economic, and societal.

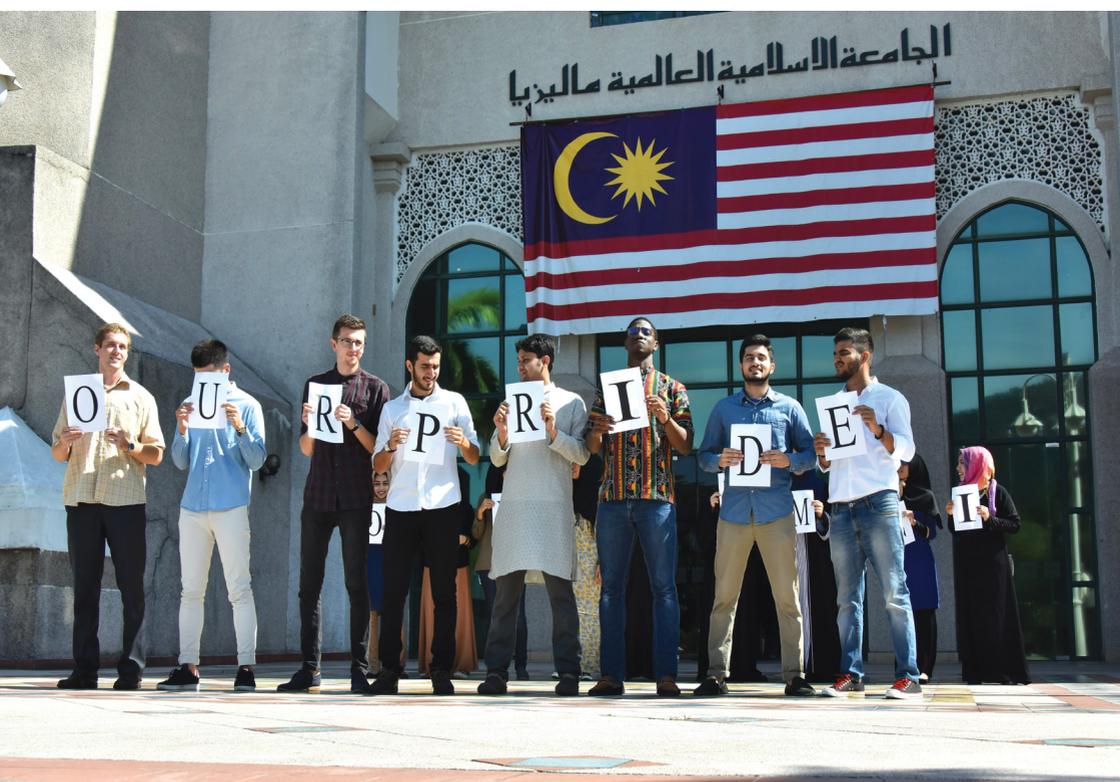
The SAF puts together the various elements that are major parts of a higher education institution to create a coherent "*jami'ah insāniah*" system. Cognisant that although students flock to campus initially to go through an academic programme, the SAF views the entire student experience in addition to the formal curriculum as core towards the students becoming and embodying *Insān Sejahtera*. Therefore, the SAF highlights the roles that each element plays in nurturing **holistic human beings** - the University refuses to be a degree mill intent only on simply producing employable graduates without "soul".

The generic SAF is applicable to all IIUM academic programmes - from Foundation to Doctoral levels. The relevant diagram is to be read together with the Guiding Principles detailed out in Section 4.

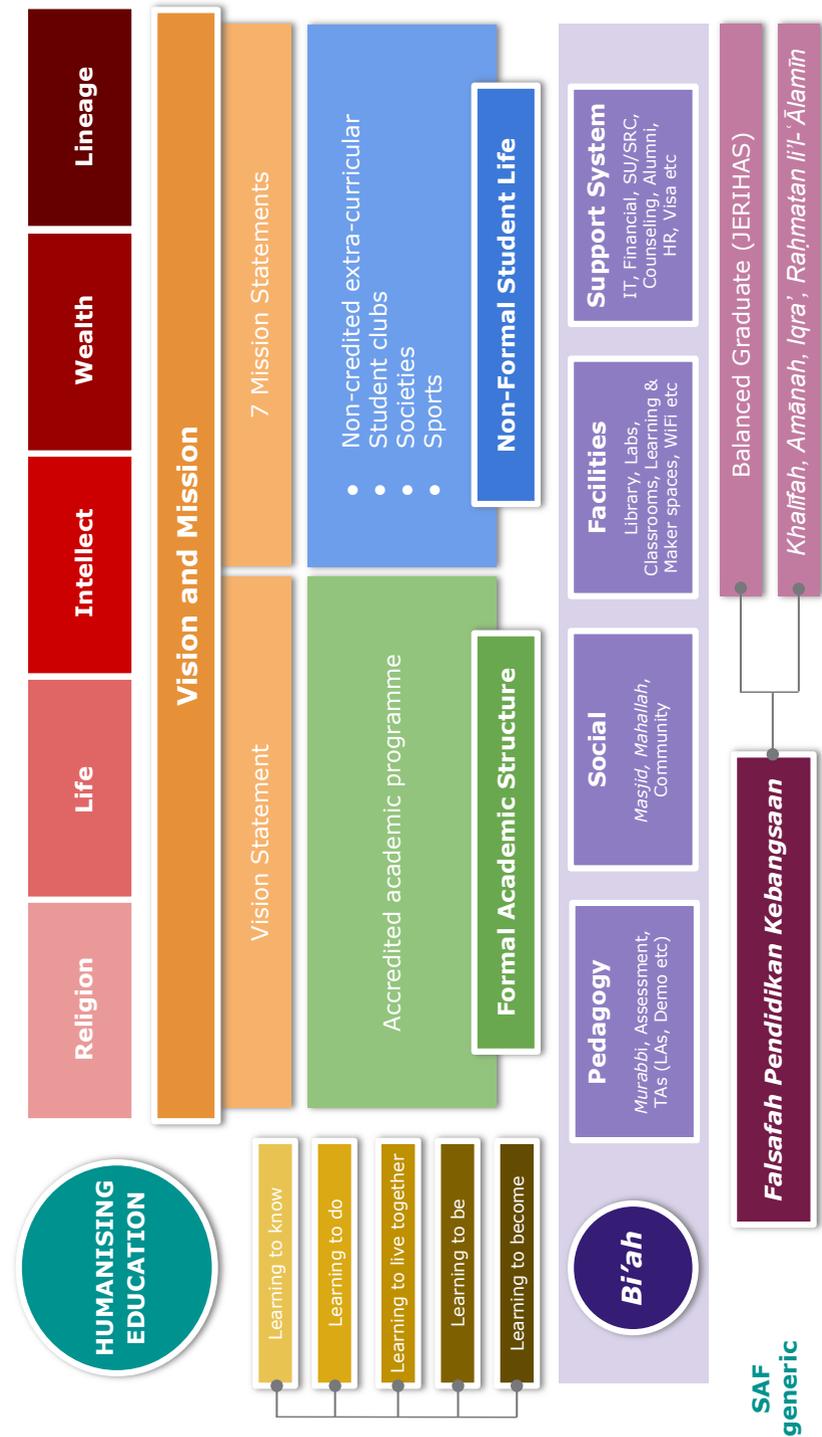
SAF is not simply about academic programmes. SAF is about putting together the elements of IIUM as a higher education institution that will provide for an educational experience that is transformational. Transformative education leads to change of attitude and worldview, personal psychological growth, and successful adaptation while building upon the personal experiences of the learner. SAF ensures that this occurs in a flourishing Islamic environment.

Indeed, SAF is also a reminder for the community to engage in activities that are well-aligned to the right path, and to be united and stronger together, for becoming an excellent academic institution is an obligation of a university bearing the term "Islamic" in its name.

SAF is not about achieving certain statistics, chasing some "objective" numbers purported as indicators of quality, or about going after accolades, especially the commercial ones. SAF is a testament of the University's commitment to the true nature of education - that of discovering and propagating knowledge that would bring about change and advancement to the self and to society. In our world, knowledge that would bring us, as complete persons closer to our Allah *Rabbul-ālamīn*.



THE GENERIC SEJAHTERA ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK



The *Sejahtera* Academic Framework is IIUM's articulation of humanising education in the post-pandemic and post-materialistic era, where humanising education is the enterprise of knowing and glorifying Allah and seeking knowledge and putting it to beneficial use in the society for the achievement of *Rahmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*. It is values-based.

The Arabic word for 'religion' (*deen*, Arabic root د ي ن) is strongly associated with spiritual intellectual and civilised life, with its four primary meanings being mutual obligation, submission or acknowledgment, judicial authority, and natural inclination (Douglas and Shaikh, 2004). *Deen* expresses the idea of obligation toward Allah, based on natural inclination towards Him. A derivation of this root is the Arabic word for city— *madinah*. A city is a community of complex social relations and transactions based on responsible and reciprocal fulfillment of obligations, submission to civil judgment and authority. Another derivation is the word *tamaddana*, meaning to found cities, or to humanise thought, while the word *tamaddun* itself means civilisation or refinement of manners (Douglas & Shaikh, 2004). For people to be civilised, they need education. And in IIUM, this education is grounded in the philosophy of knowledge that is firmly rooted in Islam, the *deen*, a way of life.

Hence, humanising education here means that students are not seen as products, but as vital and active forces of the University's existence, where students co-create their learning experience and their educational environment for glorifying Allah and seeking knowledge and putting it to beneficial use in the society for the achievement of *Rahmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*. As active participants, students are also responsible and accountable for their actions, as part of the learning process, thus making them wiser.

Humanising education here also means that instructors are given the opportunity and support to also develop and prosper. They are not robots, or even robot-like, who repetitively teach a course or conduct research simply to fulfill their annual performance goal set up by another party. Instead, they generate and propagate knowledge, beyond the walls of their classrooms or offices, and engage in effecting progress in the community, on or off campus.

In a humanising educational organisation, the other members in the University community are also engaged to provide an ecosystem that celebrates knowledge and activities related to it. The importance of staff members is not measured by their position, but by their commitment towards providing the best, as befit their own roles of *khalifah*. In other words, the performance of staff is measured by their impactful contributions.

With this overarching principle in mind, the elements of SAF are briefly described below:

Maqāṣid Ash-Sharīah

The concept of *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharīah* does not just inform the decisions made with regards to the administration of the academic programmes and University affairs, but it also underlies the values to be embedded in both the formal and informal academic curricula. It is the *raison d'être* of the University. *Hifz al-dīn, an-nafs, al-'aql, al-mal and an-nasl* is loosely translated as preservation and promotion of faith, life, intellect, wealth and lineage. They are also the five essentials of human existence.

Vision and Mission

The Vision and the 7 mission statements of IIUM as preserved in the IIUM Constitution provide another layer of inspiration for creating the IIUM transformative educational experience. Academic activities - be them curriculum development and implementation, research, publication or consultation - should endeavour to embrace the vision and mission.

Pillars of Learning

The pillars of learning as espoused by UNESCO are adopted into the SAF. Learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, learning to live together and learning to become (i.e., to transform oneself and society) are not just learning outcomes to be put on paper, but they inform our pedagogical practices and co-curricular activities, emphasising IIUM's role in nurturing the person and developing the *ummah*.

Formal Academic Structure

This element constitutes the formal academic structures, forming a major, if not the most important, part in a student's educational experience while in IIUM. Students come to IIUM in pursuit of a formal academic qualification, and the University is accountable to offer them high quality education, evidenced via accredited academic programmes. The structure of the programmes will differ for the different levels of studies, but the educational goals remain the same.

Non-formal student life

The non-credited student activities also shape students. The formal academic load should not consume the entire time of the students' tenure in IIUM. Cognizant of this, there should be structured or semi-structured activities or programmes that are non-credited and voluntary, yet will contribute to the students' educational experience beyond the classrooms and the campus. This may be in the form of (but not limited to) student clubs, organised sports, cultural activities, community engagement projects, etc.

Bi'ah (ecosystem)

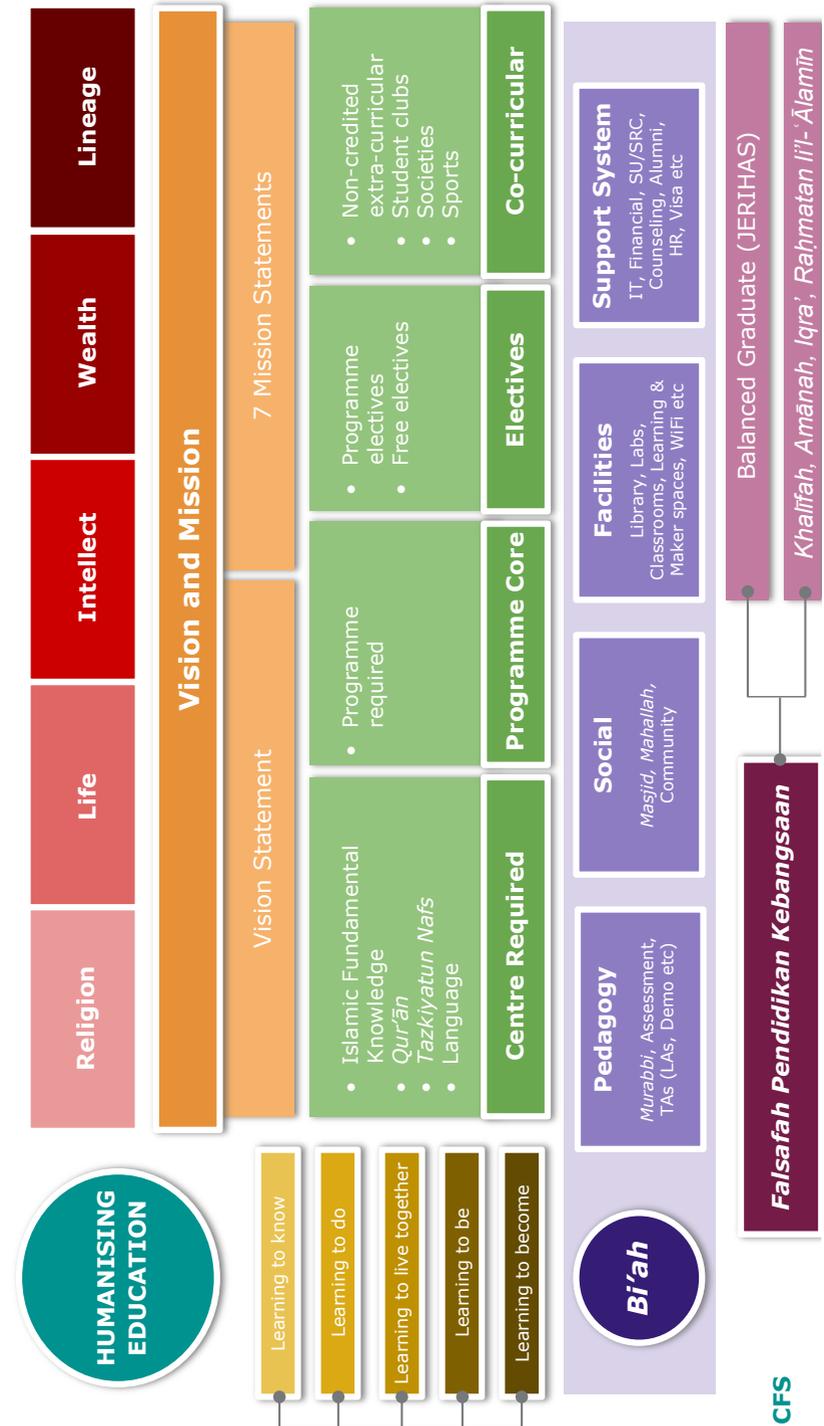
Classes do not exist in a vacuum. The *bi'ah* is the ecosystem that does not simply support, but may at times, be drivers towards realising the transformative education process.

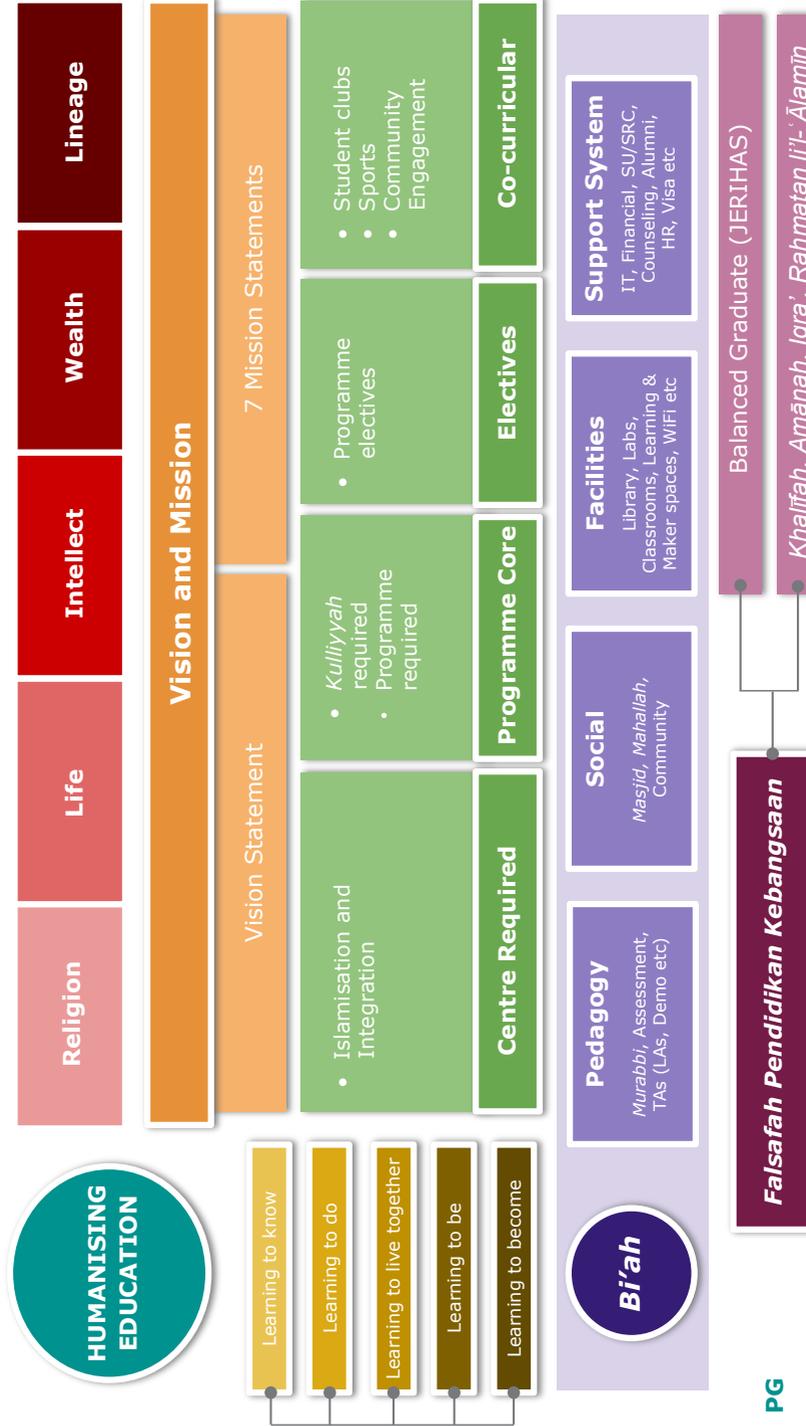
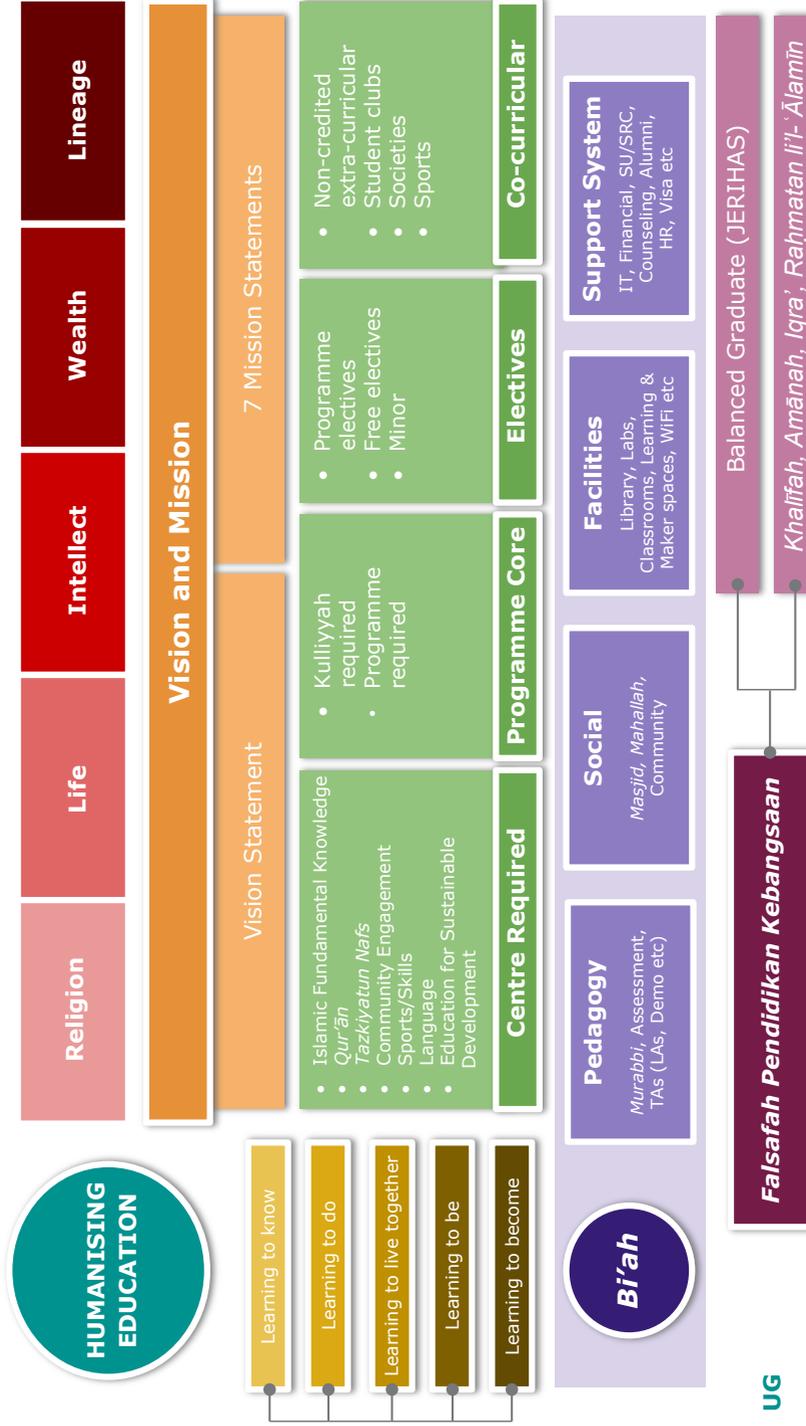
- on the surface, emphasising on the pedagogy and not the person seems counter to the humanising principle. SAF intentionally focuses on the pedagogy and subsumes the person under it as the conduct of classes may not be fully dependent on the instructor. For transformative learning to happen, the instructors take the back seat, allowing students to explore, guiding as and when necessary. The nature of how this is done requires the instructor to have a firm understanding of pedagogical principles in assuming the *murabbi* role. In constructive alignment, the assessment is also a major part of the process. SAF also acknowledges the role played by non-academic assuming the teaching roles, such as the teaching assistants, the demonstration leaders, the lab technicians and the clinical trainers. Indeed, it takes the whole campus community to educate a student.
- the physical space is as much a part of the *bi'ah* as the social environment. Hence, the roles of the *masjid*, the *mahallah* and the community should be considered and highlighted in the transformational education environment.
- facilities will continue to be an integral part of any higher education institution. They should not just be available, but they should be maintained and upgraded whenever possible to ensure the University's capability in offering high quality educational experiences.
- the support system consists of the agencies that not all students may not come in direct contact with but which remain essential in the University's quest to offer the best educational experiences to the students, and the best working environment to the academic, professional and administrative staff.

Graduate attributes

When all is said and done, at the end of their academic journey, students will leave the University. As IIUM alumni, it is expected that they will embody these graduate attributes exemplified under the core elements of *Khalifah*, *Amānah*, *Iqra'* and *Rahmatan lil-'Ālamīn*. How this is manifested will differ depending on the level of study. Regardless of whether they are pre-degree or post-graduate students, they are nurtured to become balanced individuals who uphold the *tawhīd* principle and contribute towards the community, making IIUM a beacon in manifesting the *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan* (FPK, National Philosophy of Education). The balanced IIUM graduate will encompass the expanded JERI+HAS domains explicated in the FPK (refer to section on FPK).

THE SEJAHTERA ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK FOR FOUNDATION STUDIES





“
Knowledge is that
which benefits not that
which is memorized.”

(Imam Shafi'i)



A CONVERSATION WITH OUR MURABBI PROFESSOR EMERITUS TAN SRI DR. MOHD KAMAL HASSAN

Report by: Zainurin Abdul Rahman

On the 24th January 2019 representatives from the Office of Knowledge for Change and Advancement (KCA), the Office of Communication, Advocacy and Promotion (OCAP) accompanied by Dr. Nadzrah Ahmad from Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (KIRKHS) made a short trip to Institute Latihan Islam Malaysia (ILIM) in Bangi, Selangor to meet one of the most popular and influential figures in IIUM, Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dr. Mohd Kamal Hassan.

Upon our arrival, we were ushered to a meeting room to wait for his arrival. We were a bit apprehensive about the kind of reception that we would be getting. With butterflies in our stomachs, we quietly ask questions to ourselves; how should we greet him? What should we say first? And how would he react to our questions? All our concerns disappear as soon as we heard Professor Kamal's a gentle voice giving salam as he entered the room.

After exchanging pleasantries and a short *ta'aruf* we began our discussion, which revolved around his years in IIUM, how he spends his time now, and finally the history as well as the relevance of the IIUM song. Professor Kamal spoke fondly of his days in IIUM, his plans and achievement and the people who worked for and with him. He also spoke highly of IIUM ideals, vision and mission. We believe that, to his mind these features of IIUM reflect the identity of IIUM just as the wearing of *songkok* and *tudung* during IIUM convocation. In terms of his present activity, we were quietly surprised when he mentioned that he has just started his attachment to ILIM which is on voluntary basis. While many figures at his age feel contented resting at home, true to the spirit of sharing and seeking knowledge, Professor Kamal still finds time to share his knowledge and wisdom with others at no costs.

Professor Kamal's tone of voice changed to a more one serious one as we started talking about the conception, composition and more importantly the selection as well as the meaning of words and phrases in the lyrics of IIUM song. We felt that he took the task of coming up with IIUM song very seriously. The song, to him, should not be sung merely as part of a ceremony. Although he agreed that the IIUM song should be identified as "IIUM anthem", he believes that the meaning of the song should be understood and internalized by all because the song is loaded with messages. At the very least, it can unite IIUM community, wherever and whoever they are now.

Our discussion with Professor Kamal progressed amicably and interspersed with reminder and laughter. His comments, advices and suggestions were well-elaborated and he even invited us to exchange ideas with him, quite like a father talking to his children. Throughout our discussion with Professor Kamal, we sense that his love and concern for IIUM has never changed or diminished. We feel that all he wants is for IIUM to live up to its expectations and to succeed in providing education for the ummah. As for the immediate future of IIUM, he agrees with the initiatives of the present Rector's office and with the right support from IIUM community, Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dato' Dzulkefli Abdul Razak might just be the right person to lead IIUM into the future.

The discussion ended with Dr. Zulkefli Muhammed Yusof from KCA handing over a basket of fruits to Professor Kamal as a token of appreciation. A small gift for someone who has given so much to IIUM.

LEADING THE WAY: THE PHILOSOPHY OF IIUM SONG

By: Prof. Emeritus Dr. Kamal Hassan and Dr. Nadzrah Ahmad

Introduction

The IIUM Song entitled Leading the Way was composed by the late Johan Nawawi back in 2007. One of its primary objectives is to strengthen the emotional bond among IIUM community. It is rather emotional instead of intellectual because the melody appeals to the heart, not to the intellect. The song highlights the ideals of IIUM which includes its vision, mission and principles. It also aims to foster the *ukhuwwah Islāmiyyah* among Muslim brothers and sisters. From an aesthetic viewpoint, the song has its own uniqueness. It starts with the melody of chirping birds, which put the listener into the state of calmness. Its overall melody is also a mix between contemporary and traditional Malay melody. The main themes of the song are described below:

Leading the way

The song starts off with the implied objective of a *khalifah*, to lead humankind to the right path of God. Today, the zeitgeist of humanism of our modern world has however, granted everybody the right to lead humankind to his or her path. As far as Islam is concerned, from the perspective of a Muslim, the right path is one, which is *al-ṣirāt al-mustaqīm*. The right path aims to steer those who willingly tread it back to God, not leading humankind away from God.

Enlightening the future

The philosophy of nihilism and absurdism today has painted the world pessimistically dark and bleak. A large deal of its philosophy owes its emergence to the strand of post-modernism. Post-modernism has decreed the principle of deification of reason and the rejection of revelation as its essential drive. It also brought the crises of existence, which as has been professed by Protagoras, due to the role of *homo mensura* i.e. that man is the measure of all things. It is only by following the right path that we can enlighten the future and develop optimism.

Sharing the wisdom

The *Qur'ān* has called upon humankind to follow the right path by submitting themselves to the Divine will. It is by following the revelation that we may attain wisdom, for revelation is also *ḥikmah* from Allah SWT. The *Qur'ān* also urges Muslims to spread the spirit of Islam with "*ḥikmah* and good advice."

Internalising the spirit of Islam

The quintessential spirit of Islam is *tawḥīd* that is the divine uncompromising oneness of God. The element of *tawḥīd* is the fundamental basis for an Islamic worldview, and that it must be let permeated through the whole system.

Relying on Revelation and reason

The primary essence of IIUM is the integration of revelation and reason. In the epistemology of Islam, knowledge is not received only by reason, but also by the virtue of revelation. Revelation and reason are not two separate phenomena, but rather integrated.

Readiness to excel and prevail (We shall excel we shall prevail)

The line gives the promise of an ultimate success. It also implies the struggle against ungodly forces such as *kufur*, hypocrisy, *nafs*, materialism, egoism et cetera. It is a call to excel and prevail over these obstacles. On the other hand, excel also means comprehensive excellence, which is one of the mission of IIUM.

Merging faith and knowledge

Some of those who have knowledge today believe humankind should depart from God. They believe things can be solved with sole reason and science. Islam however, views reason and science not as an infallible epistemology. Therefore, it has decreed that knowledge which is sought by the learners, must be grounded on faith. It is fundamental because the revelation also comes from God, and therefore its validity is safeguarded.

Carrying the roles of *Khalīfah* (We are the *khalīfah*)

All the tasks and objectives are incumbent upon us because we are the *khalīfah*. All human beings regardless of their beliefs and religions are appointed as *khalīfah*. One of the important task for us to do is the *'imārat al-kawn*, to administer, manage, develop, and flourish.

Fulfilling the *Amānah* (We will fulfil the *amānah*)

The world is an *amānah* that Allah has given us to be fulfilled. We are obliged to fulfil the role of bringing peace and harmony to the world.

Making this world a better place (Together, let's make the world a better place)

The line serves as a rallying cry for all humankind to make the world a better place. It includes everybody, not only the Muslims but the non-Muslim as well, to work together and making the world a more inhabitable place. The world has to be worked out to make it a better place because today, human beings are suffering, devoid from spirituality and overpowered by materialism.

Upholding the culture of learning (Forever expand the culture of *Iqra'*)

The concept of *Iqra'* is so foundational in Islam. It can be seen from the fact that the first revelation being revealed to the Messenger SAW is to read, based on surah *al-ʿAlaq*. But the first revelation does not stop at read or recite; it follows to read and recite on the name of God. Allah is the one who knows, human beings are the one without knowledge. The pen as the instrument of pursuing knowledge is also sanctify by God. That implies that the pursuit of knowledge is sacred. Knowledge is also an *amānah*. The learners who fulfil the *amānah* of knowledge becomes scholars. In Islam, scholars occupied a great position. After the prophets, it is the scholars in the hierarchy. Scholars should be the inheritors of

the prophets. But unfortunately, today scholars are divided from prophethood. To some of them, God is superfluous, and they therefore departed from the path of God. This is exactly the phenomenon revealed in the *Qurʾān* when Allah says: he views himself as self-sufficient (*an raʾāhu astaghna*). So, to expand the culture of *Iqra'* is vital to become, not only the culture of Muslims, but also the culture of humanity.

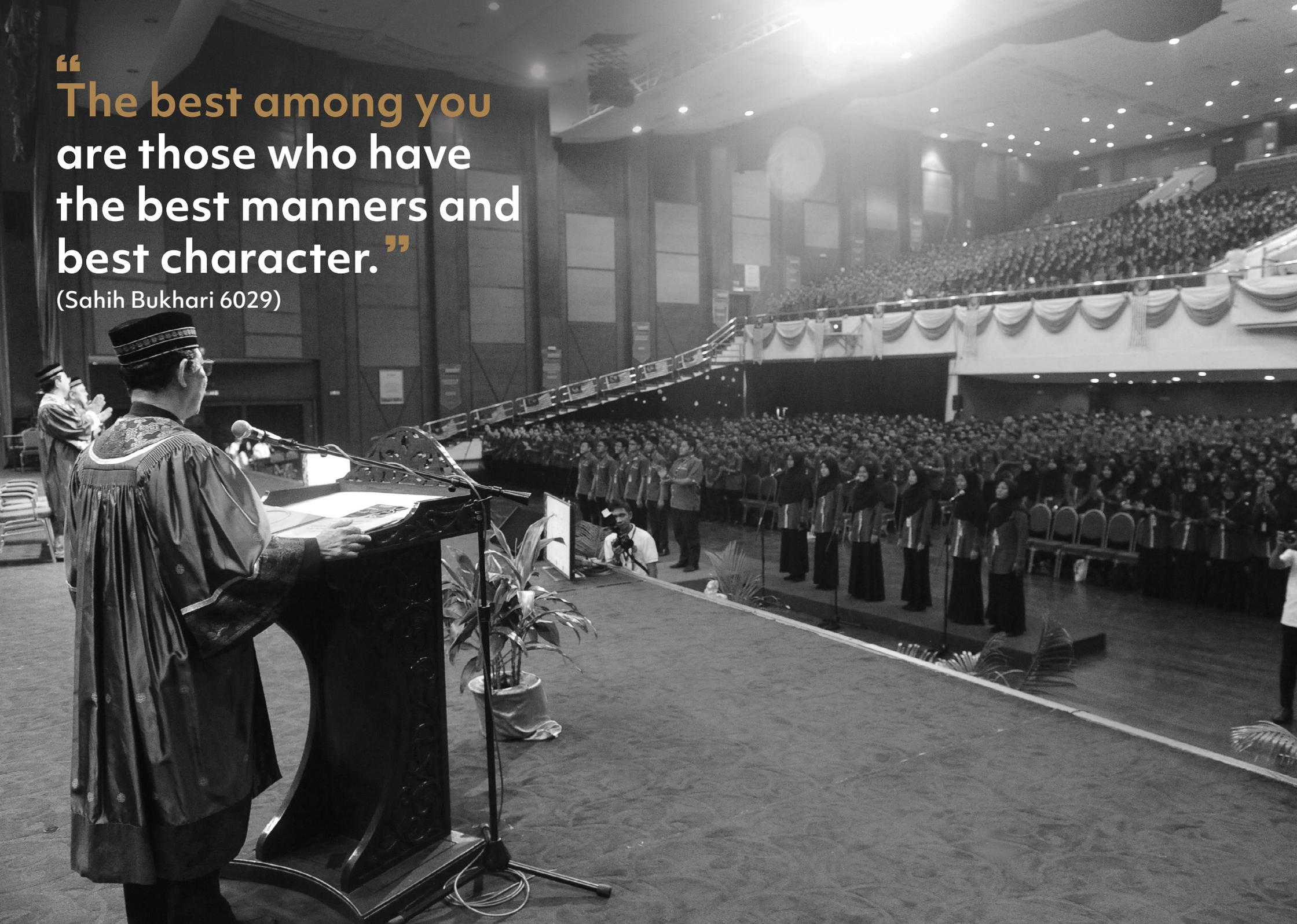
Realising the meaning of *Raḥmatan lil-ʿĀlamīn* (IIUM is to realise the meaning of *Raḥmatan lil-ʿĀlamīn*)

IIUM is one of the educational instruments to realise the mercy to all mankind. Here, one of the manifestations of *rahmah* is the integration of revelation and reason. Besides that, the concept of *Iqra'*, submission, *sharīʿah*, *aqīdah* and *akhlāq* are all mercy from God to humankind as well. Mercy should not be reduced to tolerance per se. Its source is from the Messenger SAW himself, who is the embodiment of *Raḥmatan lil-ʿĀlamīn*; his sayings, deeds and actions all are mercy as well.



“
The best among you
are those who have
the best manners and
best character.”

(Sahih Bukhari 6029)



INTRODUCTION

The framework is a conscious attempt to pull together the foundation of IIUM (its mission and vision), the *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharīah* and the contemporary and future issues of the world today, both at the national and international levels.

Education provides a platform for various parties to come up with solutions to what is happening in the world. However there should be no “one-size-fits-all” when it comes to specific approaches or content or even curriculum structure, but decisions made are done so after a careful consideration of institutional, local and global perspectives.

Hence, it is important to have an institutional perspective of the various inspirational forces that have shaped the framework. This section will interpret the major concepts that are in the framework, contextualising them to IIUM.

Fatima Al-Fihri
(b. 800) used her wealth to found the oldest library in Fez, which was a part of the al-Qarawiyyin mosque. The mosque was established not just as a centre of worship but as a centre of study.

THE NATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

The statement of the National Philosophy of Education or better known as *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan* states,

"Pendidikan di Malaysia adalah suatu usaha berterusan (lifelong) ke arah memperkembangkan lagi potensi individu secara menyeluruh (holistic) dan bersepadu (integrated) untuk mewujudkan Insan yang seimbang dan harmonis dari segi intelek, rohani, emosi dan jasmani berdasarkan kepercayaan dan kepatuhan kepada Tuhan. Usaha ini adalah bagi melahirkan warganegara Malaysia yang berilmu pengetahuan, berketerampilan, berakhlak mulia, bertanggungjawab dan berkeupayaan mencapai kesejahteraan diri serta memberi sumbangan terhadap keharmonian dan kemakmuran keluarga, masyarakat dan negara"

The IIUM *Sejahtera Academic Framework* is grounded on the University's vision and mission and the *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan* (FPK). The FPK statement highlights several key elements which are:

- i. the development of individuals' four domain potentials, JERI i.e. physical (*Jasmani*), emotional (*Emosi*), spiritual (*Rohani*), and intellectual (*Intelektual*); the University expands this concept to include the Islamic Philosophy of Education domains which are H (*Hamba Allah*), A (*Alam sekitar*) and S (*Sosial*) - to be referred henceforth as JERIHAS.
- ii. in a holistic, comprehensive, and integrated manner;
- iii. with the aim to produce a complete or perfect *Insān (insān kāmil)*;
- iv. who has a firm belief and faith in God, is obedient, and devoted to Him.

IIUM embodies this under the concept of *Insān Sejahtera*.

To realise this noble aim, the developmental domains of the individual, i.e., physical, emotional, spiritual, intellect, social, environmental and servant of Allah (JERIHAS) need to be well developed to their full potential and aligned to the Islamic values and principles based on the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* through the theory and practice of a balanced and integrated curriculum and co curriculum. What is fostered from such a curriculum would be individuals who possess good health, are physically fit and energetic; have harmonious and stable emotions; pure and strong spirituality; positive mind; high consciousness; are deeply knowledgeable and wise. These individuals are to be educated within the integrated concept of knowledge and education for mastering both the revealed knowledge and the derived human knowledge, to then recognise and be mindful of both types of knowledge. To complete the education process, students' *akhlāq*, values, skills, and attitudes need to be given careful attention

too. An integrated curriculum such as this will be able to produce *Insān Sejahtera*, who will not only attain his or her *kesejahteraan diri*, but to spread it out to enable the society's, environment's and nations' *kesejahteraan* too.

As an *Insān Sejahtera* (*Sejahtera* person), one is responsible to contribute towards the advancement and betterment of all aspects of one's life whether economic, politics or social, for one's family, society and nation, as well as the world. More importantly, in one's endeavours to fulfil this responsibility, one has to limit *fasād* or destruction. The *Insān Sejahtera* shall always strive for development not for material gain alone, but rather for the *kesejahteraan* and equilibrium of the society. This idea of limiting *fasād* is equivalent to the idea of sustainable development - preservation and promotion of the 5Ps (Peace, People, Planet, Property, Partnership).

Hence, IUM lecturers as *murabbis*, besides teaching students to excel in their academic studies or to become experts in their area of study, need to also focus on students' capabilities, resilience, and strength of critical, creative and innovative thinking, the internalisation of values, the discernment of making good and fine judgment, decisions and resolving problems and crisis, and development of pro-social behaviours, concern for and compassionate towards the *kesejahteraan* of the society and environment. The aspiration of the FPK, i.e. in line with the vision and mission of IUM, is to nurture IUM graduates who are responsible and just towards the society, environment, and the *ummah*; and achieving total success (*Falāḥ*) in the world and Hereafter.

Although FPK may be seen as "local" to Malaysia, with its specific reference to "Malaysian citizen", the spirit is not localised, and is applicable to all IUM students. The FPK does not detract from the Islamic Philosophy of Education, which continues to be the basis of the mission and vision of the University. FPK though, is explicitly included in the SAF because it provides a concise and common objectives which may be shared with all, Malaysians and non-Malaysian alike.

MAQĀṢID ASH-SHARĪ'AH

The teachings of Islam as contained in the *Qur'ān* and elaborated by the Prophet (peace be upon him) do not concern only matters of correct belief and good personal behaviour or the affairs of family life no matter how important they are. Rather, those teachings cover all aspects of human life and existence both at the individual and collective levels and throughout the different stages of the human journey in this world. Accordingly, setting up the norms and criteria of good and evil and truth and falsehood and laying down rules and laws to regulate human social, economic and political interactions and relations within and among societies and countries are part and parcel of Islamic teachings and practices. The feature of Islamic teachings and practices clearly underscores the social and communal nature of Islam as a way of life caring for both the individual and the community.

The *Sharī'ah* as enunciated in the noble *Qur'ān* and Prophetic Sunnah in all of its parts is means to;

1. **secure a benefit for the people, and**

2. **protect them against corruption and evil.**

Besides being revealed to benefit human beings and removing them from harm, this is also an indicative of Allah's mercy to humankind.

There are three (3) different categories of the objective of *Sharī'ah*:

a. Essentials: The matters on which the spiritual and worldly affairs of the people depend, to neglect them will lead to total disruption and disorder and it could lead to bad ego-centric consequences.

b. Complementary: The matters of which a kind of interests or benefits which leads to hardship of the individual or hardship to community if it is neglected but does not lead to the total disorder of normal life. The aim is removing hardship. For example, *rukhsah* in *'ibādah*.

c. Embellishment: The matter of which its realisation leads to improvement and the attainment of desirable means. For example, the observance of cleanliness in personal appearance and in *'ibādah*, moral virtues. the disappearances will not interrupt the normal life; however, it might lead to the lack of comfort in life.

These five values of the "Essential" to human existence are:

1. **Preservation and protection of *ad-dīn* (Religion)**
2. **Preservation and protection of *an-nafs* (Life)**
3. **Preservation and protection of *al-'aql* (Intellect)**
4. **Preservation and protection of *al-mal* (Wealth)**
5. **Preservation and protection of *an-nasl* (Lineage)**

Collectively, they are deemed as the five essentials of human existence.

Preservation and Protection of *ad-dīn* (Religion)

The word *ad-dīn* signifies 'religion' in the widest sense, extending over all that pertains to its doctrinal contents and their practical implications, as well as to one's attitude towards God. (Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'ān*, KL: 2011, p. 69). In other words, it includes what we should think and believe about God and other articles of faith as well as how we should behave and act in our worldly life. It is a way of life.

In the Islamic worldview, it is religion and religious faith that establish and maintain the essential vertical bond between human beings and God, their Creator and ultimate Sustainer (or *Rabb*). This connection with God is at the origin of all human spirituality and ethics and has far-reaching implications for human life and existence in the world.

Just as religion builds and enhances our vertical bond with our Creator who is the Absolute and most Sublime being, it lays down the values, norms and rules that shall govern our behaviour and actions and regulate our horizontal relationships and interactions with fellow human beings and the natural world with all that exists therein. Both types of human beings' connection with God and His creation have a definitively spiritual character no matter how strong or weak it may be.



“ Knowledge exists potentially in the human soul like the seed in the soil; by learning the potential becomes actual. ”

(Imam Al-Ghazali)

Preservation and Protection of *an-nafs* (Life)

Protection of *an-nafs* or self-preservation means the infallibility of the human self from its material and moral elements, by establishing its origin, which is the axis on which the architecture of the earth revolves, and the meaning of disagreement is realised in it. The Almighty said: "He created you from the earth and made you responsible in it" (*Qur'ān*, 11:61) as it is preserved physically, moral and spiritual, and in its total and partial dimension.

Self-preservation manifests itself in two aspects;

1. **Preserving it from the aspect of existence; and**
2. **Preserving oneself from the side of nothingness.**

An-nafs extends beyond the human self to include other life forms. The above verse and also *Qur'ān* verse 2:30 are just some of the verses which made explicit this aspect of protection and preservation of life.

Preservation and Protection of *al-'aql* (Intellect)

The mind is a bounty from Allah to us, and we have to make use of it to know Him, to distinguish between right and wrong and to bring in benefits to ourselves and our societies.

The mind (*'aql*) is the condition for the responsibility given by Allah to human beings. Without having a sound mind, Allah will never give Trust (*amanah*) to humans. The child, the Insane or the sleeping person is not accountable while he/she is in this stage or condition. Hence, preserving the mind functioning well becomes a necessity in our life. *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* stressed on the use of the mind for the purpose of thinking and reflecting to achieve benefits for humanity and protecting them from harm. Individual mind is the ownership of humanity, so we have to preserve it directly to public interest towards *Rahmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*.

In Islam, the heart and mind are used interchangeably. Hence, to understand the functioning of the mind, we have to take into account both thinking and emotions. Characteristics such as self-confidence, self-esteem, self-control, happiness and positive attitudes, optimism are significant for reasoning and logical thinking.

Our minds are in need first to protect them from what affects their functioning negatively and to activate them to be useful. Since our religion looks at the personality as a holistic and integrated entity, our mind also has to be viewed as an entity which is affected by physical, psychological and social factors. Unhealthy bodies, psychological problems and bad environments, whether physical or social, have a high impact on our minds, their development and their productivity.

IUM planned and implemented academic programmes and courses have to adopt an integration approach and lead students to success in this life and the life to come, through delivering quality holistic care for the students, cultivating

Islamic commitment to develop students' Islamic personality and identity. Furthermore, our educational system has to prepare students to become responsible, and self-sufficient in their future life to have impact in their societies upon their graduation and behave ethically in their daily life. Hence, it is important that our programmes and courses become conduits for the preserving, protection and promotion of the intellect, and not just a platform to disseminate knowledge.

Preservation and Protection of *al-mal* (Wealth)

Properties, resources and wealth in this life belong to Allah. We are the heirs and custodians of properties given to us by Allah and entrusted to use them for lawful purposes. Islam guides us how to earn wealth and spend it in lawful means. Islam encourages us to be productive, and by doing so, we are getting closer to Him. Islam guides us how to preserve property and wealth to achieve success (*falāḥ*) in this life and the life to come. Managing the property, resources and wealth of the university is one form of worship by which we seek the blessings from Allah.

Islam forbids waste, exploitation, deception and misappropriation of properties, resources and wealth. The primary purpose of wealth is to fulfil our needs as human beings with dignity in this life and the life to come. Thus, the preservation of wealth becomes a necessity for us to take it.

In the context of managing IUM as a *jami'ah insāniah* and an international centre of educational excellence, IUM has to exert its utmost efforts to prevent any financial or wealth misuse and abuse; and optimise its use in fulfilling the vision and missions of the University. IUM community should be made aware that *zakat*, *sadaqah*, and *waqf*, are essential form of fundamental support for the university as it was also the primary source of funding in Muslim history for educational institutions. Well-established mechanisms, systems and regulations have to be set up to ensure the effective use of wealth in supporting IUM.

Preservation and Protection of *an-nasl* (Lineage)

The preservation and safeguarding of lineage or progeny start in the pre-natal stage of existence and does not wait until human beings are born. Another term that is directly connected to that of *nasl* is namely the term *nasab* which has also been used in the *Qur'ān* and is frequently mentioned by Muslim scholars in conjunction with *an-nasl*.

Nasab embodies the essential natural bond or blood relationship between parents and children, whereby the latter are properly attributed to the former. It thus gives rise to the primary layer or immediate constituents of the family system, which includes the spouses and their descendants, and may also include their ascendants. From it emerged the sense of descent and belonging in the hearts and minds of the children and that of owning and prolongation at the level of the parents.

Family rights and obligations in the Islamic context are not mere private family matters that do not concern the rest of society, though their administration is assigned to the family members to handle privately. Marriage and family constitute the fundamental social institution providing the necessary natural and proper ecology for the physical, psychological, moral, spiritual and intellectual development of the human being at very crucial stages of his/her life, thus shaping their personality in a decisive manner.

The most fundamental aspect of human life and existence stems from an important fact about humankind in the *Qur'ān* according to which God has created man and woman from one and the same original human reality or entity and instilled in them a natural inclination towards each other that is the source of love, compassion, tenderness, and tranquility expressed by *Qur'ānic* terms as *mawaddah*, *rahmah* and *sakeenah*.

FUTURES OF EDUCATION

The *Futures of Education* as proposed by UNESCO (2020) is framed as a global initiative "to reimagine how knowledge and learning can shape the future of humanity and the planet". Indeed, it is a bold step forward that has not been comprehensively undertaken since the days of the industrial revolutions where "education" took a drastic turn leaving behind "a world of increasing complexity, uncertainty and precarity". To this extent, the UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay was quoted as saying: "Our deeply humanist DNA cannot let us reduce education to a technical or technological issue, nor even to an economic one." Allegorically, this is in perfect sync with what the younger generation has been saying the same all along in their criticism to what is deemed as the "failure" of today's so-called "education."

Greta Thunberg, TIME's Person of the Year for 2019, called out one such criticism in questioning where education is heading in the 21st century and beyond. She has been famously quoted to query the need to go to school when her future (and that of her generation) cannot be assured. She said: "I felt everything was meaningless and there was no point going to school if there was no future." It, no doubt, is a powerful indictment of how education has failed to meet the "new" expectations, while some considered it as irrelevant to the post-2020 generation. More so, the post-pandemic days of COVID-19. Most significantly, she took the initiative to push back, turning it into a wave of protest and a global movement: Fridays for Future. "I promised myself I was going to do everything I could do to make a difference," she said. In fact, she was adamant that 2020 would be the year for action against climate change. An oblique way of saying the "education" has not been serious enough to engage, let alone, resolve the related issues coming on the heels of the COP25 United Nations Climate Change Conference 2019. COP25 had to be extended from Chile to Madrid despite a two-week session, giving the impression that Thunberg was on the right track, what with the less-than-optimistic outcome coming from world leaders in their deliberations. It gave rise to widespread frustration and disappointment, including that expressed by UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres because it lacks clarity without any clear consensus as to how best to save planet Earth, and its inhabitants.

Education for Sustainable Development

Putting this in educational terms, the gap is clear and wide. There is much to be done in educating world leaders and policymakers on the burning issue (pun intended). Developing countries and their inhabitants, for example, are still generally unaware of the dire consequences of the climate crisis that are being shifted to them, making their future even more vulnerable when the related culprits are largely not held accountable. As long as this remains, the situation will worsen because the prevailing unjust distribution and consumption of resources between the Global North and South is unsustainable. This is further enhanced by the coronavirus outbreak that abruptly descends on the already ailing planet. We are reminded of the profound statement made by former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon: "There is no Plan B, because there is no Planet B." Meaning, the standard to be agreed upon must be equitable and just for all humanity regardless of divides – social, technical and political. The cliché to "flatten the curve" introduced to tackle the pandemic outbreak is spot-on on all fronts, education included. In other words, all nations must operate within the limits of one planet in terms of the available finite resources. Simply put, countries that have been living on a binge must now recalibrate (read re-educate) themselves into adopting a new sustainable lifestyle that is based on one planet.

Decolonising education

More than that, they must return the resources used in their unbridled excesses to those who have been deprived of them due to historical injustices of the past. Correcting such injustices is a vital educational outcome in achieving global sustainability post-2020 by decolonising the prevailing education ecosystem. Specifically, it must meet the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, or in short, Education 2030. Sustainable development is the organising principle for meeting human development goals while simultaneously sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services on which the economy and society depends. Unfortunately, this is a far cry from what it is today, where education is in general geared towards unsustainable production and consumption, drawing on the model of the 19th century. Generally, it resembles the factory model coming out of the very first industrial age some 300 years ago. Since then, there have been many variations over time, including the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR 4.0), the latest of its kind. Fundamentally, however, the assembly-line structure based on the nexus of Manpower-Mind-Machine (Hi-tech), 3Ms, is the main stay subservient to the economic paradigm of the neo-liberal Human Capital Theory. This is now increasingly recognised to be inadequate as the ultimate solution for the future, given the confining and dehumanising nature of the 4Ms, made more fragile by the COVID-19 predicament. For example, this includes the issues of "lockdowns," uncertainties, and shared prosperity so that no one is left behind! Succinctly, it is about contributing "to the common good of humanity", as highlighted by UNESCO.

As the pandemic deepens with more than 30 million people affected, and more than 1 million deaths globally by the third quarter of 2020, the “true” nature of the so-called “modern education” is made bare to the eyes of the world. Its relationship to slavery, slave trade and scientific racism can no longer be disputed. The so-called “world-class” universities of the Global North are no more what they claimed to be – just, fair and universal. To quote the Christopher L. Eisgruber, the current President of Princeton University on the decision to remove Woodrow Wilson’s name from their School of Public and International Affairs: “Princeton honored Wilson without regard to, and perhaps even in ignorance of, his racism. And that, I now believe, is precisely the problem. Princeton is part of an America that has too often disregarded, ignored and turned a blind eye to racism, allowing the persistence of systems that discriminate against black people” (2020).

In other words, today’s education is not only unsustainable, but also colonised and coloured by racism in a very subtle way, and this has been kept away from the public’s consciousness until the coronavirus pandemic exposes it.

Education 2030 — from 4Ms to 4Hs

Translated into educational terms, the 4Ms (Manpower-Mind-Machine-Money) must now be expanded into a 4Hs nexus of Humanity-Heart-Hi-touch-Humanising Life. Alternatively, this framework further aims to enable the reconstructing of future education to be more inclusive, as envisaged by the overarching outcomes of Education 2030. This is interrelated with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2016-2030 encompassing the 5Ps of People, Planet, Prosperity, Partnership and Peace. It is no coincidence that the 2020 International Day of Education, which falls on January 24, 2020, is contextualised on the same reference points. From a similar perspective, the younger generation clearly point to what education’s next destination would be like, and what it means. It is equally a moral as it is an educational imperative. According to TIME, Thunberg “offered a moral call to those who are willing to act, and put shame on those who are not” — global leaders included. Reportedly, Thunberg has joined forces with renowned natural historian, Sir David Attenborough in asserting their leadership globally, not just a sustainable one, but an equitable and fair partnership between the Global North and South. By creating a “global attitudinal shift”, as it were, millions across geopolitical boundaries have endorsed the call by joining hands to force recognition of an urgent need for change.

Gone are the days when the South was coerced into playing catch-up based on the (unilaterally) standard set by the North or the West, which has been regarded by experts as the very source of the problem way back during the Earth Summit of 1992. As a result, for the ensuing decades, the case further deteriorated until the introduction of the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development in 2005, which ended in 2014. In the 10 years, the

education factor played a pivotal role in moving the needle towards the goals of sustainability. Post-2014, SDGs came to the fore as described earlier, where the education factor is inherent in the transformative process towards a sustainable future.

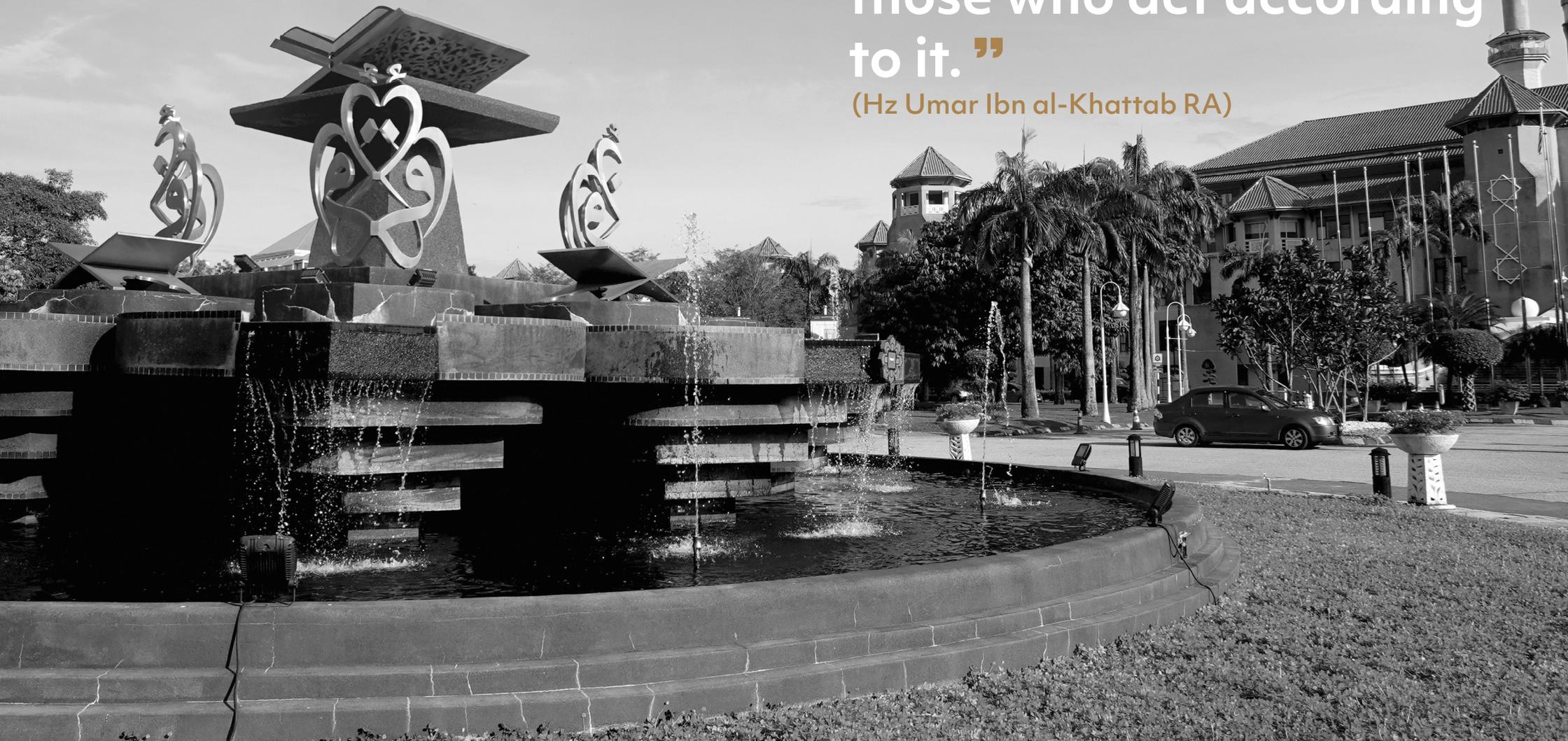
This cannot be better illustrated than the effort taken by UNESCO, the lead agency for SDGs. In launching the futures of education, “Learning to Become” was crafted as a major think piece that projects a new trajectory forward. It complimented well another approach of learning that is rooted in the 1972 Faure Report, “Learning to Be”, and two decades later, in the 1996 Delors Report, which embraces the four pillars of learning for the 21st century, namely, Learning to Know, Learning to Do, and Learning to Live Together, being other three. Put this together, within the framework of the 1956 Razak Report, the ensuing *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan* (1996) and the inherent wisdom of its *Sejahtera* concept, Malaysia is well-poised to reach out towards the futures of education. The ultimate global mission is to save planet Earth, and along with it ensures that all living species and their natural ecological ambience survive intact. Simply put, survival or being sustainable is the new endgame for education. And everything else follows accordingly.

It therefore becomes the basic catalyst to go beyond the 21st century, designed to share a forward-looking vision that offers a policy agenda for the post-industrial age and its ramifications. It is about leveraging education and knowledge (even wisdom) as the common platform of highly renewable human endeavours in instituting sustainable alternatives to transform the world through sustainable education. That is, a world which is more just, equitable and enriched by the wisdom of Divine revelation within the *homo sapiens* (not merely *homo economicus*) that has been missed, if not failed, to nurture truly educated *insan* in the real sense of the word. In IUM, this will be the *homo Islamicus*.



“
Do not be fooled
by the one who recites
the *Qur'ān*. His recitation
is but speech, but look to
those who act according
to it.”

(Hz Umar Ibn al-Khattab RA)



INTRODUCTION

IIUM recognises that a curriculum is the heart of its being. Innovatively developed and creatively delivered, a curriculum serves as a catalyst that triggers dynamic processes that would shape narratives and effect changes in societies and nations.

To ensure the successful implementation of the framework, a comprehensive evaluation of the present practices in the existing curricula was conducted. The aims of this evaluation were to review, develop, and validate the efficacy of leading-edge changes to the University's academic programmes. In order to obtain this information, the following major activities were conducted:

1. perform a 360-degree assessment of the relevance and adequacy of IIUM's curriculum in terms of its goals, programmes and courses learning outcomes, content-standards and performance-standards, structure, delivery, assessment and implementation.
2. benchmark best practices and innovation in curriculum development and implementation, with a special focus on the delivery and the achievement of content-standards and performance-standards of the curriculum and courses.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The information for this report was obtained from a series of activities involving different segments of the University.

- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving course facilitators, students, administrators of each of the UniCORE courses, academic staff according to their kulliyah, postgraduate students and deputy deans in charge of postgraduate programmes in the kulliyahs, at different times.
- Graduate Attributes Survey 2019
- Academic Experience Survey 2019
- Post-Graduate Survey 2020
- Tracer Study 2018
- *Meeting of IIUM Great Minds Workshop*
- Student Feedback Survey 2019
- Academic Review Survey 2020

As such the report here is presented according to the order below:

- i. General perception
- ii. Academic programmes
- iii. UniCORE courses
- iv. Graduate attributes
- v. Tracer Study
- vi. Student Feedback Survey

METHODOLOGY

Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

The FGDs were led by skilled moderators leading a targeted group of informants through a semi-structured interview setting on a specific issue. Accordingly, in each FGD, all informants were allowed to voice their complaints, concerns and recommendation to the issues above.

Two sets of FGDs were conducted in this exercise, one related to kulliyah's academic programme and the other related to the University Required Courses (UniCORE).

At the Kulliyah level, a series of 12 FGDs were conducted. Each FGD was conducted at the different kulliyahs with the esteemed academic members of the kulliyah serving as the informants for the FGD. The general objective of this exercise was to identify and record the views of the academic members of the University about the academic programmes in IIUM. Specifically, in each FGD,

the precursor questions posed to the informants revolved around the issues related to their kulliyahs in terms of:

- their general feelings towards their academic programmes.
- the teaching methodologies employed at the respective kulliyahs
- graduates' attributes, and
- areas for improvement.

For the UniCORE, a series of six (6) FGDs involving members of staff and students as the informants (Table 3.1). The findings of these FGDs would help the University in designing the new academic framework as part of the effort of revising the University's academic curriculum, the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF).

The main objectives of conducting these FGD were to:

- determine the informants' views towards UniCORE courses
- identify the problems faced by the administrative offices, instructors and students in the implementation of UniCORE courses, and
- discuss potential measures that can be taken to further improve the implementation of UniCORE courses.

Table 3.1 Informants for FGD

Activity	Informants	Location
Focus Group Discussion (FGD)	Co-curricula Unit under Students Affairs and Development Division (STADD)	Gombak Campus
	Fundamental Inter-disciplinary Studies	
	Quranic Language Department	
	Students	Kuantan Campus
	Mixed-group of academic staff	
Students		

Surveys

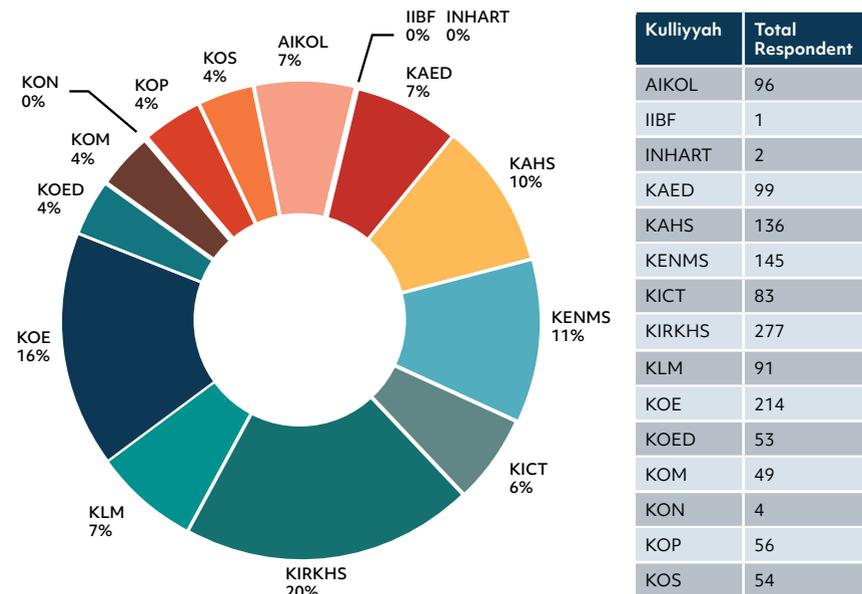
Academic Experience Survey: An open online survey on IIUM academic experience was conducted to get input from IIUM community and alumni in general. The main objective of the survey was to compare the expectation of IIUM management with the reality happening on the ground. The survey was administered after the discussion by the top level to review the University curriculum. The survey was opened for three (3) months via Google form. The survey was able to collect data from only 83 respondents.

To see the perception of current and past students and staff on the existing academic environment

To gather suggestion from current and past students and staff on improving IIUM academic experience

This survey indicated that, excluding the 'alumni' (7.2%), 92.8% of the respondents are still in the system. Some of them are alumni who either re-joined IIUM as an academic staff or as administrative and support staff. Their feedback is valuable since they could provide valuable information from the perspective of both a student and staff.

Graduate Attributes Survey 2019: A Graduate Attributes Survey was conducted during the 2019 IIUM Convocation. QR code containing a link to Google Form survey was pasted at graduates holding area. This allowed the respondents to have access to the questionnaire. A total of 1360 participated in this survey.



Academic Review 2020 Survey: Another university-wide online survey was conducted in March 2020 involving IIUM undergraduates. A total of 884 final year students voluntarily participated in this survey. The questionnaire in this survey comprised 12 items purportedly measuring the students' evaluation of the objectives, structure, contents, and delivery of the 20-credit-hour UniCORE courses. These items were constructed based on the findings extracted from the aforementioned FGDs, covering seven (7) indicators of the undergraduate academic curriculum. Each item was a suggestive proposition about an aspect of the UniCORE curriculum, to which respondents had to indicate their level of agreement based on a 5-point scale.

Post-Graduate Student Survey 2020: 400 current post-graduate students answered an online survey done to get their opinion on the post-graduate experience in IIUM.

Tracer Studies

The Graduate Tracer Study report presented the findings of a survey involving the IIUM graduates who attended their convocation ceremony. The graduates were requested to complete two online questionnaires - one constructed by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) and another by IIUM. The survey by the latter was constructed to evaluate whether the IIUM missions of Islamisation, internationalisation, and integration of knowledge were achieved from the students' aspect. The total number of respondents for this Tracer Study was 4,955. The following highlights from the survey conducted in 2018 provided a general view of the student development and the performance of IIUM graduates in the workforce:

- Evaluation of academic programmes and facilities
- Community service, and
- Employment

Meeting of IIUM Great Minds Workshop

The workshop in 2019 started the ball rolling on a full review of the academic activities of the University. It was attended by all the top management members (UMC), the Deans, the Directors, selected academic members of the Kulliyah, selected members from non-academic agencies, and also student representatives from all campuses. It was also attended by Professor Kamal Hassan as advisor to Centris. They were assigned to working groups - each comprising at least one UMC member, a Dean, a Director, kulliyah members, agency member, and student representative. They came up with a SWOT (strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis on academic programmes, human resource, facilities and community collaboration. They also came up with suggestions for improvements. These were then used as part of the basis for the Focus Group Discussions and the Academic Review Survey.

Student Feedback Survey

Student Feedback Survey (SFS) is a tool that helps to ascertain and monitor the quality of teaching and learning processes and outcomes. A total of 20,109 students participated in this particular Student Feedback Survey (2019/2020 Semester 1). The data from this survey serve as a basis for making informed decisions to enhance the teaching and learning processed in the University. Specifically, the data from this survey could be used to:

- evaluate the impact of teaching from the students' perspective;
- provide information for continuous improvement; especially in terms of teaching and learning;
- provide evidence for quality audit processes;
- assist in the professional development of academic staff.

FINDINGS

General Perception

The results of the Academic Experience Survey indicated that the respondents have had favourable academic experiences in IIUM. This could be illustrated by the keywords related to the aspects, concepts and ideas that they came across while in IIUM (see figure below).

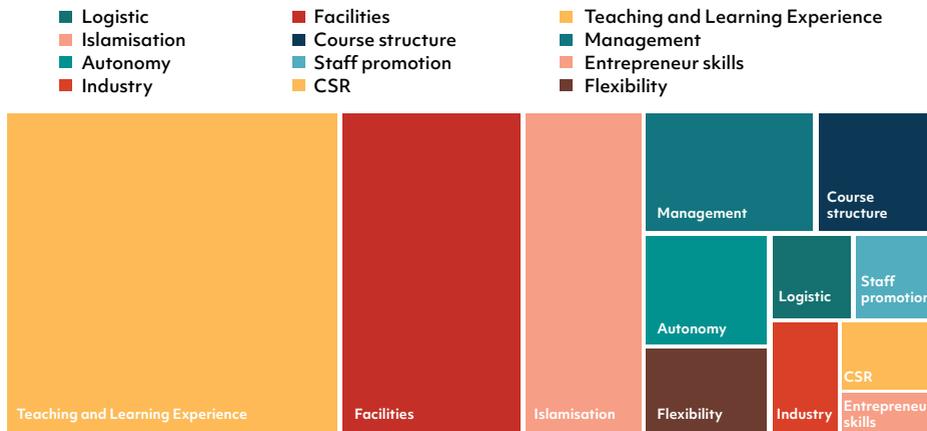
General perception of favourable academic experiences



When asked about the existing features they would like to be maintained, the survey results show that a large portion of the respondents described the Islamisation and Integration of knowledge as the key aspects to be continued in IIUM. The Islamic environment coupled with mixed local and international scholars are also among the features highlighted in the survey comments. There are also feedbacks that favour the availability of intellectual discourse as well as *Qur'an* course and *Usrah* (for students and staff) as an avenue to nurture holistic individuals. English Language as a medium of instruction is another element which is described as important to IIUM.

Respondents were also required to suggest any measures or ideas to improve the IIUM existing academic experience. The figure below illustrates the distribution of suggestions clustered in the 12 different categories.

A treemap on suggested categories for IIUM improvement



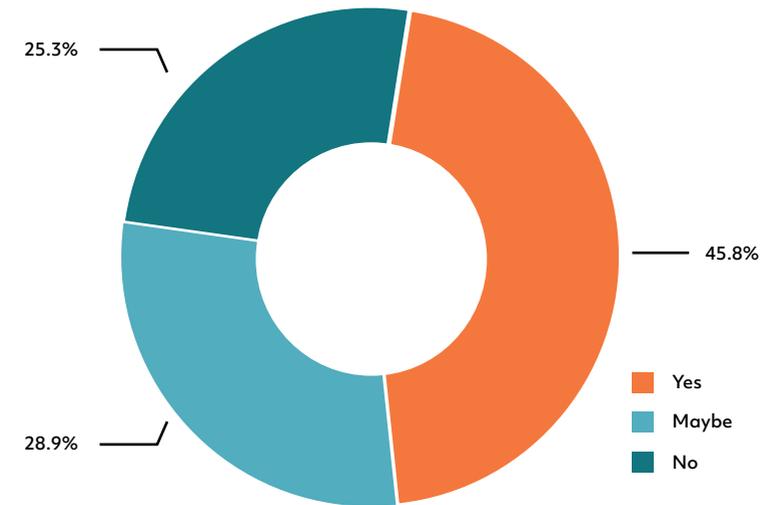
The “Teaching and Learning Experience” is the main category of experience that the respondents suggested needs improvement. Most of the suggestions made were on the conduct of the teaching and learning, including the:

- reduction of class size;
- balanced between the practical and theoretical studies;
- enhancement of student-centred learning environment; and
- use of blended learning in taught courses;

The next category of experience that needs improvement was “Facilities”. The respondents indicated that with the demand of online learning, the improvement needed include better and wider access to WiFi connection. In addition, there was also a need to improve classroom teaching and learning aids as well as to have modern learning space. Besides that, there were also suggestions on fixing toilets and potholes for *kesejahteraan* of IIUM community.

“Islamisation” in IIUM has a room for improvement as suggested by the respondents. The practice of *ukhuwah*, *ikhlas*, *istiqamah*, and *taqwa*, as well as spiritual development among IIUM community could be further improved.

Distribution of respondents on personalising students' study plan



The last question of the survey was on the study plan. Almost half (45.8%) of the respondents agreed that students should be given the opportunity to design their own study plan.

The 25.3% who disagreed explained that:

- students are less experience and might not know the nature of the programme, and how to design their own study plan;
- clinical programmes are more structured which required pre-planned study plan;
- a well-established study plan is required to ensure completion of study Graduate on Time (GoT); and
- the current IT system will not be able to cater for the change.

The remaining respondents who answered “Maybe” argued that:

- given proper guidance, students who have clear direction should be given the flexibility to choose their own courses;
- the allowance should only be given to mature students who are in their final years; and
- the system might not be able to process students’ applications.

When asked for any additional comments, it was interesting to read that respondents largely stressed on the needs to empower both students and staff.

Academic Programmes

General Issues and Challenges

This section presents the themes extracted from probes on the general feelings towards Academic Programmes obtained from the FGDs.

In terms of academic programmes offered at the kulliyahs, all informants reported positive views in that all the programmes were well received by the public and that they were accredited accordingly either by Malaysian Qualification Agency and/or by the relevant professional bodies. In fact, there were kulliyahs who claimed that the academic programmes that they offer were lauded by their respective regulatory bodies and even quoted as exemplars for other institutions.

However, some informants cautioned the University against focusing on the graduates' employability alone. They believed that some of the programmes or courses offered might not be about preparing students for the job market but simply for providing education and for educating people. Thus, academic curriculum review should be conducted regularly and critically with the right objectives in mind. The focus should be on strengthening and making academic programmes relevant rather than meeting the market demands only.

Teaching Methodologies Employed at the Kulliyah

Most lecturers were moving towards more contemporary teaching delivery modes. There was a general agreement among the informants that digital format materials were important and that they embraced the needs to change and adopt the new teaching methodologies.

Unfortunately, to the informants, there were issues that hamper their progress in using the state-of-the-art teaching methodologies. Some of these issues concern infrastructure and facilities while others concern the decisions made by the kulliyahs themselves. Most informants suggested obsolete computer facilities and software coupled with poor internet access as the main reasons for their difficulty in applying digital materials in class. Even when the necessary training was given to the members of staff, they would probably not be able to use the skills in the classroom as there were no facilities to allow them to do so. Specific to the medical-related kulliyahs, the informants suggested that the University invested in the purchase of virtual reality equipment, simulators and models to upgrade their quality of teaching. The informants also commented on the difficulty in getting financial allocations to replace furniture in the classroom.

There were also issues related to the decisions made by the kulliyahs such as, the changing or maintaining modes of teaching delivery, the assignment of assessment weightages, class sizes and the provisions for staffing and training.

Areas for Improvement

The comments in this section deal with matters that were not discussed in the other sections above. The informants suggested that there was a need to have a serious forum on the status of University curriculum given the present direction of the University and the feedback from the stakeholders. This involved the different required courses offered by the different units in the University and the kulliyahs. And whether they were a part of the formal curriculum or co-curricular activities. Another issue that received the informants' attention was the different understanding, and to a certain degree the misunderstanding, of terms and concepts related to IIUM academic framework such as University Required courses (UniCORE), free electives, minors, functions of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the future of Islamisation.

The informants seemed to be leaning towards allowing students to monitor their own academic progress and adherence to their study plan. The empowerment of students in this respect can only indicate the trust that the University has on IIUM students' integrity and maturity. As an alternative, if the University does not believe the students are ready for this, the financial allowance of respective Academic Advisors ought to be reinstated as the responsibility of advising students is not an easy task.

In terms of recognition from the public and the visibility of IIUM, the informants suggested that the University seek from the *Bahagian Kemasukan Pelajar IPTA* (UPU) the appropriate codes for our academic programmes. This will ensure the visibility of IIUM in the eyes of potential students. For international recognition, the informants recommended that IIUM embark on a more robust and aggressive marketing to bring in more international students.

Since the issue of finance related to the purchase of new items, maintenance of the existing ones and recruitment of new academic and non-academic personnel have been going on for a long time, the informants suggested that a fresh new discussion between kulliyahs and the relevant IIUM authority is needed. While it is generally accepted that IIUM, as other public universities do, is experiencing financial difficulties, it is also reasonable to recognise the requests from the different kulliyahs in terms of facilities and new members of

Abū al-Qāsim Khalaf ibn al-'Abbās al-Zahrāwī (936–1013) was a physician, surgeon and chemist, who was considered to be the greatest surgeon of the Middle Ages. His innovations in surgical procedures and instruments had an enormous impact in the East and West up until today.

staff. It is recommended that this discussion be structured and moderated in the spirit of win-win situation

The informants suggested that the Centre for Professional Development (CPD) plan the annual almanac of training to be disseminated to all academic members of staff prior to the beginning of every semester to make it easier for them to identify the trainings in which they want to participate. Realising that there were generic as well as specialised training, it was also recommended that CPD conduct a needs analysis assessment of training for all kulliyahs. This would ensure that at least the basic needs of training of all academic members of staff can be fulfilled.

It is worth noting here that contrary to the above, in actual practise, CPD posts all information for its annual almanac on its website at the beginning of the calendar year. CPD also announces its training, at least one month prior to the session for enrolment through the HURIS Step Application, with the exception of the training sessions that CPD conducted during the ERTL.

Feedback from CPD itself raised some concerns with regards to commitment levels in some of the participants. The lack of participation in CPD training and not staying throughout the training session is an indicator of low commitment among academics for reskilling and upskilling. Most of the time, around 30-40 lecturers would enrol, but only 10-15 would show up. And less than 10 stayed throughout the programme due to meetings, classes etc.

Perhaps the contributing factors to this unsatisfactory level of participation are (i) lack of recognition from the Kulliyah/University for participation in these programmes, (ii) lack of support from the kulliyah, in terms of time off to go for proper training, and (iii) the notion that they are doing fine without the additional training because they achieve more than 80% in their SFS. Only those who achieve below 80% for 3 consecutive semesters are required to undergo retraining.

The following presents evidence that substantiated the perceptions of the sample towards their academic programmes gathered from the Academic Review 2020 Survey.

Table 3.2 Percentage Distributions of Perceptions towards Academic Programme

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Are useful for your personal wellbeing?	6.8	22.1	71.1
Have been taught effectively by course instructor?	7.5	26.0	66.5
Develop your soft skill such as communication skills?	8.8	26.5	64.7
Have been efficiently organised?	13.9	26.4	59.7
Do not meet their objectives?	46.2	35.0	18.9
Have duplicated content with your foundation courses?	23.4	37.7	38.9
The load of the courses does not reflect the credit hour?	29.9	38.6	31.6

Table 3.2 summarises the percentage distributions of responses among the final year students. Of the 884 respondents, at least 60% endorsed the propositions that their undergraduate courses were “useful to their well-being,” “effectively taught by the instructors,” “develop their soft skills,” and “efficiently organised.” Almost 47% were in agreement that the courses fulfilled their designated objectives. However, the data revealed that more than one-thirds of the students indicated the occurrence of replication and mismatch between course workload and credit hour.

Learning Experience

To capture students' feedback on their learning experience, the questionnaire includes nine items related to the prevalence of unpleasant experience. Each item is a statement about teaching and learning issues, which has been extracted from the FGS sessions. The respondents were prompted to indicate the frequency to which they had experienced. Table 3.3 presents the results of data analysis.

Table 3.3 Students Learning Experience

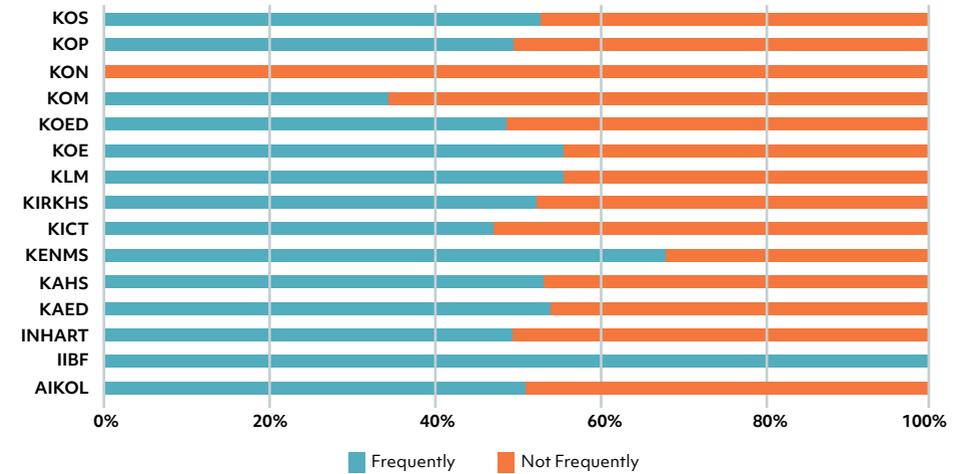
	Never	Rarely	Some-times	Fre-quently
Too much coursework/assignment	5.1	16.5	44.7	33.7
Mismatch between course credit and workload	12.1	23.5	38.2	26.1
NOT much exposure to the use of relevant technology, e.g. digital	9.8	26.9	39.1	24.1
NOT getting timely feedback on my performance	7.0	26.7	45.7	20.6
NOT allowed to register elective courses in other Kulliyahs	26.5	27.4	27.1	19.0
NOT allowed to take elective courses that I am interested in	24.1	28.3	29.4	18.2
Repeated contents across courses	9.4	30.8	41.9	18.0
Not knowing the relevance of the courses to my future career	12.1	21.4	50.1	16.4
Unfair allocation of marks across assignment and exam	33.0	32.9	34.0	0.0

The results showed that more than two-thirds of the respondents reported unfavourable learning experiences in terms of workload, exposure to relevant technology, knowing the relevance of the courses, and getting feedback on their performance. Also, more than one-half of the sample indicated the prevalence of repeated contents across courses.

The learning experience of current students and students who have recently graduated seems to be aligned. From the Graduate Attributes Survey, out of the 1360 respondents, only 19.1% students felt that they are not burdened with 'too much coursework or assignment' during their study period. However, 50% felt that there were "too much co-curricular activities".

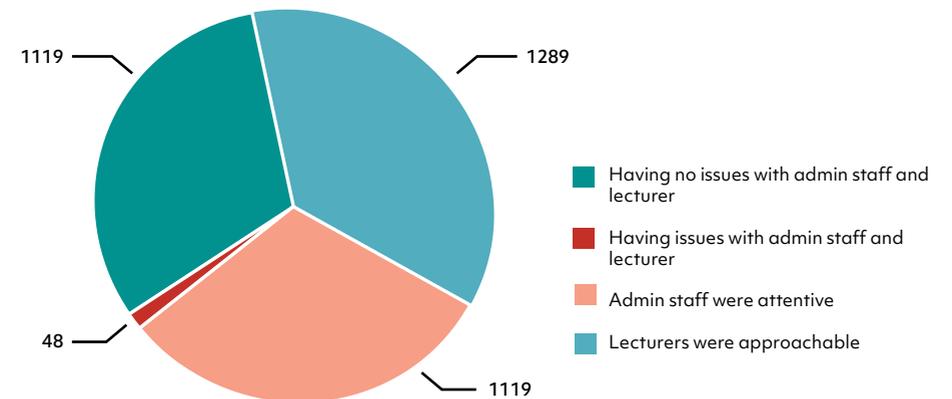
54% of the respondents confirmed that there is 'repeated content across courses' while taking their programme. From the tabulation in Figure 6, excluding data from KON and IIBF, KOM and KENMS students' feedback is skewed towards 'Not Frequently' and 'Frequently' respectively.

Students' perception on redundant content by Centre of Studies



Data also show that more than half of the students (51.7%) are frequently "not sure why some contents were taught" in their programme. Further analysis on the data has shown that these groups of respondents contributed 80.4%, 76.2% and 74.8% to the total feedback in which they experienced "unfair assessment", "unable to take elective courses that they are interested in" and "mismatch between credit hours and course workload" respectively.

Students' experience with IIUM staff



The figure above shows the overall students' experience with IIUM administration and academic staff. Overall, students were happy that their "lecturers were approachable" and that the "admin staff were attentive to their needs".

The triangulation from the different data collection methods strongly indicated the strengths and weaknesses of the IUM academic experiences. While generally positive, especially when it comes to staff-student relationships, and that the students/alumni appreciate the Islamic elements in the academic programme, there is still room to improve which has to be done at the programme review level. This is generally because the concerns seem to revolve more on the inadequate breadth in terms of content (e.g., duplicated content), skills (e.g., not much access to relevant technology) and choice.

UniCORE

Findings from FGD

From the FGDs with the kulliyahs, all informants appeared to be concerned about UniCORE courses and suggested the UniCORE curriculum, content, scheduling and, in particular the overall implementation be looked at. Many believed that the monitoring of UniCORE courses has not been done systematically. The concerns among informants revolved around the redundancy and duplication of the content of UniCORE courses and the content of courses offered at the kulliyahs, and as such, the informants requested that a reduction of hours for UniCORE courses be considered. Informants also discussed instances where UniCORE courses have to be held at night to avoid clashes in scheduling of classes.

Informants wished for UniCORE courses to be more hands-on rather than theoretical in nature and be less examination-oriented. They viewed UniCORE courses as the courses that would make students more resilient and capable with soft skills like creative thinking skills and communication as the highly needed ones by IUM students. The informants also wished for the selection and training of instructors for UniCORE courses to be given better attention as students informed them that there were instructors who did not seem to have strong beliefs or competencies in the content of courses they are teaching.

The FGD with the students and course providers provided slightly different themes.

Five (5) main themes were extracted from all the FGDs conducted with the course providers, namely the novelty of UniCORE courses; human resources and logistic; training on teaching methods and assessment procedures; moral support from IUM authorities; and other matters.

a. Novelty of UniCORE courses

This theme concerns the ability of the informants in making sense of the term UniCORE and the objectives for the offering of UniCORE courses. The FGDs conducted indicated that the informants had uncertain and different views towards UniCORE courses. Some of the informants were not sure of what

the term UniCORE stands for. Even when given the chance to define what UniCORE is, the “off-the-cuff” responses ranges from, the courses that will provide Islamic input to students, a certain “must” for IUM students, a way to differentiate IUM students from students of other institutions to “a collection” of courses that students must register as a graduation requirement. The responses given by the informants lack a clear and definitive interpretation of UniCORE courses and the objectives in offering these courses. This uncertainty is present in the comments by all informants in the FGDs conducted although it is more prevalent among the students.

There seemed to be no or a lack of briefing about UniCORE courses and the features of UniCORE courses to the IUM population. In spite of the fact that all informants were involved with the offering and implementation of UniCORE, their understanding of UniCORE was limited to their own responsibilities and scope of work. There was no clear indication of their concise knowledge of all the components of UniCORE in terms of structure, implementation and monitoring of concerned courses. This was even more serious in situations when there was an administrative reshuffle, where a staff who was previously located in a non-UniCORE-offering office was transferred to a UniCORE-offering office. This needs a further attention of the University as UniCORE courses function as the backbone of academic programmes, where all the courses serve to consummate students’ experience as IUM students.

Another concern that was observed during the FGD was that some informants did not perceive the presence of UniCORE courses as being useful to students. The words “previously” or “before this” appeared many times during the FGDs, which relate to the predecessors of the present UniCORE courses. Questions on the usefulness or success of the proposed UniCORE courses seem to conjure a comparison between the present UniCORE courses and the “old” university required courses. There was a view that suggests the “old” required courses were more capable in making an impact among our students than the present UniCORE courses. It was not known if this view is nostalgic, sentimental or objective in nature but it was noted.

b. Human Resource and Logistics

This theme revolved around the issues of time, number of students in a class, venues, equipment and the recruitment of instructors to teach UniCORE courses. Informants who were members of staff lamented the fact that the number of hours allocated to teach their subjects was too small, indicated by the small number of credit hours. Pedagogically, they suggested that without frequent face-to-face meetings, the students might not be able to have a good understanding of the knowledge and a good mastery of the skills that the instructors attempted to impart. They believed that they should meet their students more frequently per week and thus, their courses deserve a higher number of credit hours.

This issue was mentioned together with the number of students in a class. This was particularly the concern of those who were teaching *Mata Pelajaran*

Umum (MPU) and University General Studies courses (UNGS). There seemed to be an overwhelming dissatisfaction over the projection of students' numbers compared to the availability of venues, equipment and instructors. The complaints mainly revolved around the ability to secure well-equipped venues before the semester starts. While the informants somewhat relented over matters related to the venues and equipment, there seemed to be a general agreement among them that in order to maintain or to promote quality instruction, measures on finance need to be looked at with a view to appoint more instructors; part-time, contract or permanent one. This issue, in turn, was related to the amount and intensity of training provided to the part-time and contract staff prior to their teaching of specific courses. The informants suggested that the training was pertinent for the instructors to be able to deliver their teaching and assess the students in the best way possible.

c. Training on Teaching Method and Assessment Procedures

All informants in all FGDs unanimously agreed that they are in dire need for training to enhance the teaching skills and professionalism, particularly for the part-timers. At the moment there is no specific training in teaching and learning processes for UniCORE instructors. In terms of teaching methods, although the teaching informants have upgraded themselves, they still lack a formal training in developing and using appropriate teaching delivery.

The same concern was also applicable to the instructors' knowledge and skills in assessment procedures. Although some informants reported the use of up-to-date assessment procedures, they did not acquire the knowledge and skills from IIUM-organised training.

d. Moral Support from IIUM authority

The informants hinted that the UniCORE courses were perceived by the University population; students, lecturers and administrators alike, as "second-class" courses in terms of the courses' contribution to students' life and the contribution of the courses to the students' professional capability. In short, the major courses, referring to the degree, which the students were registered for, were viewed as being far more superior than the UniCORE courses. Instances recalled by the informants suggested that the UniCORE courses were also viewed as "wasting-time" courses.

e. Other Matters

There was also a need to look into all the courses offered in UniCORE as there seemed to be duplications of courses. When courses were duplicated there was a good possibility that elements related to the courses were also duplicated such as, the contents, methods of teaching and assessment procedures. This gave rise to our concern that a massive curriculum was needed to avoid duplication among UniCORE courses.

Another theme that raises concern was the monitoring of UniCORE courses, particularly in Kuantan Campus. It was not clear who was the authority in managing the courses. Instructors were reported to handle courses as they wished without following the prescribed course outlines. The informants suggested that there were cases where courses were being scheduled haphazardly and not according to the students' availability, which caused clashes in time-tabling.

Students' Evaluation of Unicore Courses

The students' feedback on the UniCORE courses were gathered from both the FGD and a survey.

During the FGDs, the students commented that when they enrolled in the University, they felt uncertain of UniCORE. They were not briefed appropriately about the UniCORE courses in terms of the structure, importance of the courses and the reason why they have to take the courses.

In terms of assessment, the students suggested that assessment procedures should be conducted according to the different contexts of the different kulliyahs. This would allow the knowledge and skills in UniCORE courses to be applied by the students in their unique areas of specializations, particularly courses related to *usrah* and UNGS. In addition the informants also wished that the assessment for some of the UniCORE courses be assessed based on pass/fail basis rather than grades.

The following section presents findings on UniCORE from the Academic Review 2020 Survey.

The respondents were indirectly asked whether or not they agree that the UniCORE curriculum implementation managed to achieve its objectives and the efficacy of its structure, which include the organisation and scheduling of classes. Responses from those surveyed are summarised in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Percentage Distributions of Perceived Effectiveness of Objectives and Structure

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Contents should be aligned to the Kulliyah's curriculum?	7.8	24.9	67.3
Enrich my knowledge on islamic worldview?	9.0	25.1	65.8
Class schedule of the courses should match academic programme structure?	7.5	27.6	64.9
Are useful for your personal wellbeing?	13.2	31.9	54.9
Develop your soft skill such as communication skills?	16.3	33.1	50.6
Section for UNGS courses is based on programme?	16.3	34.0	49.7

The data yielded several noteworthy results. First, at best only around one-third of the sample responded positively to the suggestion that the UniCORE, “enrich their knowledge on Islamic worldview, which signified the degree of the achievement of one of the main objectives of the courses. The results also suggested that only five out of every 10 final year students were in agreement that the UniCORE, (i) useful for [his/her] personal well-being” and (ii) “develop their soft skills such as communication skills.” These two objectives substantively underscored the UniCORE’s *raison d’etre*.

In terms of the students’ evaluation of the structure of UniCORE, the data indicated that less than one-half of the sample responded favorably. In fact, the majority (more than 60%) of the students were of the opinion that class schedule and course contents need to be reviewed and structured. Still at least one-fifths of the sample were non-committal. Their responses implicitly indicated neutrality or not having any view pertaining to the curriculum issues.

Perceived Effectiveness of the Teaching and Learning

The respondents also evaluated the effectiveness of the curriculum delivery, particularly with respect to various (five) aspects of teaching and learning processes. Specifically, the respondents were asked if they agree that the UniCORE programme enriches their spiritual engagement, has been taught effectively, aligns the course workload and its credit, contains duplication of contents, and has been efficiently organised. In addition, the questionnaire measures the respondents’ evaluation of the overall achievement of the UniCORE objectives. The responses from the sample surveyed are summarised in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Percentage Distributions of Perceived Effectiveness of Objectives and Structure

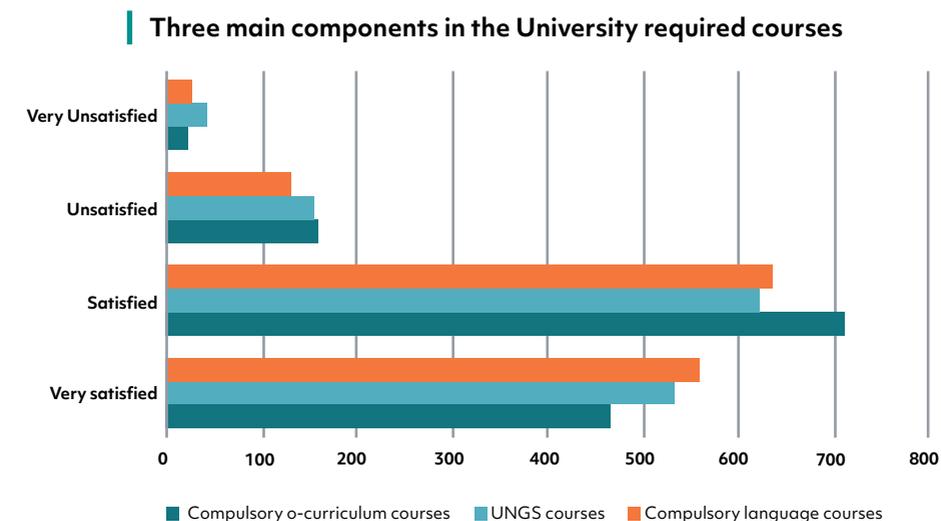
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Enrich my spiritual engagement?	17.0	36.0	47.1
Have been taught effectively by course instructor?	17.3	35.7	46.9
The load of the courses does not reflect the credit hour?	20.5	33.5	46.0
Have duplicated content with your foundation courses?	20.2	34.8	44.9
Have been efficiently organised?	30.3	35.9	33.8
Do not meet their objectives?	33.6	42.0	24.4

The results of data analysis showed that less than one-half of the students were in favour of the prevailing UniCORE curriculum practices. For example, only 47% were in agreement that the programme enriched their spiritual engagement while only one-third of the sample disagreed with the proposition that the UniCORE courses meet their objectives.

In a nutshell, the data suggested that the final year students were having difficulty to endorse the suggestions that the UniCORE courses have achieved their objectives, efficiently structured and organised, and effectively delivered.

However, the Graduate Attributes Survey presents a different take on UniCORE.

Students in this survey were also asked about the University required courses during their 3 to 5 years of study in IIUM. The figure below summarised the findings. Overall, students were found to be generally satisfied with the courses prescribed under the University required courses.



The conflicting findings seemed to indicate that while being a student in IIUM, the UniCORE courses were seen to be irrelevant and unnecessary, perhaps because these courses were not part of their core area of study. But upon graduation and having had to deal with a world that is more than just about their area of study, the graduates found UniCORE courses to be beneficial and contributing to their overall perspective.

Students' Preferences and Recommendations

The study also examined the final year students' reactions to policy intervention with respect to the IIUM's academic rules and regulations. The questionnaire proposes six possible changes to the current academic administration practices. And, the students were required to indicate their agreement for each proposal.

Table 3.5 Percentage Distributions of Student Who Would Recommend Changes

	NO	YES
Student to be given the ultimate freedom to choose their own skills courses?	5.2	94.8
That the courses to focus on practice (knowing how), not theory (knowing what)?	11.1	88.9
That the content and the learning outcome of the courses to be revised?	15.4	84.6
That the <i>Tilawah</i> to be taught before <i>Qur'anic</i> Language course?	44.1	55.9
That the curriculum of <i>Tilawah</i> courses should be revised?	45.1	54.9
That the <i>Qur'anic</i> Language to be taught before <i>Tilawah</i> course?	47.5	52.5

Table 3.5 shows the distribution of reactions towards changes in the six aspects of academic rules and regulations related to UniCORE. The results of data analysis indicated that eight out of every 10 respondents voted positively for freedom to choose skill courses, UniCORE to focus on practical skills, and that their contents and learning outcomes to be revised. Furthermore, the majority of the sample would recommend that the *Tilawah* course be taught before the teaching of *Qur'an* Language course.

Graduates Attributes

There was a mixed bag of comments from the informants when discussing matters related to IIUM graduates' attributes. In general, the informants recommended that IIUM maintains the uniqueness of its graduates. They believed that this was true due to the creative and unique combination of contemporary and Islamic components in the curriculum structure of programmes and courses. In fact, informants reported that there were students who claimed that they have become better reciters and memorizers of the *Qur'an* and have become more proficient in public speaking in Malay and English because of the practice they received in their classes.

However, it must be noted that there was a huge room for improvement for our students and the University is encouraged to look into it. One area that needed immediate attention was the condition of our students' mental health. This issue was echoed by many informants during the FGDs. IIUM students were

seen as suffering from mental health problems such as depressions and anxiety that affect, among others, their resilience and hardiness in facing the day-to-day challenge as university students.

Another area that deserved attention was keeping a balance in IIUM students' competencies in specific hard skills and soft skills. Feedback from different stakeholders in this respect were mixed. On one hand, our students were demanded to have a deep understanding of hard skills, particularly those concerning their discipline of studies and, on the other hand, our students were also expected to display abilities in soft skills such as communication skills.

Graduates' Growth Mindset

Five-point Likert scale items were posed to the students concerning their mindset growth. It is promising to know that students agreed that "*effort is path of mastery*" and that "*failure as opportunity*" rather than something that would stop them from growing. Perhaps, that could be the reason as to why only 604 out of 1360 respondents seconded the "*intelligence and talent are born with*" statement. This could mean that students believed that 'talent' could be a result of a constant effort and getting back up from 'failure'. The two other target points have a surprising outcome. Students found themselves "threatened by others' success" and that they "often get angry when getting feedback" about their performance.

Mapping of 2019 IIUM Graduates' Mindset

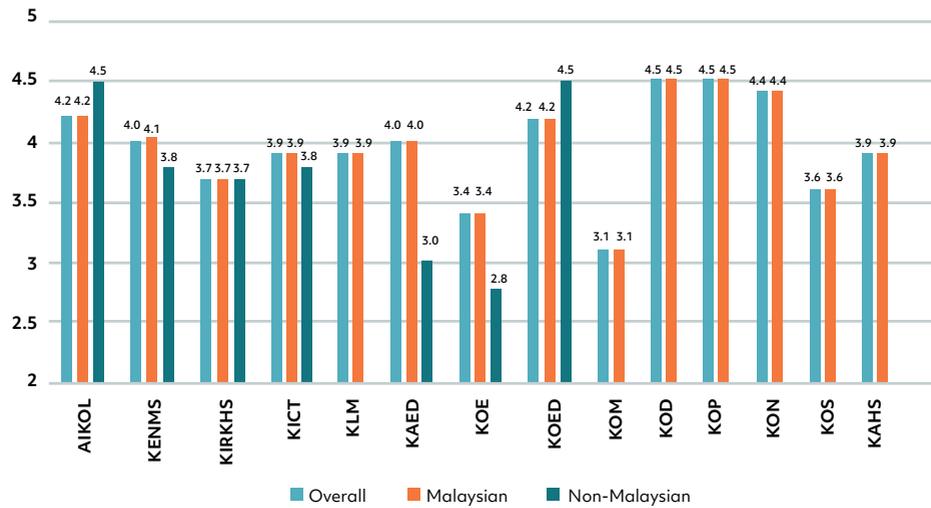


Tracer Study

Evaluation of Academic Programmes and Facilities

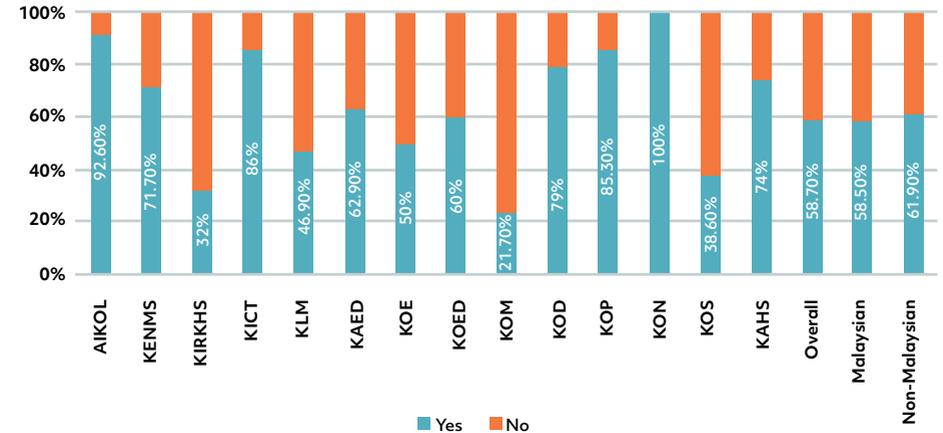
Graduates were asked to evaluate the helpfulness of their respective study programmes to their current jobs by rating them on a scale of 1 (extremely low or not helpful at all) to 5 (extremely high or extremely helpful). Overall, IIUM academic programmes were rated at 3.9. The rating significantly greater than 3.5 suggests that the graduates found that the programmes were helpful.

Helpfulness of study programme by Kulliyah



From the 2,382 graduates who had secured a job before graduation day, 58.7 percent were working in fields related to their study programmes. The result showed that all Kulliyah of Nursing (KON) graduates found work related to their field of study before graduation day. Due to issues related to housemanship placement for medical graduates, only 21.7 percent secured positions in hospitals before graduation day.

Employment in field related to study programme by Kulliyah



Graduates were also asked to evaluate the overall curriculum in terms of (i) suitability of the study programme, (ii) balance between the theoretical and practical components, (iii) internship programme, (iv) compulsory co-curricular programme, (v) compulsory subjects, (vi) variety of co-curricular activities offered, (vii) preparing students for working life, and (viii) whether the internship programme helped them obtain suitable employment.

Overall, the graduates were satisfied with the curriculum, as shown by the rating, which is significantly greater than 3.5. (Table 3.6)

Table 3.6 Evaluation of curriculum by kulliyah

	AIKOL	KENMS	KIRKHS	KICT	KLM	KAED	KOE	KOED	KOM	KOD	KOP	KON	KOS	KAHS	OVERALL
Suitability of Programme	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.6	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.3
Theoretical-practical balance	4.1	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.2	4.0	3.6	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.0	4.0
Internship	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.1	3.8	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.1	4.1
Compulsory co-curriculum	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.1
Compulsory subjects	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2
Variety of co-curriculum	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.0	4.5	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2
Prepare students for working world	4.0	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.6	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.2	4.4	3.9	3.9	4.0
Internship helps employment	4.2	4.3	4.0	4.3	4.3	4.1	3.8	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.0	4.1	4.1
Malaysian	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.1	3.9	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.2
International	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.9	N/A	4.0	N/A	N/A	4.5	N/A	3.8
Total	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	3.9	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.1

Soft skills include interpersonal communication, creative and critical thinking, problem solving, analytical, teamwork, inculcating and practising positive values, and awareness of general knowledge and current issues. In general, the graduates rated their soft skills as “very good” with mean ratings significantly greater than 4 (see Table 3.7). Among the soft skills listed, the graduates rated themselves slightly higher (4.3 and above) in teamwork and inculcating and practising positive values.

Table 3.7 Soft skills by Kulliyah

	AIKOL	KENMS	KIRKHS	KICT	KLM	KAED	KOE	KOED	KOM	KOD	KOP	KON	KOS	KAHS	OVERALL
Interpersonal communication	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1
Creative and critical thinking	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.2	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.1
Problem solving	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.3	3.9	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1
Analytical skills	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.1
Ability for teamwork	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.3
Inculcation and practising positive values	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.4
General knowledge and current issues	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1
Malaysian	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2
International	4.3	3.9	4.1	4.2	5.0	4.0	4.1	3.7	N/A	4.1	N/A	N/A	4.6	N/A	4.1

The levels of satisfaction with other facilities such as laboratories, health centre, lecture halls, classrooms, sports facilities, transportation, and accommodation were summarized in Table 3.8. Although the graduates were satisfied with the parking facilities provided, the satisfaction ratings were lower compared to other facilities. Graduates from the Gombak campus gave slightly lower ratings for health centre service and campus security. KOM and KAHS graduates' ratings for campus bookstore were lower as it is not offered at the Kuantan campus.

Table 3.8 Evaluation of other facilities and services

	AIKOL	KENMS	KIRKHS	KICT	KLM	KAED	KOE	KOED	KOM	KOD	KOP	KON	KOS	KAHS	OVERALL
Laboratories	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.0	3.7	4.2	3.9	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.9
Lecture hall/tutorial room	3.7	4.0	3.9	4.3	4.2	4.1	3.7	4.3	3.7	4.5	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	3.9
Sports facilities	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.0	3.8	4.3	4.1	4.4	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.0
Cafeteria	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.1	3.9	4.3	3.7	4.1	3.8	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.0
Accommodation/Mahallah	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.4	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.2
Transportation	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.8	4.2	3.5	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.1	3.9
Campus bookstore	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.6	3.9	3.6	4.1	3.3	3.6	3.7	4.0	3.6	3.4	3.8
Conducive study area	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.8	4.3	4.1	4.5	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.0
Health centre	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.6	3.9	3.8	4.1	4.4	4.5	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.2	3.9
Parking	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.2	3.8	3.4	3.7	3.4	4.2	3.9	3.5	3.5
Campus security	3.6	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.6	4.0	4.1	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	3.8
Online integrated learning system	3.7	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9	4.0	3.7	4.2	3.8	4.0	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.0	3.9
ICT services and facilities	3.7	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.8	3.9	3.7	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.0	4.3	4.0	4.0	3.9
Total	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	3.9	4.0	3.7	4.2	3.9	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.0	3.9

Community service

Graduate were asked about their participation in community service programmes organised under BUDI, STADD, kulliyah, or *Mahallah*. The activities involved are on social and welfare, mentoring, or *da'wah* based programmes. Overall, more than 80 percent students were involved in the social and welfare-type community services, an average of 32% on mentoring-type community services, and an average of 30% involvement in *da'wah*-type community services.

The graduates believed that their participation in the community service programmes provided a positive impact on themselves as well as on the communities involved.

Employment

Overall, the top three sectors 2018 IIUM graduates worked in were professional, scientific, and technical (17.2 percent), education (16.7 percent), and other services (11.8 percent). However, the sectoral concentrations differed across different kulliyahs. For instance, 28.6 percent of KENMS graduates worked in the financial and insurance or takaful sector while over 65 percent of KICT graduates, expectedly, was in the information and communication technology sector; almost 32 percent of engineering graduates were employed in the manufacturing sector, and 38 percent of KAED graduates were in the construction sector. Most KOP, KAHS, and KOD graduates predictably worked in the professional, scientific, or technical, or health and social services sectors. A diverse group were found among KOS and KLM graduates, who worked in various sectors (see Table 3.9).

Table 3.9 Top employment sectors by Kulliyah (UG)

AIKOL		KAED		KENMS	
Professional/scientific/technical	63.1%	Construction	38.2%	Financial/insurance/takaful	28.6%
Other services	23.6%	Professional/scientific/technical	12.9%	Professional/scientific/technical	15.3%
Real estate	4.4%	Other services	11.8%	Other services	8.3%
KICT		KIRKHS		KOE	
Information/communication	65.3%	Education	38.6%	Manufacturing	31.8%
Financial/insurance/takaful	6.3%	Other services	15.1%	Professional/scientific/technical	21.0%
Other services	6.3%	Financial/insurance/takaful	7.1%	Information/communication	15.4%
KOED		Overall		KAHS	
Education	78.8%	Professional/scientific/technical	17.2%	Health/social	41.2%
Other services	5.9%	Education	16.7%	Professional/scientific/technical	27.5%
Admin/support services	3.5%	Other services	11.8%	Other services	10.7%
KOD		KOM		KON	
Professional/scientific/technical	45.8%	Education	21.7%	Health/social work	92.5%
Health/social work	25.0%	Health/social work	17.4%	Professional/scientific/technical	5.7%
Other services	16.7%	Accommodation/food service	13.0%	Other services	1.9%
KOP		KOS		KLM	
Professional/scientific/technical	42.9%	Education	15.8%	Education	28.6%
Health/social work	33.8%	Professional/scientific/technical	15.8%	Other services	24.5%
Other services	13.2%	Other services	14.9%	Information/communication	16.3%

Interpretation and Recommendation based on Tracer study

In general, the University has been offering programmes that prepare students for the world of work. Many of our graduates work in the area appropriate to their studies. However, each kulliyah should do a more specific tracer study for their graduates. Our students were also sufficiently exposed to community services and Islamic oriented activities during their study years. Even though the students found the facilities acceptable, at an average of around 4.0, there seems to be a lot of improvement that could be done.

While the data presented provide generally good indicators that our programmes are creating a viable workforce that is in demand, there is still room for improvement and some cause for concern. It is not clear why Medicine (KOM), Dentistry (KOD) and Pharmacy (KOP) graduates do not identify themselves as mainly working in the health field. Of the categorized sectors, the percentage of Science (KOS) graduates who are in education and who are in the scientific sector are equally divided - and that figure is actually low at 15.8% each. There is also an indicator that going into the education sector is a popular option among the graduates, even for those not from Education (KOED).

Each kulliyah should use these findings to enhance their programmes and engage with their graduates - those who remain in the field and those who do not - for feedback as part of their critical review and to have a better understanding of the general patterns shown here. Again, while employment is not the sole indicator of a programme's quality, employability is; and more importantly, the impact the programmes have made of the graduates is of utmost concern - and this can only be done with more intense engagements with the graduates of each programme.



Student Feedback Survey (SFS)

There are four parts of questionnaires for this survey, the summary of the results are shown in Table 3.10.

Part 1 is on the lecturer's pedagogical aspects and his/her impact. Part 2 is an assessment of the course itself - in terms of its applicability and relevance from the student's perspective. Part 3 is on the facilities (teaching and learning and other resources) at the kulliyah level, and Part 4 is on the facilities provided by the University in general.

Table 3.10 Summary of the Student Feedback Survey (2019/2020 Semester 1)

Centre of studies	% of student rating at least "Agree" on lecturers teaching and Conduct (Part 1)	% of student rating at least "Agree" on Course (Part 2)	% of student satisfaction rating at least "Good" on Kulliyah facilities (Part 3)	% of student satisfaction rating at least "Good" on the University facilities (Part 4)
AIKOL	97.38%	97.39%	55.08%	54.75%
KENMS	96.27%	96.20%	66.32%	66.65%
KAED	96.48%	96.88%	68.31%	66.50%
KICT	95.33%	95.34%	80.90%	66.08%
KOE	96.08%	95.95%	62.83%	61.32%
KIRKHS	96.37%	95.84%	63.17%	65.85%
KAHS	99.26%	98.19%	78.87%	77.90%
KON	99.15%	99.09%	90.43%	85.15%
KOS	98.38%	98.27%	62.79%	67.13%
KOM	99.00%	98.37%	72.93%	74.06%
KOD	99.30%	98.99%	63.24%	66.85%
KOP	99.56%	98.23%	77.58%	72.74%
KOED	97.87%	98.17%	72.19%	69.81%
KLM	96.18%	96.42%	74.79%	66.09%
CELPAD	96.43%	95.68%	78.87%	78.16%
IIBF	97.27%	97.11	82.13%	77.14%
ISTAC	87.78%	100%	57.65%	46.96%

Part 1 of the SFS consists of fifteen (15) items relating to perceptions of students on how lecturers conduct their lessons. The overall results show that students are having the right impact of teaching, highly satisfied with the teaching and learning process.

Part 2 consists of 15 questions on the actual course itself. As in the teaching and learning experience, the results are also showing that the students are highly agreeable with the quality of the curriculum.

Part 3 and 4 pose the questions on the facilities at the Kulliyah and University with 17 and 23 items respectively. These items include classroom and labs, cafeteria and campus safety, IIUM website and transportation services. There are mixed reactions from the survey, with newer Kulliyahs scoring higher satisfaction ratings compared to the older Kulliyahs for both kulliyah and university facilities.

Interpretation and Recommendation of Student Feedback Survey

Students were extremely satisfied with the quality of the lecturers' teaching and conduct and the quality of courses, with more than 90% of the students rating these two aspects as satisfactory. However, students were not happy with the quality of facilities provided by the Kulliyahs and University, with less than 60% of the students rating the facilities as satisfactory. The University authority should address this perennial issue of unsatisfactory facilities if we really want to lead the way.



“
And there is no
creature on [or within]
the earth or bird that
flies with its wings
except [that they are]
communities like you.
We have not neglected
in the Register a thing.
Then unto their Lord
they will be gathered.”

(Qur'an, 6:38)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

UniCORE

The University is recommended to rationalise the structure and content of the present UniCORE courses (and the philosophy behind it) and the old version of UniCORE prior to formalizing the SAF. Following this, all members of staff need to be given a briefing on UniCORE so that they have a succinct and working understanding of UniCORE.

Given that UniCORE is an important element in SAF towards nurturing students imbued with Islamic values and strong empathy towards others and the environment, and while being critical and grounded in evidence, the marginalisation of UniCORE courses should cease. More efforts should be made to support the implementation of these courses to achieve their objectives.

UniCORE instructors, if given formal training in assessment, would be able to review the present assessment and to propose informed changes to their courses. Hence, a continuous professional development programme to this effect should be constructed and implemented. Above all, the University is recommended to provide continuous training for UniCORE instructors and to invest on the design of a handbook on teaching skills and assessment for facilitators and instructors.

As the University decided to maintain the UniCORE setup, concerted effort must be made to send strong signals to the University population that UniCORE courses are important to the students. We do not, in any way, suggest that all members of staff should know everything about the UniCORE courses, but they at least ought to be aware of the whole UniCORE structure. Morale support from the University, in this respect, must be done deliberately and visibly to the University population.

Instructors

The practise of prioritising hiring academic staff with a doctoral or professional qualification instead of the minimum masters qualification should continue. It is evident that their expertise in their area of specialisation is translated into the classrooms and the content coverage of the curriculum. Having said that, the opportunities for the academic staff to improve themselves should be made readily available either via the existing sabbatical attachments, invigorating the industrial attachment allocation, or continued series of workshops and seminars in various pedagogical aspects, and also in the Islamisation and the *Insān Sejahtera* concepts and practices. Teachers teach for the future in the formal settings, and they become role models beyond these formal settings, hence it is important that they be given the support and opportunity to fulfill these responsibilities, while also becoming the referral persons in their areas of expertise.

Teaching Materials

The University is also recommended to re-introduce the Production of Instructional Materials Unit at OCAP (this Unit was previously handled by them) to facilitate and advise UniCORE instructors in designing teaching materials, particularly those in digital formats. The services offered by this unit should be extended to other lecturers throughout the years. The University should note that, although more and more lecturers are becoming familiar with the state-of-the-art teaching materials, there are still those who possess the ideas but lack the skills and equipment to use or manipulate digital format materials.

Facilities

Satisfaction with facilities - be them teaching and learning, research or living facilities - has not been high across the various fact-finding tools. It is therefore important for the University management to look into this more systematically, and prioritise what needs to be up-graded or installed, even removed, to provide a learning, working and living environment that befits a university that is leading the way.

Alumni

The alumni has been largely an under-utilised segment of the University community. The past few years has seen an increase in the involvement of alumni in various university programmes, but it can be enhanced. The alumni should be engaged not just in intermittent programmes, but in the academic pursuits being done in the University.

Academic programmes

The academic programmes continue to be the backbone of the university. Generally, many alumni are happy with the formal education that they received. The University should continue its quest to offer the best programmes, instead of resting on its laurels. The first-year employment rate of our graduates could be improved, but doing so requires the programmes to undertake a critical review of their current practices. However, it is something all programmes should do, and SAF is a way to frame the critical review that they should undertake.

Islamisation

As a thrust of the University, Islamisation efforts have been felt, both during their tenure as students of the University, but perhaps more importantly, afterwards as these alumni make their marks in the world. A major take-away from the FGDs is the realisation that Islamisation should be at not just the domain of knowledge, but has to be in the behavioural domain, and perhaps more importantly, in the affective domain. Islamisation processes and Islamic values should be internalised by all the University community such that they are manifested in the behaviours and the thinking processes. In the academic programmes, UniCORE is only the base to begin this effort, and it then should be picked up and addressed in the core academic courses too.

POSTGRADUATE (PG) PROGRAMMES

Patterns of enrolment

Over the past years, the enrolment number of PG students ranges between 5,000 plus students to 6,000 plus students. The ratio between international and local students varies between 40-60%. In 2019, the highest number of international students comes from Indonesia, followed by Bangladesh, Oman, China and Algeria. IIUM's PG programmes have always been attractive to students around the region, Middle East, central Asia and African region.

Table 3.11. Enrolment of PG students by nation as of June 2020

POSTGRADUATE LIST (A-K)	
COUNTRY	TOTAL
AFGHANISTAN	5
ALBANIA	1
ALGERIA	124
AUSTRALIA	3
AZERBAIJAN	1
BAHRAIN	5
BANGLADESH	325
BELGIUM	1
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	3
BRUNEI	5
BURKINA FASO	5
CAMBODIA	12
CANADA	15
CHAD	5
CHINA	131
COMOROS	13
DJIBOUTI	4
EGYPT	59
ERITREA	2
ETHIOPIA	6
GAMBIA	4
GERMANY	1
GHANA	10
GREECE	1
GUINEA	39

POSTGRADUATE LIST (L-Z)	
COUNTRY	TOTAL
LAOS	2
LEBANON	1
LIBERIA	1
LIBYA	79
MALAWI	2
MALAYSIA	3326
MALDIVES	35
MALI	7
MAURITANIA	10
MEXICO	1
MOROCCO	11
MOZAMBIQUE	1
MYANMAR	15
NEPAL	1
NETHERLANDS	3
NEW ZEALAND	1
NIGER	2
NIGERIA	74
OMAN	327
PAKISTAN	72
PALESTINE	68
PERAK	1
PHILIPPINES	5
QATAR	24
RUSSIA	6
SAUDI ARABIA	64

POSTGRADUATE LIST (A-K)	
COUNTRY	TOTAL
HONG KONG	1
INDIA	111
INDONESIA	380
IRAN	24
IRAQ	62
IVORY COAST	2
JAPAN	8
JORDAN	30
KAZAKHSTAN	5
KENYA	4
KOSOVO	1
KUWAIT	64
TOTAL	1562

POSTGRADUATE LIST (L-Z)	
COUNTRY	TOTAL
SENEGAL	2
SERBIA	1
SIERRA LEONE	3
SINGAPORE	43
SOMALIA	84
SRI LANKA	18
SUDAN	58
SYRIA	33
TAIWAN	1
TAJIKISTAN	3
TANZANIA	17
THAILAND	48
TOGO	1
TUNISIA	6
TURKEY	56
U.A.E	30
UGANDA	6
UNITED KINGDOM	4
USA	12
UZBEKISTAN	7
VIETNAM	2
YEMEN	79
TOTAL	4653
OVERALL TOTAL	6215

The top five popular Ph.D. Programmes are:

- i. Doctor of Philosophy (Education)
- ii. Doctor of Philosophy in Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage
- iii. Doctor of Philosophy (Law)
- iv. Doctor of Philosophy (Islamic Banking and Finance)
- v. Doctor of Philosophy (Engineering)

For Masters level, the top 3 popular programmes are:

- i. Master of Education
- ii. Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage
- iii. Master of Science (Islamic Banking and Finance)

Mental Health

PG studies can be quite stressful to students due to many reasons. Being away from family and beloved ones can take a toll on a person. What more when one is living on a budget or trying to stretch every single penny to make ends meet. Trying to maintain a good balance between working, family and studies is not something that not all PG students are capable of. Naturally, family commitments, death of close family members can cause depression or even cascade to bigger mental health issue. Over the past few years, the percentage of students seeking leave from studies on the basis of mental health issue has been on the rise. In 2015, the number of students granted leave on mental health issues only constitute one percent. This has accelerated to 4.8 percent in 2018.

Table 3.12 Students requesting study leave due to mental health issues (2015-2020)

Year and Mental Health Details	Count of Students	Total Percentage by Year
2015	4	1.10%
2016	8	2.04%
2017	8	1.97%
2018	19	4.88%
2019	19	4.12%
2020	5	1.75%

Sejahtera Academic Framework and the Current PG programmes

The Master programmes differ from bachelor programmes in that they are offered in 3 modes: (i) course work (ii) mixed mode (iii) research. Generally, the existing programmes offer specialization or in-depth studies in a discipline or niche areas of interest. As PG studies are principally taken by students to increase chances of employability with the additional skills and knowledge obtained, most of the PG programmes in IIUM aim exactly that i.e. to enhance career prospects or facilitate career change or to fit the practical needs of the industry. The design, field and nature of PG programmes are inherently specialized and focused to cater for adult learner level, so the course outline and delivery may not necessarily reflect the *Sejahtera* Framework. Members of the Board of studies also consist of experts in the professional field. As a result, most of the old PG programmes are not structured along the lines of the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework.

FGD: Issues and Challenges

A series of FGD were conducted at several Center of Studies between April to June 2020 to reflect whether the existing design of both Master and Ph.D. programs reflect the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework. From the feedback provided by KLM, INHART, KOE, KAHS, KON, KOM, KIRKHS, KICT and AIKOL the report is that the overall design of the PG programmes need to be revised to properly reflect the shift in IIUM's vision and mission, particularly the emphasis on SDGs and Education 2030.

However, both sustainable development goals and *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah* are portrayed heavily in funded research projects where graduate students are involved. From the total of research projects participated by PG students, about 205 of them are involved in projects that are aligned to these two missions. Although the research projects may not be attributing to any single research objectives on the IIUM mission and vision, yet the output of the research projects contributes to these ideal objectives.

Focus Group Discussions (FGD): Issues and Challenges

A series of FGDs were conducted at the Centre of Studies to seek their views of whether or not the existing design of IIUM PG programmes reflects the SAF. Feedback from the FGDs indicated that Islamisation as the IIUM philosophy of knowledge is sufficiently embedded into the PG taught courses and research. The remaining issue is whether the other core components of the SAF such as Education 2030, SDG and FPK have equally been considered as well. It has to be noted that even though IIUM's foray into SDG started only in the last one or two years, PG research analysing issues based on SDG has been done for many years albeit without any formal direction from the University.

UniCORE

The first two Master programmes were introduced in 1986 with the graduation of its first batch of economics and law students. Since then IIUM has introduced and run a total of 77 Master and 37 Ph.D. programs. As IIICE has been the backbone of academic programmes in IIUM, it has been embedded sufficiently in the program learning outcomes (PLOs) and course learning outcomes (CLOs) of PG taught courses and research programmes in IIUM.

Islamisation (and its variations) courses are considered by all Centres of Studies as core courses. At present, the Islamisation courses are offered in IIUM under different course titles and names depicting the level of mastery at the philosophical and theoretical construct, the difference of approaches and perspectives as well as depth and nuances of the methodologies adopted. The variety of names in which Islamisation-related courses are offered demonstrates that the content has been fine-tuned to address specific issues in the disciplines.

An exposure of Islamisation at its epistemological perspective would have been the most ideal form of training for graduates carrying the bandwagon of IIIICE. Inclusive in this narrative is to train the IIUM graduates to be able to articulate why Islamicisation of human knowledge is critical. Against that background, IIUM graduates must be able to integrate the Islamic values or perspectives into contemporary human knowledge, culture and civilization as well as relevantisation of Islamic revealed knowledge in all human sciences. This is the forte of the course Islamicisation of Human Knowledge taught at the International Institute of Islamic Thoughts and Civilisation (ISTAC).

A more advanced course on Islamisation is that taught at Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences. The course exposes the students to the various models of Islamisation of Knowledge as propounded by renown Muslim scholars such as Syed Muhammad Naquib al Attas, Ismail Raji al Faruqi, Taha Jabir al Alwani and Louay M. Safi. The course further offers a critique to the current approaches of Islamisation as well as proposing theoretical construct for the framing of suitable methodology for the relevant disciplines. For the Department of Arabic Language and Literature, for example, the process of Islamisation in linguistic studies is studied, whilst at the Department of *Fiqh* and *Usul Fiqh* students are exposed to selected jurisprudential issues such as *tajdīd*, *ta'sil*, *takyif* and *takamul* between sciences.

Issues in Islamisation of Knowledge, a generic course for the PG students at the KIRKHS, focusses on the intellectual content of Islamisation of Knowledge by examining methodological issues and comprehends the history of *'islāh* and *tajdīd*. The course digs deep into the conceptual and methodological issues of Islamisation of human sciences, whilst exposing the students at the same time the need to embark on the relevantisation of Islamisation to human sciences. For the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, the additional component is theory building in the form of social theory in *tawhid* paradigm.

Islamic worldview that focusses on individuals that understand his/her relation with his/her Creator, his/her relation with man, and his/her relation with universe could mould IIUM graduates' personality and character to someone that could effectively carry his task responsibly as a *Khalīfah* in this world. The Kulliyah of Information and Communication Technology (KICT) takes this angle in its *Kulliyah* core course entitled Islamic Worldview on ICT and Society. The course takes this theme deep to its heart in its appraisal of the nature, characteristics and foundations of the Islamic society in relation to ICT and values. The course further seeks to inculcate the highest Islamic values and ethics in arriving at an equilibrium in the application of latest developments in the domain of ICT. It seeks to mould the character of IIUM graduates to be of excellent professional conduct and code of ethics.

Muslim scientists of the past have left behind valuable scientific and technological developments that have formed the bedrock of the current modern science. By harnessing the contributions of the Muslim scientists of the past, IIUM graduates would be able to appreciate their critical role to continue

their struggle as well as to draw lessons that could solve the current educational and political crisis of the Muslim societies. The INHART course entitled Values, Technology and Society takes this angle as it is deemed critical that Muslims continue to come up with constructive solutions to human problem within the Islamic worldview and values.

For Kuantan campus, the practice is to offer a Unified Islamic Input for Postgraduate students from five Kulliyahs i.e. Science, Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry and Nursing. This course which has been developed by a team of academics from all the Kulliyahs in Kuantan is classified as both the Kulliyah and University course and is required for graduation. This course is quite comprehensive in its coverage, embracing within its ambit not only the historical development of Islam, Science and Technology and the achievement of the Muslim scientists in the past, but also dealt with Islamisation of the sciences itself, the inculcation of Islam's spiritual and moral values in the mind, personality and the conduct of the graduates. Among the Islamic virtues sought to be nurtured through the course is integrity, trustworthiness, perfection, manners and sincerity. The course also seeks in the first place to give the students with a grounded knowledge in the concept of Islamic worldview (Philosophy) that would be able to guide them in their future undertakings, not only in their personal life, but also in any endeavours between them and other humans, the whole society and humanity at large. As scientists, they are faced with many ethical and social responsibilities and the course seek to train them to make the most Islamically ethical choice. The ethical decorum that scientists have to foster extends also in their research, particularly that involving human clinical and animal researches). In tandem with the onslaught of climate change, the course aims to expose the students to the latest technological development in the area of green technologies.

The Kulliyah of Allied Health Sciences' Islamic Input for Health Professionals dedicate itself to train IIUM graduates to appreciate their role in enhancing and sustaining the Islamic beliefs, values and practices in their research and professional undertaking. In doing so, the course starts with an elucidation of the classification of Islamic science, before foraying into the historical contribution of the Muslim scientists of the past to modern medicine and public health as well as the importance of upholding high Islamic values and ethics in the profession.

Of particular mention is the AED 6000 course entitled Values, Ethics and Built Environment which has been designated as the core course for all the PG programmes at the Kulliyah of Architectural and Environmental Design such as the Master of Science (Built Environment, Master of Architecture (MAAR), Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP), Master of Science in Quantity Surveying and International Procurement, Master of Science in Building Services Engineering (MSBSE), Master of Science in Asset and Facilities Management and Doctor of Philosophy (Built Environment). The course aims to train the students to grasp the essence of Islamic Ethical Philosophy as derived from the two principal sources of Islam: the Holy *Qur'ān* and the Prophet's *sunnah*. At the end of the course, students should be able to understand the

implications of Islamic values and Ethics for the various specialisations within the Kulliyah of Architectural and Environmental Design and their own roles as professionals in their area. Of principal significance is the emphasis on the overwhelming importance of achieving the five objectives of the *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah* in any projects embarked upon by an IIUM graduates. The course also propagates for the peaceful coexistence with the environment and its implications for mankind's future developments.

It would be interesting to note that for some kulliyahs there is no overarching Islamisation course as the above. Two centres of studies adopted this approach i.e. the Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyah of Laws and the Institute of Islamic Banking and Finance. The rationale for this approach is to embed Islamic perspective in all the courses offered within the programme instead of dedicating a single course that dwells into the theories of Islamisation of the disciplines itself. In the Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyah of Laws taught Master in Comparative Laws and LL.M, the Islamic perspectives are well spread in the courses offered such as Islamic law of Transaction or Islamic Finance Contract. In IIIBF, a number of 14 courses are taught covering both the Western science as well as the Islamic perspective within the same course. These courses range from the financial system, economics, capital market, banking and wealth management.

The variety of which Islamisation and Islamic ethics courses are being taught bring into question whether there is a need for a single unified university required course (UniCORE-PG) known as Islamisation and Integration for the PG students that cuts across all disciplines. It is not possible to represent all the critical components of Islamisation courses in this short write up, but suffice to say that the wealth of analysis and studies on the epistemological basis, the theoretical construct, the methodologies, the history and evolution as well as contemporary relevance have been significantly and substantially extrapolated in these courses.

Elective Courses

In terms of elective courses, the master's degree (coursework mode) and (mixed mode) comes with a variety of electives. However, these electives are only open to the students in that particular kulliyah only. Free electives, as proposed to UG students throughout the university, have recently been pioneered by INHART in their MAHIM programmes.

Co-Curricular

In the domain of co-curricular, student activities can come in the form of (i) non-credited extra-curricular (ii) student clubs (iii) societies and (iv) sports. All of these forms of activities are available in IIUM and are heavily supported by the UG students. Because of work and family demands, PG students are not known to be overly active in student societies and student activities. In addition, PG students, by nature are more mature and independent and should be able to carry out activities, either of spiritual, sports, recreational or communal nature,

of their own accord with the least instruction from the university. Unfortunately, this culture is lacking in IIUM. To ignite more interest in co-curricular activities, there is a suggestion that PG students are treated like UG students in all the privileges and recognition such as star rating, gap year as well as special award for active involvement in co-curricular activities. It has to be acknowledged that as more and more students sign up for PG programmes immediately after graduation without any working experience, their exposure and training in co-curricular would be relevant for job seeking purposes as prospective employers still prefer graduates with well-rounded and balanced personalities.

As PG programmes are by nature require students to work independently, continuous engagement with the students in the form of activities would be able to mobilise the PG students' involvement in co-curricular activities. In light of heavy academic demands, it is advisable that co-curricular activities are kept as optional and non-credited. The suggestion is that extra activities can be conducted outside of the classroom to promote and create awareness on the IIUM Graduate attributes in the form of seminars, talks, and webinars including any other courses that prepare students for IR4.0.

All the Centres of Studies agree that there must be a more concerted effort to acclimatise the PG students into the IIUM ideals through student activities rather than through formal courses. An example of this is to have an annual compulsory *'ibādah* camp, flagship programmes, Service Learning Malaysia (SULAM) activities, community engagement, or sports activities where PG communities can meet and more importantly interact with each other. In addition, keeping in mind that some PG students may have minimal Islamic orientation and exposure, it is worthwhile to explore the possibility of offering *Qur'ānic* classes for selected PG students on an optional basis.

Survey Result

A survey was conducted on the SAF framework between June-July 2020 and a total of 484 PG students responded to the survey. The survey reveals that the students found the Kulliyah Required courses have been highly beneficial in enriching their spiritual engagement, knowledge of Islamic worldview and personal well-being.

Table 3.13 PG students' perception on UniCORE-PG

No.	Do you agree that, the University Required Courses;	Agreed and Strongly agreed	Disagreed and Strongly disagreed
1	Enrich your spiritual engagement?	77%	3.70%
2	Enrich your knowledge on Islamic worldview?	78%	2.20%
3	Are useful for your personal wellbeing?	75%	3.30%
4	Have been efficiently organised?	62%	7.50%
5	Have been taught effectively by course instructor?	73%	4.80%
6	Develop your soft skill such as communication skills?	68%	6%
7	Have duplicated content with your undergraduate courses?	35%	24%
8	Do not meet their objectives?	19.50%	48%
9	The load of the courses does not reflect the credit hour?	23%	39%
10	Class schedule caters to the need of postgraduate students?	52%	9.30%

Despite the lack of courses that focus on soft skills, due to the nature of PG programmes that require presentation as mode of assessment, more than 70% of the students found that the courses have been instrumental in developing their soft skills.

Table 3.13 PG students' perception on the core courses

No.	Do you agree that, your programme / Specialization Courses;	Agreed and Strongly agreed	Disagreed and Strongly disagreed
1	Are useful for your personal well-being?	75%	4.80%
2	Have been efficiently organised?	68%	6%
3	Have been taught effectively by course instructor?	71%	5.50%
4	Develop your soft skill such as communication skills?	72%	6%
5	Has duplicated content with your undergraduate courses?	32%	27%
6	Do not meet their objectives?	21%	49%
7	The load of the courses does not reflect the credit hour?	23%	61%

Most of the students agree that the curriculum should be revised to factor SDGs, FPK, *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharīah* and prepare them for the onslaught of IR4.0. The result of the survey indicates exactly that i.e. the majority of the students view the curriculum to be lacking in that sense and thus ripe for overall review.

Table 3.14 PG students' agreement on way forward for UniCORE-PG

No.	To what extent do you agree that your University required course should;	Agreed and Strongly agreed	Disagreed and Strongly disagreed
1	Integrate Education Sustainable Development in the courses?	70%	4%
2	Integrate <i>Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan</i> / National Philosophy Education in the courses?	57%	8%
3	Integrate <i>Maqāṣid Ash-Sharīah</i> in the courses?	72%	4%
4	Integrate 21st century learning strategies in teaching and learning?	77%	2.60%

Whilst most respondents conveyed satisfaction with the academic component of the program, many are not happy with the lack of activities held for PG students, resulting them not being integrated into the kulliyah's activities. Quite a substantial percentage of the students are not happy with the class schedule which to them does not cater to the need of the postgraduate students.

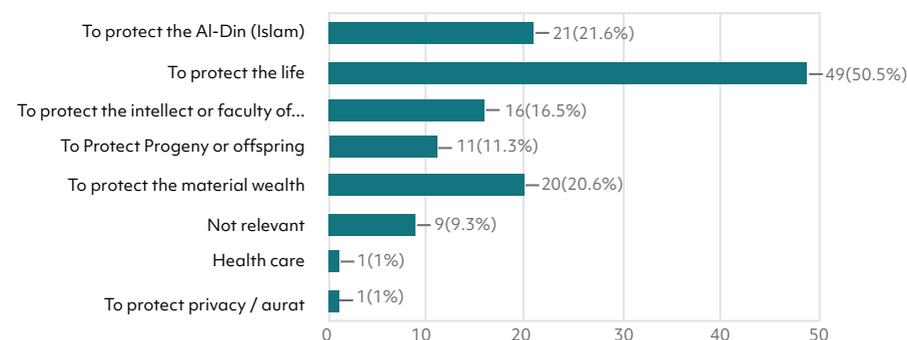
Table 3.15 PG students' agreement on potential UniCORE subjects

No.	Do you agree that the following courses are to be offered to ALL postgraduate?	Agreed and Strongly agreed	Disagreed and Strongly disagreed
1	Big data analysis	69%	7.30%
2	Coding	54%	14%
3	Virtual Reality	57%	9.80%
4	Fintech	50%	10.60%
5	Halaqah	53%	11%
6	Islamic Civilisation	68%	9%
7	Islamic Worldview	71%	6.60%
8	Service Learning Malaysia - University For Society	34%	8.60%
9	Tilawah	54%	12%
10	Usrah	48%	14%

Alignment of Research to *Sejahtera Academic Framework*

The massive promotion of the new direction of the University has somewhat been beneficial to the research focus of the PG students. In a 2019 survey, 97 research students admitted that SDG and *Maqāshid Ash-Sharī'ah* are portrayed heavily in their research. In the hierarchy of *Maqāshid Ash-Sharī'ah* for example, 50% of the thesis relates to protection of life; 21% relates to protection of faith, 20% for the protection of wealth and 16% for the protection of intellect.

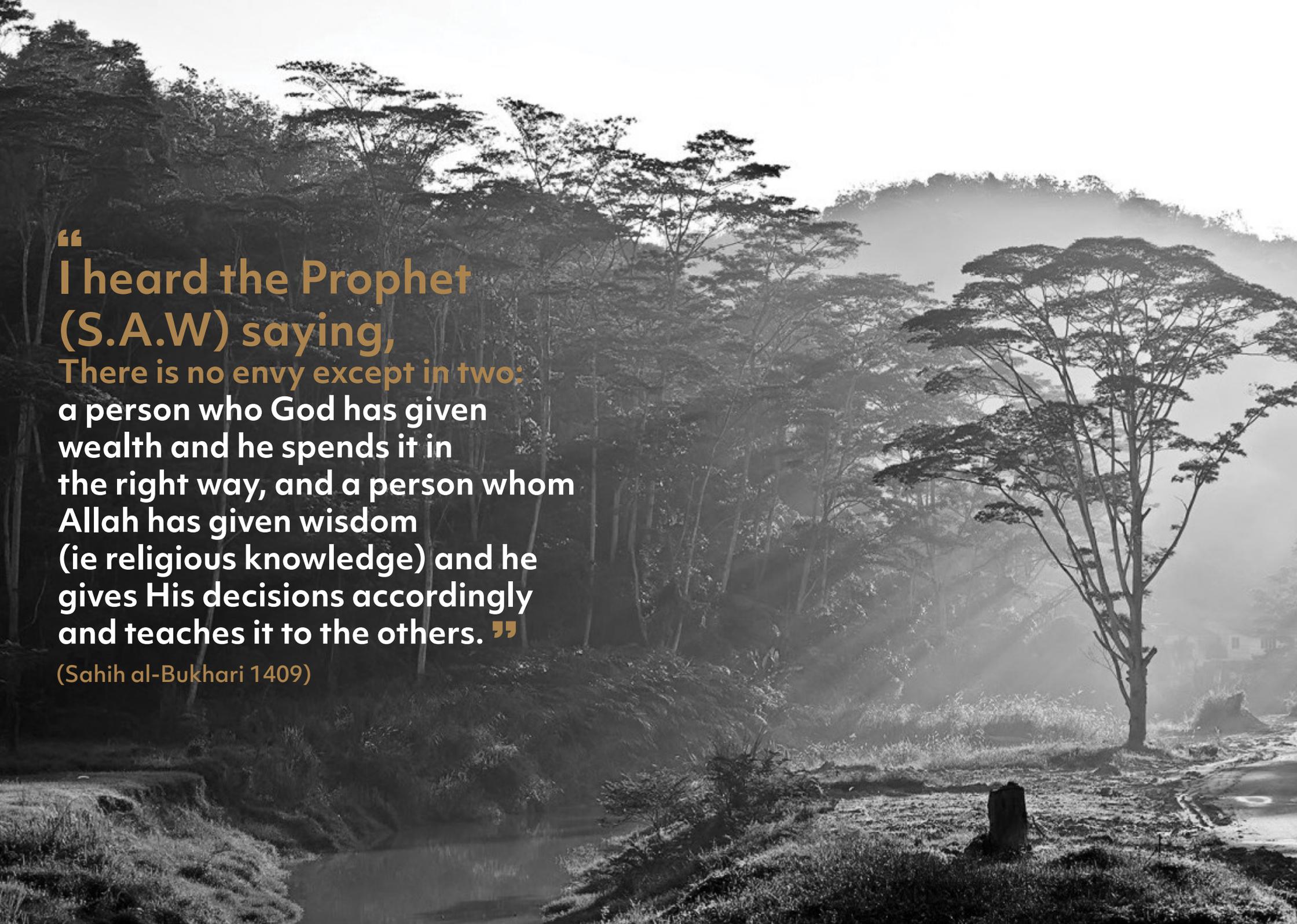
Maqāshid Ash-Sharī'ah is the Objectives of Islamic Law (Please select 1 objective that is closest to your research field)



In the same token, a substantial number of Master and Phd thesis can be ascribed to the SDGs with the highest percentage to good health and wellbeing (39.2%); quality education (22.7%) sustainable cities and communities (21.6%), peace, justice and strong institution (18%) and decent work and economic growth (16.5%).

Conclusion

The various environmental scanning exercises have provided a triangulation analysis that confirms what many in the University have known - that while our academic programmes are of good standard, they need to be enhanced to become truly an Islamic model of international standards. Academic and non-academic staff alike, and also the students, have to go outside of their bubble to be aware of the various opportunities for growth and development available to them. The University community also needs to leave the comfort zone of their silos and move towards a shared platform to materialise the shared vision and mission of the University. These findings have also identified both the existing major strengths and the major weaknesses. One of the major findings is the incomplete integration between students' campus experience inside and outside their classes, and the existence of pockets of initiatives by various agencies. Another is lack of adequate monitoring in UniCORE as it involves coordination among agencies. SAF is offered as a pathway towards this integration and towards pushing the University forward as an integrated entity in its pursuit of excellence - academic or non-academic, for now and for the future.



“
I heard the Prophet
(S.A.W) saying,
There is no envy except in two:
a person who God has given
wealth and he spends it in
the right way, and a person whom
Allah has given wisdom
(ie religious knowledge) and he
gives His decisions accordingly
and teaches it to the others. ”

(Sahih al-Bukhari 1409)

INTRODUCTION

The curriculum is a vital aspect of translating the vision and mission into a tangible process. However, it is only one part of the process. A curriculum document is meaningless without the right people implementing it the way it is designed to be.

The optimal curriculum itself is complex, but it has to be designed with the ecosystem (i.e., the supporting elements) in mind, especially the human factors. Hence, this section will present the guiding principles of the IUM curriculum arising from the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework followed by looking at the specific elements, particularly the pedagogy.

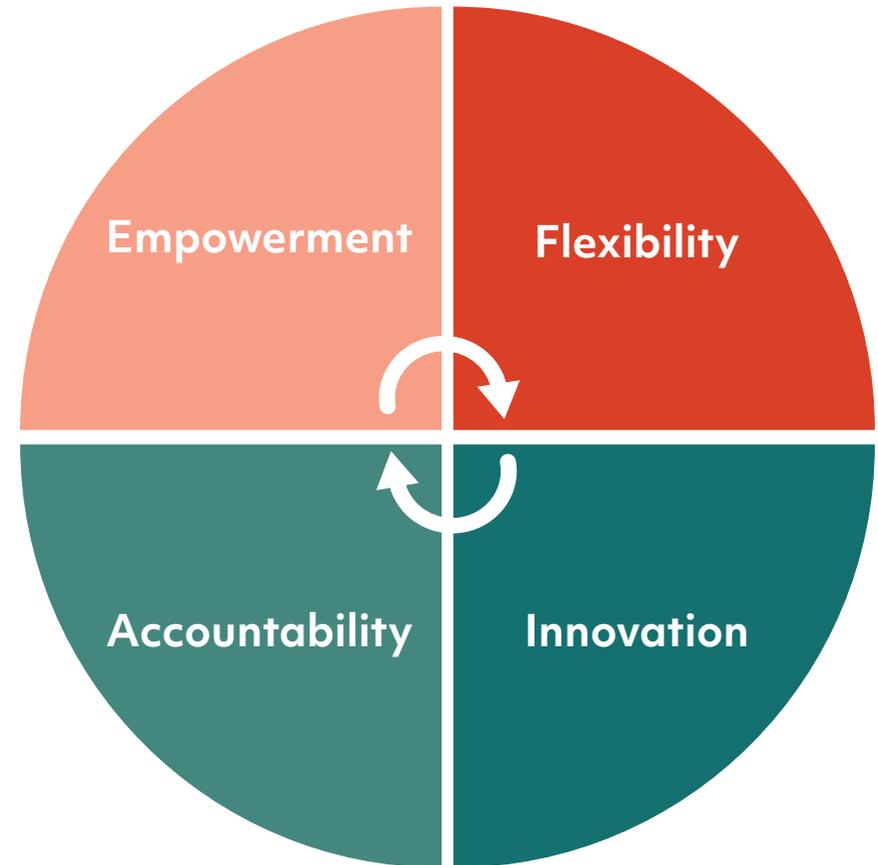
The overarching principle of the academic framework is a humanising principle i.e., **the belief in the potential of the human being and putting people first.**

Decisions are not made based on logistics or expediency, but on what is the most appropriate practice to make the learning experience a most impactful one for those involved. Structure must follow strategy.

The specific guiding principles in developing and implementing the curriculum are **empowerment, flexibility, innovation and accountability.**

Before going to these specific guiding principles, an explanation of SAF is given.

Guiding principles: Empowerment, Flexibility, Innovation and Accountability



EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment is the “authority or power given to someone to do something.” In the context of SAF, empowerment can be seen in various ways - the Senate empowers the Centres of Studies to make decisions pertaining to their particular programmes, and the Centre of Studies empowers the instructors, to make decisions pertaining to their particular course.

Properly implemented, empowerment would bring about an environment that enables everyone to be proactive and to take charge of their own study and work environment to effect positive changes to everyone, as befits the characteristic of a *khalifah*, or a leader.

Programme Owners and Lecturers

- The programme owner is empowered to develop a curriculum within the relevant standards that also upholds the SAF
- The lecturer is empowered to make decisions regarding the best practices for his/her classes especially with regard to pedagogy and assessment
- This includes the opportunity to develop new elective courses that are crafted to the lecturer’s interest and expertise

Students

- Students are empowered to decide on their academic pathway within the framework given
 - The free elective courses allow the students to explore their interests beyond the traditional boundary of their respective programmes
 - Whenever possible, students are given academic autonomy (instead of, for example, being dictated on what courses to take each semester)
 - Deciding on their own minor, and regulating their own learning to attain that chosen minor pathway
- Students should also be empowered to engage with external parties towards their self-development, e.g., organising their own career talks, hosting their own seminars, creating and running community engagement projects

Unless absolutely necessary, *rigid study plans should be gradually phased out.*

FLEXIBILITY

Empowerment can only be realised when there is flexibility in the curriculum.

Flexibility is not about bending rules, but it is about giving choices to both the students and the instructors.

Flexibility is the ability to be easily modified. The COVID19 pandemic has also brought home the point that universities need to have the flexibility culture ingrained in our system so as to ensure that we are able to face instant and unplanned disruptions without sacrificing the quality of education being offered.

What can be made flexible? A part of the curriculum structure – hence the **free electives**. The main aim of having open electives courses for IIUM students is to increase the breadth of their knowledge. It encourages students to pursue their other interests that, instead of distracting them from their main area of studies, would enable them to appreciate the complexity of the world around them, equipping them with more knowledge and skill sets to be an informed citizen in an uncertain world.

These free electives are a portion of the curriculum that is set aside that allow the students to choose from any of the Senate-endorsed courses offered by IIUM or by other recognized universities. It is no longer “above and beyond” the curriculum as per the pre-SAF practise. If the students so choose, they can plan these electives around a minor, enabling them to gain a deeper understanding and better skill set in another area of study.

The cross-listing of courses between different programmes is also a feature of this flexibility. The processes of exemption of related courses and transfer of courses will also be made less complicated administratively.

The **pedagogy** and **assessment** are also other elements that should be made flexible. As long as standards and learning outcomes are met, instructors should be allowed to run their courses and assess their students as they see fit, using the constructive alignment concept as their guide; including applying the blended learning approach.

Scheduling is also amenable to the flexibility principle. Courses may not need to run only according to the length of the regular semester, or only from 8-5. E.g., selected courses may be offered as modules, *tilawāh* classes may not need regular whole class meetings but work like tutorial sessions. Do what works best to achieve the learning outcomes, not what is easiest to manage.

Venue may be made flexible too. Face-to-face classes may not need to be held only in classrooms, or designated learning spaces for the entire semester.

Instructors are empowered to have their classes in other suitable venues befitting the learning activities of the day. The alternative venue is one that fits the need of the learning experience (e.g., a gardening class meets in the garden, a site visit for one of the class meetings for an architecture class, a factory visit for an engineering class, a shopping centre visit for a consumer behaviour topic, etc).

Team teaching should also become easier when the relevant information systems are made flexible. But to truly fulfill the spirit of SAF, team teaching means exactly that - **team** teaching, and not just a roster of lecturers going into a certain course presenting their own topics, without relating the part to others and to the students' learning experience. That method of team teaching should not be implemented. Instead, team teaching is chosen as a way to deliver a course because students will benefit from the presence of the various lecturers - who will together as a team continue to be available to the students throughout the running of the course. Collaboration is not worked out only at the lecturers' level - but is seen and experienced by the students in that course.

Again, when flexibility is adopted as a specific guiding principle, unless absolutely necessary, rigid study plans should be phased out.

As programme owners, lecturers, students and other staff are more familiar with the concept of flexibility, is it expected that more elements will become flexible from time to time, leading to the next specific guiding principle - innovation.

INNOVATION

The reason to empower the different parties and to provide a flexible structure is to encourage innovation, including social innovation.

Innovation is a new idea, method, product, etc. for a better outcome.

Empowering the relevant parties and providing a flexible structure should give rise to more innovation.

The innovation may be at the programme level, course level or even topic level.

In a transdisciplinary world, innovation may also mean coming up with new areas of transdisciplinary studies, or new transdisciplinary research projects. We may develop novel niche areas, making IIUM a dynamic centre of excellence, truly leading the way.

The innovation may also be to the pedagogy or the assessment, even to the ways of communicating. Innovative instructors will not simply apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired, but will also come up with new ideas, first befitting the needs of their own students and then expanding this others, perhaps leading towards the improvement of the higher education ecosystem.

Regardless of the form, the idea of innovation is to provide new ways or new solutions for a better learning experience for all parties leading to a better outcome for the students, and a more satisfactory educational experience for both students and instructors.

The COVID19 pandemic and its ensuing disruption is a case in point on how the decision to empower the lecturers to decide on their online platforms and the flexibility given to them led to innovations in the pedagogical and also assessment methods, and how these may also lead to some innovations by the students in their own learning pathway. Some lecturers explored various platforms so as to improve their online social presence, and some created their own social media channels that went beyond the content domain of their subjects, much to the benefit of their students, and others who followed them.

Innovation will lead to better problem-solving skills, and the existence of more out-of-the-box solutions. Particularly from the research-based programmes, the impact of innovation is not confined to the students' growth or the attainment of research patents, but being innovative is to be solving real-world problems facing humanity, providing the community with workable solutions, fulfilling our aim to become *Rahmatan lil- 'Ālamīn*.

ACCOUNTABILITY

All the three principles mentioned previously will only be able to fulfill their intended goals when there is accountability.

Accountability is being responsible and able to justify the decisions made as one is empowered to make those decisions.

E.g. When lecturers choose to use a certain pedagogical tool, they must also be held accountable for the success or failure of that tool.

When lecturers decide to have a site visit as a way to enable students to see a certain manufacturing process being done, they also have to consider the logistics and safety issues, and be accountable for this.

Being empowered, having the flexibility and being innovative should not mean doing as one pleases – instead it means being able to provide a learning experience that one deems the most appropriate for the students when all relevant factors are considered. One then is expected to be able to defend that decision, and provide evidence that it is not only implemented accordingly, but the impact is as intended.

Lecturers are accountable for how they run their courses, students are accountable for their own academic progress and their decisions to participate in the many experiences as students of IIUM, programme owners are

accountable for ensuring the programmes are run as per the standards set by the relevant bodies, Senate is accountable for ensuring that the programmes offered are the best that could be offered.

Hence, governance should continue to be strengthened. Good governance will lead to more empowerment, flexibility and innovations while ensuring accountability. Good governance is not about policing. It is about providing an environment where people are able to grow and develop while not on their ethics and beliefs. Good governance as envisioned in SAF is person-centred, but it is not individual-driven.

As the highest academic body in the University, the Senate is entrusted to ensure this good governance in academic management and policies are in place towards the realisation of SAF.

Accountability to Allah is deeply rooted in our concept of *amānah*. Whatever role we play in the University, discharging our responsibilities and duties to the best of our ability is part of our *amānah* to Allah.

A Different Kind of Impact Factor

The impact of these four (4) specific guiding principles and the general principle of a transformative educational experience should in time be manifested in the classrooms, the student spaces, the staff spaces, the Senate, to name a few. Classrooms become lively places to debate issues and exchange viewpoints. Research labs become active spaces to germinate ideas and provide solutions. Student spaces - the *mahallah*, the cafeterias, the libraries, the recreational spaces, the mosques - are buzzing with students extending their learning experiences beyond the classroom. Staff spaces are also buzzing with discussions on creating new and exciting educational or living experiences, or innovative ideas for research and community engagement. The Senate is alive with careful and informed deliberations on the innovative ideas presented to them, setting the tone for the rest of the academic community.

The administrative agencies are also alive - ongoing collaboration with relevant parties across the board is the norm as everyone seeks to find ways to provide the most effective services. Everyone is enthusiastic about helping each other become better while maintaining the integrity of their work. Just as the classroom goes beyond the walls, work is also not limited to the desk job; however the spirit is one of benevolence and *ukhuwah*.

In short, the *jami'ah insāniah* becomes a reality.

Potential Initiatives

Microcredential

One of the initiatives that will manifest itself from having this flexibility is the offering of micro-credential courses.

Microcredentials is a certification of learning of a smaller set of courses/module/training programme which are designed to provide learners with knowledge, skills, values and competencies in a narrow area of study and/or practice.

To be more competitive, students and working adults can look to micro-credentials to upskill and reskill, as well as create more value and demonstrate a certain level of mastery that would make them more attractive to employers.

It is designed in such a way to make learning and training very flexible, manageable, convenient and affordable. Many developments have enabled and accelerated the emergence and popularity of microcredentials. The knowledge economy of the 21st century intensified the demand for access to education on a lifelong basis.

The Millennium and Sustainable Development Goals called for more access to quality education for all throughout the lifespan of citizens to address socio-economic inequality (see also section 5.1). Open and distance learning which can be delivered through various means such as e-learning, fully online education and mobile learning can be provided to a larger audience overcoming and constraints of the geographical divide.

Given the expertise available in IIUM, and with the flexibility now afforded by SAF, IIUM should be able to position itself as a major provider of micro-credential courses; not just in terms of academic content, but also in terms of providing courses that change the person and advance the society.

MicroMasters

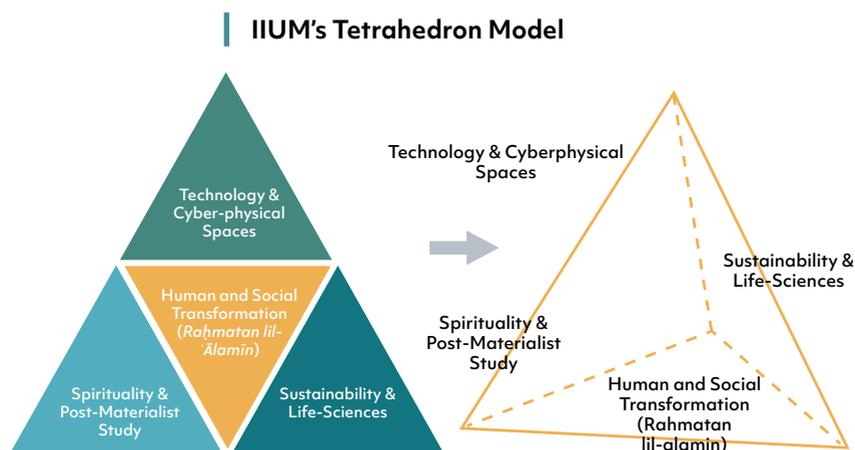
Another off-shoot of microcredential is the micromaster track. Courses offered as microcredentials may later be transferred to a Masters programme should the student decide to embark on a more traditional masters programme. The option of stackable microcredentials leading to a macro credential should be explored by the kulliyahs. The student learning experience could also come from microcredential courses taken in other partner universities. This approach not only allows potential students to embark on a postgraduate education journey in their own schedule prior to actually registering, hence reducing time to formally complete the degree, but also allows them to gain knowledge from experts in other universities at a fraction of the cost. The University should embark on this cross-cutting initiative.

Shared Platforms and Disciplinarity: Multidisciplinary, Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Programmes and Projects.

Another initiative that will also be made easier is inter-kulliyah collaboration. These various forms of disciplinarity may apply to programmes of studies, and research and consultancy projects, pushing forward the goals of ultimately offering transdisciplinary studies and our long-existing goal of integration.

The first level of collaboration is multidisciplinary - in which an issue is tackled from each area giving its own perspective on it. A more integrated approach is the interdisciplinary perspective - in which knowledge and methods from different disciplines are synthesised. A much more advanced approach in transdisciplinary - in which a new framework is developed beyond the disciplinary perspectives.

The tetrahedron model is the adopted framework for collaboration which goes beyond the kulliyahs, looking instead at the thrust of the areas of expertise, seeking a transdisciplinary approach.



The shared platforms become a basis to start a more organised collaboration and integration. Moving from an isolated perspective, academics in IUM are starting to work in multidisciplinary projects which will then move towards a transdisciplinary approach in pushing the boundaries of knowledge toward convergence, creating new areas of knowledge and partnering that are integrated and holistic, providing solutions towards humankind in a seamless journey in humanising education.

Value-added Electives

Most programmes have now adopted and offered free elective courses. A free elective course is a course open to all students in the University, is counted as part of the graduation audit, and is taken by students according to their choice,

not imposed on them. With the flexibility afforded by SAF, it is hoped that some of the courses will be extended to allow students to gain additional credentials. For example, the *tilawah* courses could become part of a competency framework for *tilawah* teaching certification, which interested and eligible students may embark on. These upskilling pathways could become a normal part of the IUM learning experience in the near future, as we equip students with more specific skills that will enable them to cope well in the uncertainties plaguing the world at large.

COMMUNITY CO-LEARNING (FORMAL+ INFORMAL) BEYOND CLASSROOM

The complex dynamics of global and local issues today have forced us to rethink and reevaluate our education system to remain relevant as higher education institutions. The constant change in the nature of issues on the ground demands us to be more involved and reorient our curriculum to not merely gaining knowledge from the textbooks or journals, but taking the community and nature as the teacher. The curriculum now should be able to address not just 'To Know' in the UNESCO's Pillars of Education, but extending until 'To Be', 'To Do', 'To Live together' and finally 'To become'.

In order to address this need, the reorientation needs to include soft skills such as systemic thinking, transdisciplinary cognitive skills, leadership skills, and communication skills as these skills are deemed important to answer the issues. Unfortunately these skills are not fully taught in formal classrooms and not easily acquired in lecture halls or laboratory settings. These skills are usually gained in the informal settings of co-curriculum. Realising the dire need to change this orientation, thus it is imperative that the role of 'used-to-be' informal learning get strengthened and embedded in the formal curriculum.

IUM in its journey to humanise education has decided to strengthen its curriculum through informal learning i.e community learning. This community co-learning is no longer an activity to fill up the weekend or voluntary in nature but rather become the mainstream curriculum. As much as focus is given to producing students to achieve academic excellence, IUM is more interested in shaping the students to achieve holistic excellence, an *Insān Sejahtera* who is balanced cognitively, emotionally, physically, psychologically, socially and spiritually. A graduate who will use their knowledge and skills not just to get to the Dean's list but to actually contribute to the betterment of society.

Community learning is not totally new in IUM. In fact, it has been in the system for more than 20 years. This is done through implementation of Study Circle or *Usrah Budi* which is part of university required courses. *Usrah* is an Arabic word literally translated to 'family', while *Budi* is a Malay word carrying the meaning of being courteous. The activity is popularly known as *halaqah* which carries a linguistic meaning of 'circle'. As a whole, students and facilitators are to gather as a family to address contemporary issues, especially those related to sustainable development, in a very dynamic way. Part of the course is to actually go to the ground and participate in community engagement programs.

In contrast to the conservative approach of religious discourse, *halaqah* is designed to link the fundamental teaching of Islam with society's current needs. It serves as a dynamic and progressive learning community. One example is the issue of poverty eradication and Islamic teaching about it and ways to solve it on the ground. All students must register to join a *halaqah* or *usrah* in 4 of their 8 semesters at university. As a whole, the *usrah* package is designed to integrate the cognitive, behavioral and affective aspects of Islam, such that the students will be able to develop their KhAIR attributes.

The community is also not confined to a selected segment of society. The community may be the learning community consisting of fellow students, the learned community consisting of professionals and academics, and the community-at-large consisting of others inside and outside the University.

UniCORE 2020 FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

The University Required Courses (UniCORE) is a set of courses that are required to be taken by all IUM undergraduate students. The main objective of UniCORE is to imbue IUM students with a solid foundation that speaks to the philosophy, vision and mission of the University. Specifically, the objectives of the UniCORE are:

- to deepen students' sense of purpose and meaning in life
- to nurture students with *adab*
- to develop students who are imbued with Islamic knowledge, values and ethics and able to relate with contemporary issues
- to expand the culture of *Iqra'*
- to inculcate awareness on the meanings and responsibilities as '*abid* and *khalifah*

The UniCORE is expected to lay a well-grounded foundation through understanding the fundamentals of oneself and how the formation of noble characteristics occur from the balance of all main elements in an individual. The result of realisation and comprehension from the essence of UniCORE produces students who know about themselves, their Creator, the Holy *Qur'an* as a guide in their lives, the Prophet (pbuh) who has become the source of morality and character, virtues to be implemented, and vices which should be curbed. The foundation will nurture an *Insān* of *adab* who realise the purpose and responsibilities of life and embrace the pursuit of knowledge.

The learning outcomes of UniCORE 2020 are that the courses will:

- Engage in continual learning activities and the sharing of ideas with the community at large
- Engage in continuous self-development based on the knowledge-seeking spirit
- Make informed decisions in life using strategic thinking and practical skills

- Practice *adab* in their behaviours
- Initiate projects or activities that will lead to the advancement of society
- Participate in intellectual discussion on religious and contemporary issues
- Be steadfast in performing fundamental religious duties
- Demonstrate inter-cultural competencies

The courses in UniCORE 2020 are categorised into:

- Islamic fundamental knowledge
- Leadership and Living Skills
- Education for Sustainable Development

The specific courses may change over time if the situation is warranted, but the initial distribution of courses according to the categories in the spirit of SAF is presented in the following table.

UniCORE 2020 Courses

No	Course Title	Credit Hours
ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTAL KNOWLEDGE		
1	Basic Philosophy and Islamic Worldview	3
2	Knowledge and Civilization in Islam	2
3	Ethics and <i>Fiqh</i> of Contemporary Issues	3
4	<i>Tilawah Al-Qur'an</i> 1	0.5
5	<i>Tilawah Al-Qur'an</i> 2	0.5
6	Introduction to Arabic for Quranic Understanding 1	0.5
7	Introduction to Arabic for Quranic Understanding 2	0.5
8	<i>Usrah</i> 1	0.5
9	<i>Usrah</i> 2	0.5
LEADERSHIP AND LIVING SKILLS		
10	English for Academic writing	3
11	Family Management	0.5
12	Leadership	0.5
13	Skill 1	0.5
14	Skill 2	0.5
15	<i>Bahasa Melayu</i> 1*	1
16	<i>Bahasa Melayu</i> 2*	1
EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT		
17	Sustainable Development: Issues, Policies and Practices	2
18	<i>Usrah</i> in Action 1 (SD: Community Profiling)	1
19	<i>Usrah</i> in Action 2	1
TOTAL		20

*only for students with no formal BM competency

Islamic Fundamental Knowledge

The Islamic Fundamental Knowledge courses have continued to be a core part of the formal academic programmes of the University. Envisioned to provide Muslims who not only have the competencies the public regarded are part of the good Muslim (such as *Qur'an* recitation and congregational prayers leader), the main thrust of the Islamic Fundamental Knowledge courses are to provide a philosophical grounding on Islamic thoughts and principles, paving the way for Islamisation in their areas of studies, and a philosophical shift from a heritage Muslim to being an informed an active Muslim learner and scholar.

Abû Hâmid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazâlî (c.1056–1111) was an influential philosopher, theologian, jurist, and mystics of Sunni Islam. His writings on purification of the soul (*nafs*) and the heart (*qalb*) continue to be relevant today.

Tilawah Al-Qur'an is a competency based course, where a student needs to meet a minimum competency requirement. A student who has met the minimum competency requirement (based on *Tilawah* placement test) will be exempted. A student who is exempted or has completed the minimum competency requirements is given the opportunity to obtain a certificate of competency by fulfilling entire competency level; that will be added value especially for those wishing to offer *tilawah* classes to others. This *tilawah* competency certificate may also be offered to the public.

The implementation of *Tilawah Al-Qur'an* course differs from normal courses in that fixed class meeting time will be transformed to a more open system where students will be assigned with a particular teacher until he/she reaches the required minimal competency. Assessment may be done on selected intervals (not just end of semester). Students progress at their own pace; hence they may complete this as fast as 1 assessment cycle, or as long as they are enrolled.

Arabic in IIUM is not just Arabic. The thrust of Arabic in IIUM is towards understanding the *Qur'an* and related materials, with the aim of appreciating the Islamic linguistic elements. Towards that end, the UniCORE 2020 offers Arabic as Quranic Language, such that the knowledge gained via the courses become means to interact with the *Qur'an*. As per *tilawah*, the department is encouraged to extend their offerings for additional levels, with an option for additional types of certification.

Malay Language continues to be compulsory for undergraduates who do not have adequate competency in Malay language. Under UniCORE 2020 a major change is to offer the language based on competency and not on nationality. This will afford the department to offer other elective Malay language courses that may be taken by any student, either for the credit or for additional certification.

Tazkiyah an-nafs, or the purification of the soul, should be an on-going effort by all, more so if one is a practicing Muslim. As much as the students are young adults, they shall continue to benefit from a structured and safe environment to improve their relationship with Allah. Hence the *usrah* courses are part of their undergraduate experience. Having a formal *usrah* structure will enable the University an avenue to nurture the spiritual development of these young adults, some of whom come from less advantaged backgrounds spiritually. Towards this end, elements such as the selection of *nuqaba'* and the monitoring of the activities should be taken seriously by everyone. The *usrah* courses are not to be taken as a checklist to fulfill graduation requirements, but as a serious endeavour towards becoming better Muslims who will become more committed to their role of *khalifah*.

Leadership and Living Skills

IIUM has always prided itself on being an Islamic university that nurtures leaders at all levels of societies. From the family institutions to nations across the globe, our alumni have been prominent. This tradition will continue. Although leadership is a trait to be nurtured in all programmes, the University will also have designated UniCORE courses, if nothing else than to wake-up the slumbering leaders inside the students.

Skills and sports courses are to be taken as part of the University offering a holistic and balanced educational programme. This will nurture some of the JERIHAS elements in the students. At a pragmatic level, the skills courses may enable the students an alternative income avenue in the future should they so desire.

The credit for these courses may be earned by taking the courses in the conventional manner or by actively engaging in activities and projects directly related to the courses, e.g., student athletes who are in the University sports teams competing at a certain level, students leaders at *Mahallah* or University levels.

A major change in the approach of implementation of these courses will be offering modules on 3 levels of competencies: basic, intermediate and advanced, and being flexible in terms of the pathway taken to complete this and the scheduling of the classes.

It is aspired that this will also lead to additional certification of competencies, giving value-added to the students once they have graduated from the University.

Education for Sustainable Development

The Education for Sustainable Development category of the UniCORE is to especially undertake Mission 2 of IIUM, which is to produce better quality intellectuals, professionals and scholars by integrating the qualities of faith (*īmān*), knowledge (*‘ilm*), and good character (*akhlāq*) to serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress as well as sustainable development in Malaysia and in Muslim world.

It consists of three courses Sustainable Development and *Usrah* in Action (UIA) 1 and 2. Carrying the name of ‘*Usrah*-in-Action’, these courses will be divided into two parts. The first part will be Community Profiling where the students are expected to build rapport with the designated community and run a need analysis on the issues in the community. The second part of *Usrah*-in-Action will take place in the next year of students’ academic study years as they are more equipped with the knowledge and skills of their major course and now ready to contribute more to the community. The second part will be the implementation of a community engagement project based on the need analysis in the first part. Both courses of *Usrah*-in-Action will be preceded by an Introductory Course of Sustainable Development as the pre-requisite course.

The Unicore Agenda Beyond UniCORE

UniCORE only provides a basic foundation in the areas listed above. For the objectives of UniCORE to be truly fulfilled, students should be given various opportunities to extend and apply the knowledge and skills gained in these courses throughout their student life. This may be in the form of student clubs, student societies, course assignments, discussions and seminar (formal and informal), kulliyah activities -- the possibilities are endless. What this requires is a conscious effort by other members of the University to learn more about the content and implementation of UniCORE and be able to connect with their own areas of expertise or activities. Students should also be proactive in approaching lecturers and instructors and fellow students on ways to extend their knowledge beyond these UniCORE courses.

PEDAGOGY

As befit the overarching principle of humanising education, the pedagogical practices shall reflect more student-centred learning (SCL) rather than teacher-led instruction. An SCL environment is not an environment where the students are always right, and their desires are pandered to. Instead, it is an environment where they are engaged and take responsibility for their own learning. The instructors will provide the environment and opportunities towards this end. With both fulfilling their *amānah*, the classrooms (including labs, studios etc.) will become dynamic spaces buzzing with intellectual discourse and the genuine pursuit of knowledge and skills.

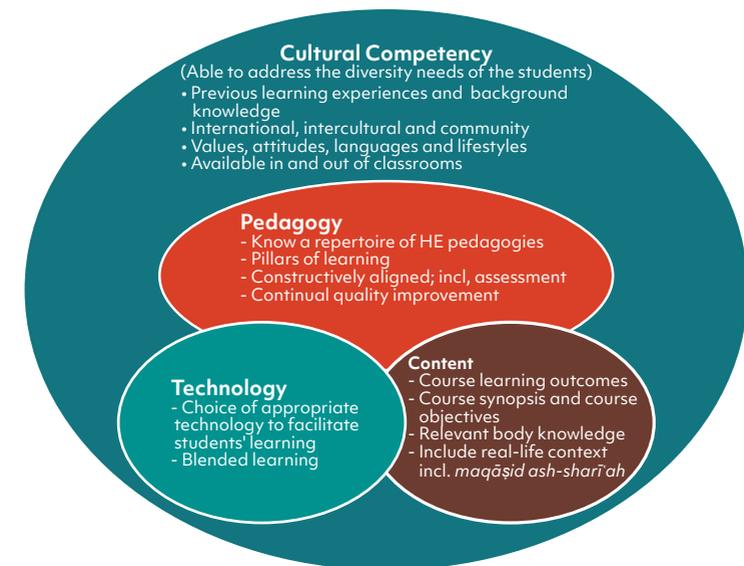
Towards this end, the University will not be prescribing specific pedagogical practices to be uniformly applied by all. Instead the University will provide the infrastructure and training necessary for instructors to create this dynamic learning space. This includes providing avenues for the instructors to acquire the teaching competencies needed.

Discovery learning, blended learning, transformative learning, flipped classrooms would be some of the terms that will no longer remain alien to anyone in the University, be them directly involved in the classroom or indirectly so. Intuitive learning and indigenous knowledge could form part of the approaches informing our pedagogy. The pillars of learning and the philosophy of education will continue to inform the instructors as they plan their meeting sessions.

Lecturers should leverage on the empowerment and flexibility given to them to expand on their repertoire of pedagogical practices, and to innovate and develop novel practices; all the while being mindful of their accountability. Lecturers should keep up on the pedagogical approaches for face-to-face meetings, and also the technological tools available to facilitate their remote learning practices.

A useful framework to base the murabbi competency is the ESD teacher competency framework (UNECE, 2019). The adapted version is presented below.

Murabbi competency framework Able to create and provide transformative learning opportunities for learners to develop as *Insān Sejahtera*



A handbook on Teaching and Learning based on this *Murabbi* competency framework for better implementation of SAF will be produced, not to be prescriptive, but to provide guidelines for best practices.

“
Eat and drink from the
provision of Allah, and
do not commit abuse
on the earth, spreading
corruption.”

(Qur'ān, 2:60)



ASSESSMENT

The IIUM recognises that assessment is an important component of effective teaching and learning processes. The quality of assessment is vital to the University's claim about the quality of its graduates, which defines the trust and confidence of stakeholders. Assessment determines the quality of student outcomes and shapes the learning that will take place - assessment is a catalyst for progress and reform in educational practices.

IIUM views the assessment of students' work seriously and as such, careful consideration is given to the whole process of assessment. The integrity of students' assessment is of paramount importance because it concerns the students' well-being and their future. As such, no students should be wrongly assessed and the assessment imposed on them should measure not only their knowledge, skills but, also to a certain degree, their worldview on how they will impact the community after they have graduated. Students ought to be appropriately assessed based on their performance in the formal curriculum as well as the co-curricular activities. This initiative is in line with IIUM vision and mission. While the world outside seems to view students as commodities or consumers, IIUM views students as individuals that can be developed as balanced and holistic human beings. In short, IIUM expects its students to be spiritually and professionally capable to function as responsible leaders and *khalifahs*.

Assessment in IIUM begins with the statement of assessment policy followed by the implementation of assessment processes and procedures, the training of members of staff as well as the monitoring review of the present assessment practices, including the best practices by other institutions and industries.

The quality of assessment process in IIUM requires substantial contributions and cooperation from many parties. For the aspirations above to materialise, IIUM demands concerted and collective effort from the different offices, office bearers and individuals within the University system from all levels including the top management, the academic staff and non-academic staff as well as the students.

The IIUM Assessment Policy (2018) underlines the University's commitment towards the implementation of a transparent and state-of-the-art educational assessment practices. The Assessment Policy applies broadly to all types of assessment in the University's undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. The policy covers multidimensional learning processes, accounting for the commonality, diversity, and distinctiveness of learning outcomes across programmes.

The Assessment Policy serves as a guide for assessment practices for all IIUM academic programmes. This policy informs instructors, students, and other stakeholders about approaches to assessment. The policy also spells out how the University develops and uses tests, examinations, and other means of

assessment techniques in making decisions about students' learning and capabilities. This enables IIUM to strategise, benchmark and set standards for the performance, monitoring, recognition, and evaluation of its assessment methods and approaches.

In general, the assessment practices are expected to:

- provide a fair, reliable and valid basis for the assignment of grades or awards for students' work and performance;
- promote students' mastery of concepts and skills by providing adequate modelling, practice, monitoring, and feedback on students' performance;
- direct progressive development of complex learning outcomes, which include the attainment of generic competency, i.e., language competencies, communication, information literacy, research and inquiry, personal and intellectual autonomy, and the understanding of professional, social, moral, and Islamic values through the use of meaningful and authentic assessment tasks;
- record and aggregate student achievements against the predetermined learning outcomes;
- assist instructors in evaluating the effectiveness of their teaching;
- facilitate the revision and improvement of the curriculum, courses, and programmes; and
- define and protect academic standards (including autonomy) deemed necessary for the purpose of accountability

The assessment activities consummate the teaching and learning experience in IIUM. Appropriate assessment techniques are used formatively and summatively throughout the teaching and learning process. The formative assessment occurs during instruction. It is normally flexible and ongoing, and its primary aim is to determine the extent to which IIUM students have achieved sufficient mastery of specific concepts, skills or competencies. On the other hand, the summative assessment takes place towards the conclusion of instructions. It is normally formal and structured, and its primary purpose is to certify students' achievement in different courses.

In terms of test formats, IIUM recognises the importance of using different and multiple test formats depending on the needs of different areas of specialisations and *kulliyahs*. Tests in IIUM range from paper-and-pencil to computer-based, direct to indirect and from discrete to integrative tests. In addition, test formats that stem from alternative assessment frameworks such as practical-based and performance-based tests are also finding their ways

in IIUM classrooms. Apart from the traditional “sitting-in” examinations, IIUM also acknowledges the existence and utility of other types of examinations such as open-book and take-home examinations.

Over time, it is expected that examinations and tests are no longer the “go-to” assessment method of the majority of the lecturers. Given the innovations in pedagogy that are expected to happen, the assessment methods used will also change so as to remain constructively aligned to the learning outcomes and the pedagogy. To be able to conduct authentic assessments, IIUM lecturers shall have a repertoire of assessment methods at their disposal. If nothing else, the COVID-19 experience should convince the lecturers of the need to master other assessment methods besides examinations and tests.

In order to inform and update the IIUM population of the latest trend of assessment processes and procedures, basic and specialised training sessions on assessment are to be conducted regularly. Assessment training may be organised centrally or by the different kulliyahs and institutes.

In IIUM, assessment is a systematic process that is designed to make an informed judgment of each students’ quality. Students in IIUM are evaluated on a whole array of abilities ranging from oral, listening, reading and written skills, presentation skills, computational-related skills, creativity and performance-based tasks. In order to be fair to lecturers and students alike, tests and measurement are designed according to certain standards that would yield reliable and valid results and hence, represents a good assessment practice.

One potential innovation is competency assessment that gives the level of outcomes attained using the 360-degree approach. It attempts to “gauge” the behavioural change that the students have undergone in learning to translate the knowledge acquired in a collective fashion for the desired impact, and not on what an individual could do and retain as conventionally carried out. The students are equipped with theoretical as well as practical dimensions so that they can draw on the interplay of the various main factors to effect change in the community. Students are able to identify the constraints and opportunities present in the community, as well as engage and empower the community to arrive at the most desirable ‘solutions’.

A revised IIUM Assessment Handbook will be produced, again not to be prescriptive, but to provide guidelines for best practices.

RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH

Responsible research is multifaceted. It involves adherence to ethics, upholding values and principles, engaging communities, and sharing of knowledge in conducting research. While it is natural for universities, IIUM included, to demand their staff to conduct research, the way forward is to promote and ensure that the research projects are responsible ones.

Ethics is a precursor to responsible research. Research must, first and foremost, be grounded on ethics and morally acceptable actions. Researchers must avoid actions such as plagiarism, claiming credit to work which is not his/her own, reporting on false data and analyses, and the likes. While these may seem like feeble issues to raise, they still occur in the world of academic research worldwide. From Anas r.a., he reported that the Prophet s.a.w. said, “There is no faith in a person who is not trustworthy” (Mohammed Farid Ali Al-Fijawi, 2020). In the case of Muslim researchers, deliberately misrepresenting their work can be equalled to them discarding their faith.

Research must also be based on the right values. From an Islamic point of view, these would be the values as propagated by the Islamic teachings. Research must not lead to destruction, wastefulness, injustice, and other harmful effects to the world and its inhabitants be it human, animals and the environment. Instead, research, especially in IIUM, should be strongly grounded on the principles of the *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah*. To show the seriousness of the University in ensuring research projects are responsible, it may be a good idea to introduce requirements for researchers to demonstrate the ‘responsible-ness’ of their research in the research proposals. This can be simply a mapping of the research work to the principles of *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah*.

Responsible research also refers to research that engages the community. In other words, responsible research ‘requires involving the community and public at large in the processes of research’ (Dzulkifli Abdul Razak, 2019, p.58). This is to ensure that research benefits the community and the *ummah* at large by addressing societal problems and contributing towards elevating the quality of life of present and future generations. This will make research purposeful rather than merely to fulfill the requirements of key performance indicators or any other rating and ranking requirements.

Among the aims of responsible research is the generation and sharing of knowledge. Under the concept of responsible research, new knowledge must be shared in the spirit of *Raḥmatan lil-‘Ālamīn*. Sharing of knowledge for the betterment of the *ummah* and the world should be seen as *sadaqah*. Abu Hurairah r.a. narrated that the Prophet (pbuh). said, “Whoever is asked about some knowledge that he knows, and then he conceals it, he will be bridled with the bridle of fire” (Mohammed Farid Ali Al-Fijawi, 2020).

Islam prohibits the acquiring of knowledge solely for worldly advantage, but rather for the blessing of Allah. Indeed, knowledge which is shared will continue to benefit the sharer (researcher) even after he/she leaves this world. Abu Hurairah r.a. reported that the Prophet s.a.w. said, “When a man dies, his deeds come to an end except for three things: *sadaqah jariyyah*, a knowledge which is beneficial, or a virtuous son/daughter who prays for the deceased” (Mohammed Farid Ali Al-Fijawi, 2020). To promote sharing of knowledge, it is therefore important that IIUM researchers do not only publish their work in indexed journals but also in reputable open access platforms including newspaper and television so that the knowledge will be able to reach more people.

In the context of SAF, responsible academic research can be linked to formal and informal education. For instance, the UniCORE courses such as the *Usrah* in Action 1 and 2 provide ample opportunities for findings from research to be implemented on the ground to benefit the society. In the case of *Usrah* in Action 1, research findings can become the basis or problem statements for community selection and to initiate their profiling. In *Usrah* in Action 2, research findings can become inputs or the how-to in solving societal problems or elevating quality of life of the society.

As part of continual quality improvement, lecturers should partake in scholarship of teaching and learning. Reflective teaching is necessary to learn from one’s own practices (otherwise also known as action research). With the innovations in pedagogy and assessment that will be coming under SAF, it is imperative that lecturers document their practices and the impact of these practices, and share it to the wider scholarly community beyond the University, to share their knowledge and to help others nurture their own students.

The push for research that is responsible is part of the whole institution transformation (WIT) initiative of the IIUM (OSIC, 2019). Under WIT, the focus of research performance in IIUM should no longer be only about increasing the number of research or accumulating larger amounts of research grants, but also ensuring research projects are responsible and impactful, and are accessible to a greater number of audiences, locally and globally. While the world is beginning to embrace responsible research, IIUM should lead the way in advocating Islamic perspectives to shape and define responsible research.

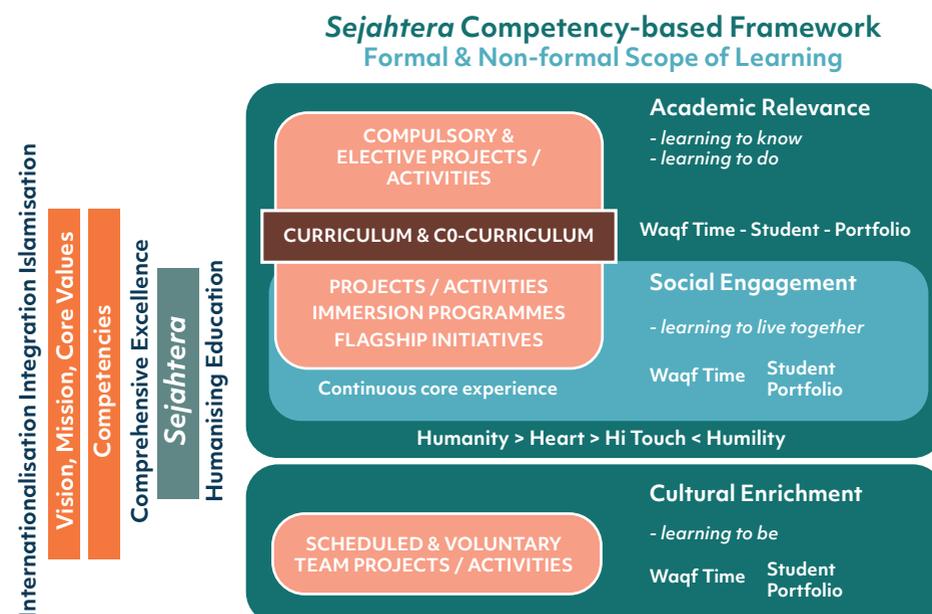
THE FORMAL CURRICULUM

The formal curriculum itself then should take into account these elements of SAF. A curriculum should be more than just a collection of courses. It is at best a road map which outlines the ultimate outcomes of a learning process while allowing the instructors and students to create academic experiences that fit their particular needs within the parameters given.

In IIUM, regardless of the curriculum model any programme wishes to adopt, the curriculum has to be constructively aligned, and it has to fit the SAF. It will also have to comply with the relevant programme standards, but ideally, it will go beyond the programme standards.

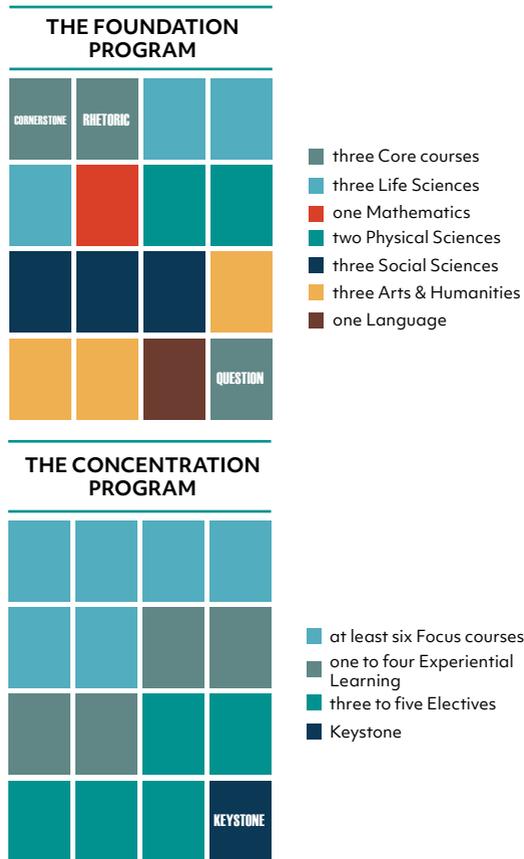
SAF does not prescribe a specific curriculum model. The ensuing models are presented to suggest some potential models, for us to start imagining the possibilities that we may embark on in our quest to provide not just cutting edge knowledge and skills, but also a cutting edge holistic educational experience.

Model 1. *Sejahtera* Competency-based Framework IIUM



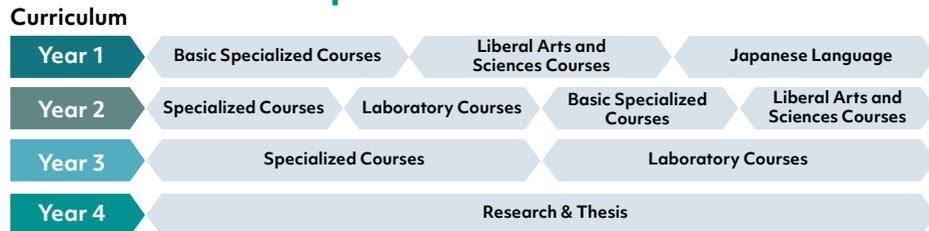
Source: Dzul kifli Abdul Razak, Meeting of IIUM Great Minds 2019

Model 2. Quest University, Canada
Foundation Years 1 & 2; Concentration Years 3 & 4



source: <https://questu.ca/academics/build-your-degree/>

Model 3. 3+1 model



source: Nagoya University Global 30 International Programs

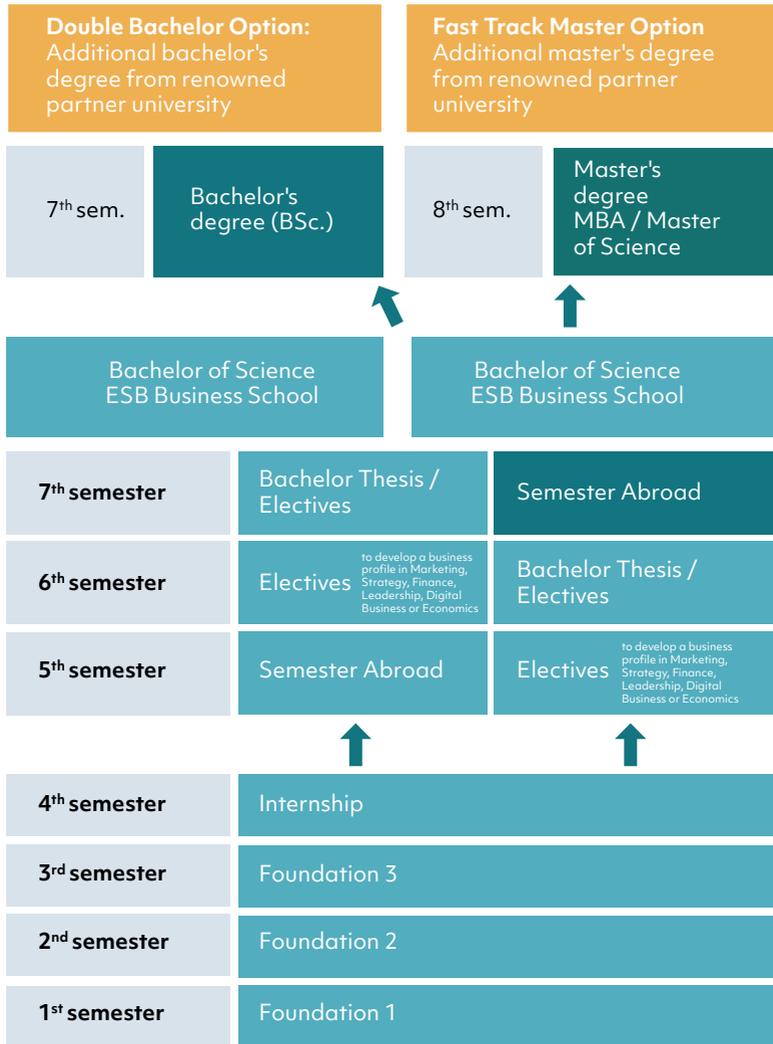
Model 4. 2u2i model

DURATION OF STUDY	MODEL	MODEL STRUCTURE							
		SEMESTER							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4 years	2u2i	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	3u1i	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3 years	2u1i	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	1u2i	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
2 1/2 years	1u1i	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	2u1i	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

● CLASS
 ● INDUSTRY

Model 5. Smart partnership with semester abroad model

Programme structure



source: ESB Business School, Germany

Model 6. Clinical post-graduate integrated model

METHODIST UNIVERSITY DOCTOR OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY CURRICULUM MODEL



source: <https://www.methodist.edu/otd/curriculum-design/>



“
**The intelligent
person’s tongue is
behind his heart:**

when he wants to speak, he first thinks. If [his words] will be in his favour, he says them, and if they will be against him, he does not speak. And the ignorant person’s heart is behind his tongue: when he merely thinks of saying something, he says it, whether it is for or against him. ”

(Hasan Al Basri)

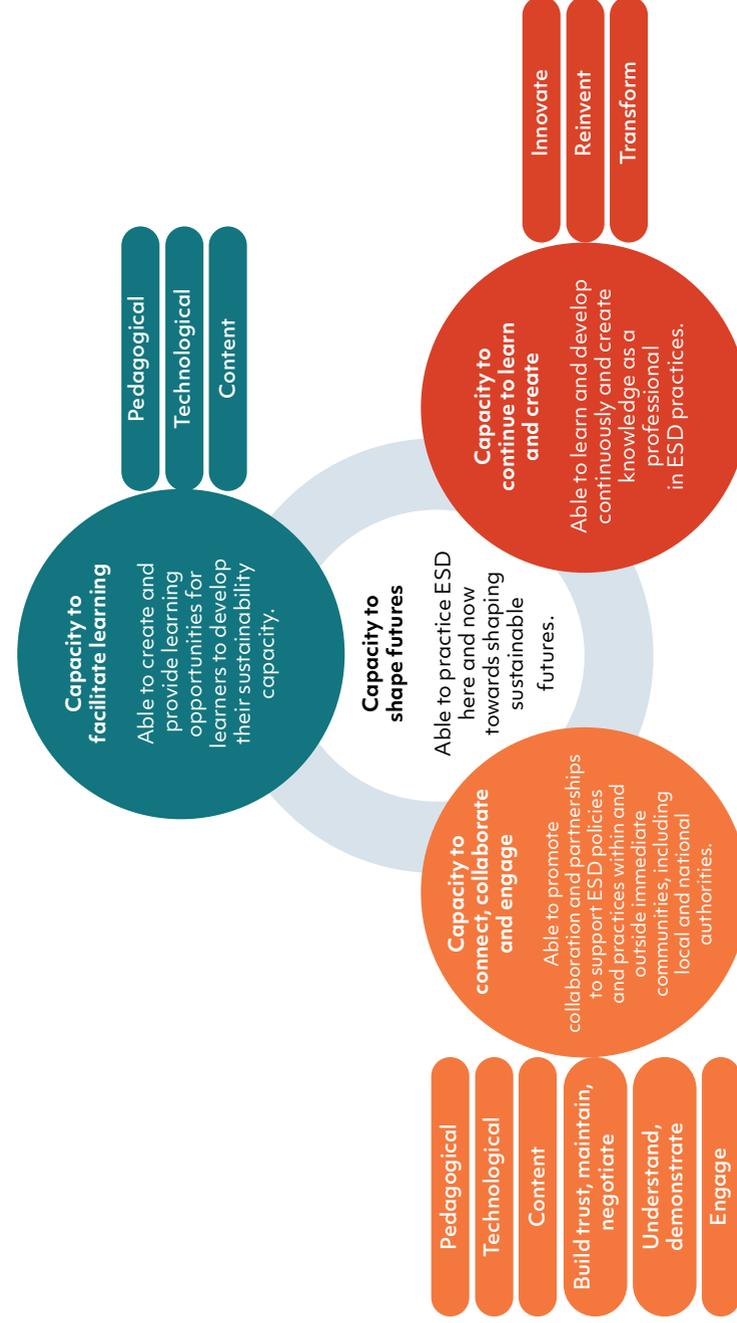
INTRODUCTION

Since 2019, IIUM has embarked on a Whole Institution Transformation (WIT) in order to consolidate its vision of becoming a leading international centre of educational excellence. This is reflected in the IIUM Roadmap 2019-2020 (OSIC, 2019), with its strategic direction of 'Humanising Education through *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharīah* and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)'. The Roadmap seeks to reinvigorate the operationalisation of the University's seven (7) mission in the context of present and future scenarios, while standing firm on the foundations of the University.

The philosophy of IIUM is framed on two main tenets; that human is the servant of Allah and that man is the vicegerent (*khalifah*) of Allah on earth (M. Kamal Hassan, 1983). This is refined to mean the philosophy of IIUM emphasises the objectives of human existence, namely to serve Allah swt (*ubudiah*) and to develop the world as His vicegerents in accordance with His will (M. Kamal Hassan, personal communication).

In the context of IIUM as a university, this philosophy leverages heavily on the roles of knowledge in achieving the totality of human development, both physical and spiritual, consistent with Allah's creation of body and soul (*jasad* and *rūh*). Thus, knowledge imparted at IIUM must also be total, complete and inclusive of intellectual, spiritual and moral dimensions. Education at IIUM must be laden with values in line with the *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharīah* and operationalised through SDGs.

ESD teacher competency framework adapted from: UNECE 2019



* Education for Sustainable Development

WHOLE INSTITUTION TRANSFORMATION

The WIT is a transformation approach that involves everyone at the University. It is a University-wide transformation approach in which changes and transformation are made in totality rather in piece-meal or ad-hoc nature, leaving no one behind, including the surrounding and far-off communities impacted by the existence of the University (Dzul kifli Abdul Razak, 2020).

WIT is an overarching, but for the purpose of this book, only selected strategies of WIT will be discussed to demonstrate WIT linkages to IIUM *Sejahtera* Academic Framework (SAF).

WIT AND SAF IMPLEMENTATION

SAF is one of the initiatives of WIT that seeks to connect and integrate various knowledge elements to address the physical and spiritual aspects of human development. As such, values become an integral part of education under SAF.

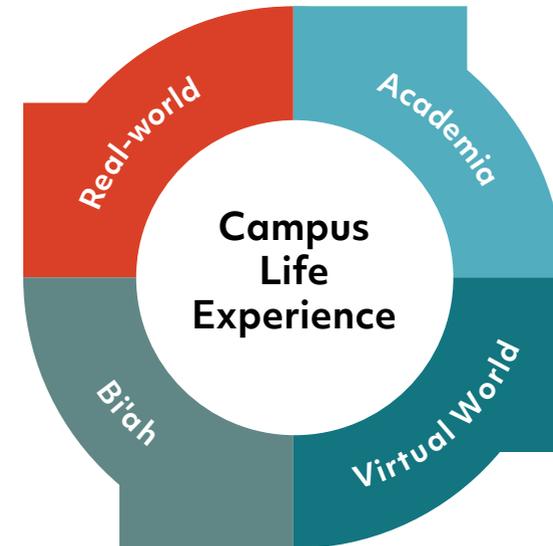
In WIT, strategies are commonly linked to one another to create wholeness in transformation. As such, successful implementation of one strategy is often dependent on the success of the implementation of other strategies. Similarly, in terms of implementation, WIT and SAF relationship is mutually supportive. For WIT to succeed, SAF must also be a success and *vice versa*.

CAMPUS LIFE

By now, it is clear that the IIUM WIT agenda involves everyone in the IIUM community especially the students. It is also apparent that one of the WIT objectives is to provide a complete nurturing environment for the university community. Therefore, it is only imperative that the students' life be considered and put into perspective in fulfilling IIUM's quest for a transformative learning ecosystem.

It has usually been the case where students' life definition in curriculum is largely confined to their space within the context of attending the formal class. Little attention is given to the other aspects of student life, for example, their well-being in the students' residential (*mahallah*), as well as their interaction with the community at large. In fact, with the vast internet access, a student's life expands beyond local community and borders as understood from the concept of life-wide learning (LWL).

A student's life sphere in IIUM



A *Murabbi* ecosystem is what IIUM aimed to achieve for the students. With intakes being the main throughput, it is vital to identify and recognise the different aspects of students' life that may influence the outcome of the nurturing process of *Insān Sejahtera*. This process can be seen as a sub-cycle - "from the student, to the student".

With SAF, the four (4) elements in the figure above are the major milieus of student life. The students are active participants in which they are not only taking in information but also actively providing feedback. Hence, these milieus are vital towards the development of the JERIHAS domain in students.

As can be seen in the graduate's attribute survey reported earlier, the 2019 IIUM graduates have issues in the 'mindset' section of the survey. They felt threatened with others' achievements and were unable to handle criticism. In Ibn Khaldun's "The *Muqqadimah*" (1377), he specified that the environment (*bi'ah*) has a direct effect on an individual mindset especially *Bi'ah solehah*. In fact, many published literatures have reiterated the impact of *Bi'ah solehah* in nurturing *Hamba Allah* who is well-balanced not only in Academia aspects as per the FPK (*Jasmani, Emosi, Rohani, Intelek*) but also in the Real-world (*Sosialisasi, Alam sekitar*). In the case of IIUM, the *masjid, kulliyah, mahallah, café*, and recreational centres are among the main points of influence to our students.

One of the agenda for *mahallah* is to instill the sense of belonging to IIUM. The *mahallah* should not just be a place for students to rest and sleep. Prof Emeritus Kamal himself mentioned that the design of the *mahallah* having four

compartments per room to accommodate four students is to allow students to interact with one another while maintaining their own personal and privacy space. The mahallah should be seen as the students' first IIUM new family. Foreign students especially should feel at home with *mahallah* mates to support them whenever they are homesick.

Mahallah must rise up and play greater roles in nurturing students. The standard of student activities at *mahallah* must be raised and linked to the University's aspirations. Activities should no longer be confined to *mahallah* level only, but also seek to put IIUM on the global stage. New activities with new concepts should be created, created if necessary, rather than just relying on or continuing the current activities or traditions. Activities should be implemented due to their impacts, and not because they are inherited from previous years. Current activities which are non-impactful should be discontinued and replaced with better ones. All students, rather than a select few, must be involved in students activities at *mahallah*.

Mahallah must also provide a surrounding that instills values and *adab* amongst students. Students must be taught the lifestyle of respecting one another and respecting the environment. *Mahallah* must encourage students in terms of intercultural dialogues, and understanding and respecting each other's culture. Wastage and excessiveness must be eliminated, especially in relation to use of resources like electricity and water. The culture of cleanliness must be ingrained in each student.

The Academia which is centred at the kulliyah is a place where students are able to find their strength as well as to grow their self-esteem. Kulliyah becomes a platform for the students to explore their strength further and facilitate them in securing opportunities that would be beneficial for them in a real world. Outside the confines of the classroom, informal interactions with *murabbi* are necessary towards the holistic development of the student.

Community engagement enhances students' leadership skills while promoting awareness and compassion among students which are also the main characteristics in good *Khalifah* and *Hamba Allah*. Students would then be more encouraged to work and live together as a community in solving the community issues at hand.

In this millennium, what transpires in the virtual environment should not be taken for granted. The University is now taking in undergraduates who are considered "millennials" - one characteristic of which is that they are digital natives. Social media is not just a part of their life, in many cases, it is a huge part of who they are. The University should leverage, rather than lamenting, on this by engaging the students in various ways via the virtual environment. The *murabbi* does not have to be physically present, but a good one will make their presence felt - and sought after - virtually. The students should have safe spaces in their virtual world - a place they feel comfortable and validated - and that will support their quest to become better Muslims without being over-bearing nor punitive.

The students shall among themselves become supporters of one another virtually, and in this volatile world, this is invaluable. Mental health has steadily become a major issue for more students over time. It is imperative that the students' life provided by IIUM, physically and virtually, allows the students to develop into mature and resilient individuals; for only as people who can care for themselves will they be able to care for others. The system to support the students' mental health shall be put in place. This shall encompass preventive and proactive measures in addition to intervention and treatment. The mental health framework shall also be based on Islamic principles, in addition to empirically proven approaches, to be aligned with SAF.

Structure Follows Strategy

Strategy implementation must be supported by strong and appropriate structure. Thus, new administration and execution models must be put in place, even at the expense of age-old ones, if the latter do not facilitate or align to the current strategy implementation. In the case of SAF, several measures have been undertaken to ensure the right models are put in place to support SAF implementation.

Several task forces have been established to look into some key aspects of SAF. The main responsibilities of these task forces are to review, realign and, if necessary, reconceptualise *ta'aruf* (orientation for students), university core courses (UniCORE), community engagement and mental health initiatives into a framework that is in alignment with SAF, as well as with the University vision and missions.

SAF aims, among other things, to deliver values-based education through both formal and informal education at the University. To prepare students for this, *ta'aruf* has been reconceptualised to condition the mind and outlook of the new students. Through *ta'aruf*, they must be made aware that once enrolled in IIUM, they will experience education that puts values and intellectual competencies on equal importance. Thus, new *ta'aruf* modules have been developed to internalise the vision and missions of IIUM, and to carry the pursuit of balanced graduates and *Insān Sejahtera* into the activities conducted during *Ta'aruf* Week. The first round of these modules implementation was carried out with success during the Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS) *Ta'aruf* Week (2020/2021). Similarly, this reconceptualised *ta'aruf* was introduced to the new undergraduate and postgraduate intakes for 2020/2021 at the University's other campuses with enhanced modules appropriate for the higher level of studies as compared to the CFS.

Whilst values-based education should be prevalent in all forms of education at the University, SAF gives greater emphasis to its delivery through the UniCORE. The UniCORE has been a staple of IIUM undergraduate programmes since the inception of the University. Its essence was to provide an adequate understanding of Islamic fundamental worldview to enable the students to

embark on a journey of integration and Islamisation that would distinguish them from students of the same discipline from other universities. UniCORE are seen as one of the major platforms for education transformation under SAF. Therefore, some aspects of UniCORE have been strengthened and realigned, especially towards humanising education and promoting education for sustainable development imbued with Islamic values. The revised UniCORE was offered beginning with the 2020/2021 student intake.

Another important feature of IIUM WIT is the increased emphasis on community engagement, towards realising the concept of *Rahmatan lil-'Alamīn*. WIT seeks to present the various IIUM community engagement initiatives in a more structured framework to ensure that they will be more meaningful and more impactful not only to the nearby communities, but also to IIUM students and staff involved.

SAF sees community engagement as another important platform where education transformation can take place. Under SAF, community engagement shall be linked to formal education by design. The learning output of community engagement initiatives conducted must be related to the academic curriculum offered in kulliyahs, so that theories learnt can be realised on the ground for students to understand the concept of *ilmu, amal* and *Rahmatan lil-'Alamīn*. At the same time, linking community engagement to formal education also promises exciting experiential and life-wide learning experiences to students.

Values and intellectual capacity are very much affected by the state of mental health and wellbeing. As highlighted in the *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan*, one has to be at peace with oneself, or be an *Insān Sejahtera* first and foremost, before one will be able to contribute to the *kesejahteraan* of family, community and the nation. The issue of mental health and well-being is even more heightened during and post-COVID-19 episodes. To combat mental health problems, students and staff must be equipped with skills to manage stress and building resilience (Muhammad Faris Abdullah, 2020).

In line with the adoption of SAF, mental health related services and academic programmes will be synchronised through a university-wide mental health strategic plan and policies. These would not only reinforce the delivery of mental health related services in the University, but also remove duplication and thus avoid wastages, especially of resources. Having all service providers and experts working in sync would also enhance the University capacity to champion mental health issues at the national and global level.

Collegiality/Shared Responsibility

Collegiality relates to the working environment that promotes shared responsibility among staff of the organisation. It involves everyone working together to achieve common goals, and in the process display mutual respect to one another as well as being receptive of each other's ideas and opinions for the betterment of the organisation.

Collegiality is one of the main IIUM WIT strategies. The IIUM Roadmap provides various platforms to promote working together and eliminate silo working environment. IIUM Flagships and other shared initiatives, for instance, were developed as platforms where campus community can work together beyond Kulliyahs and Offices boundaries.

In the context of SAF, every staff of IIUM has roles to play in the delivery of education at IIUM. **Under SAF, education is no longer solely the responsibility of the academics, but also the administrative staff especially in providing the much needed support to SAF implementation.** Facilities and support services must be mobilised and shared to ensure the success of SAF. For instance, experiential learning cannot be fully implemented if transport cannot be provided for students to visit sites and communities outside of the campus. Online and flexible learning cannot be realised if network and internet facilities are not up to standard. Thus, everyone must understand what the appropriate learning requirements are under SAF so that everyone can offer the best services of their own.

Shared responsibility also means sharing of facilities and space for co-learning to take place. Given the current financial climate, where funds are limited, facilities and spaces for education purposes must be shared optimally to ensure efficiency. kulliyahs should no longer limit their buildings only for use by their own students and staff. Similarly laboratories, studios, classrooms and other facilities should be shared whenever possible. Nevertheless, a systematic mechanism to monitor the sharing of facilities must be developed and adhered to in order to ensure usage and maintenance issues are addressed. Shared usage also means shared maintenance.

Sharing of space and facilities can also help in the provision of outdoor learning space, which is one of the key features of SAF. *Masjid*, for instance, must also function as a common learning space, not just for spiritual knowledge but also socio-technical courses when possible. Real-living laboratories and galleries, for example, should also serve as learning space to students from various kulliyahs. This means creating partnerships with knowledge-based sites are encouraged in order to expand knowledge vistas.

Institutional Readiness

Institutional readiness means that the University must be ready to implement and support SAF. Apart from providing the necessary facilities and resources, it is imperative that the University ensures all of its staff understand the strategic goals and elements of values-based education, the meaning of balanced staff and students, and what *Insān Sejahtera* entails. To achieve this, the University has develop *Insān Sejahtera* training modules which must be attended by all staff. The *Insān Sejahtera* training aims to provide understanding among the staff members on *Maqāsid Ash-Sharī'ah*, *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan*, SDGs, and the vision and missions of the University.

Institutional readiness also includes the element of sustainability-led campus, which is important in the context of SAF, as well as IIUM's Mission Statement No. 2 Sustainability-led campus will lead to a conducive learning environment

for SAF to be implemented and flourish. Green campus, for instance, will be able to accommodate outdoor classroom activities, provide informal learning space for students and instill environmental values in the campus community.

SAF is essential as it puts together in one framework how each of the agencies in the University contributes towards the transformative education process. For example, the IT facilities should be a state-of-the-art - not just in the classrooms or the labs, but also in the supporting environment. What can be automated should be automated so that the humans involved are able to spend more time in growth-type of activities, not routine ones. The system should be flexible enough to capture the flexibility of the current academic programmes and the changes that will occur in the future.

Human resource (HR) matters should be focused on assisting the academic programmes such that the students continue to receive the best there is to offer. There should not be disruptions due to retirement, and unforeseen major disruptions (such as the COVID-19 pandemic) should be efficiently dealt with. All staff should be seen as talents to be nurtured, in this uniquely Islamic environment. The HR framework should be a growth framework, nurturing and protecting staff when needed; but also one in which all staff will internalise the Islamic work ethics leading to everyone striving to be the best and being accountable for their actions. This is not the work of only one agency, hence the need for WIT.

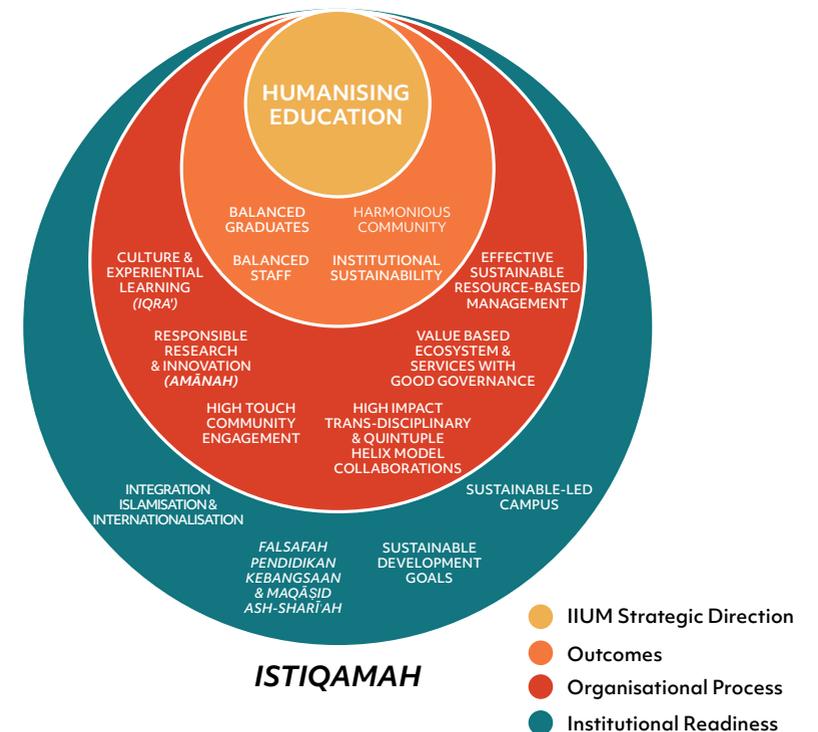
In Malaysia, university plans for institution transformation can be made difficult by the imposition of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are imposed by the various authorities and agencies. This reportedly is the case of *Universiti Sains Malaysia*. The emphasis on intangibles and immeasurable Key Intangible Indicators (KII) has been overtaken by the demands to fulfill KPIs and other measurable indicators in an oversimplified and naïve manner. This includes citation count and number of publications in particular types of journals, that are commonly used to tabulate university rankings. Learning from this, the emphasis on assessing the performance of staff is recommended to be based on KII. The KII may be made possible by using a specially designed *Humaniversity Competency Framework*. There is no “ticked box” exercise of which the institution transformation does not conform neatly. Rather “success” is based on a 360-degree approach together with the project partners based on a range of stated domains. The ‘competency model’ is intended to provide ‘a structured guide enabling the identification, evaluation and development of targeted behaviours in individuals’. It encompasses ‘a set of observable, measurable and improvable behaviours comprising knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics, including values (KSAV)’. The competency model, as designed, is to enhance further community engagement based on desired behavioural qualities and values, using core domains that mirror the *Insān Sejahtera* attributes.

Following this, various opportunities for research and innovation will be created, opening other windows for learning and co-creating ‘new’ knowledge, while (re) discovering the old from within the community (indigenisation). In this respect, the aspect of knowledge diversity – with a special emphasis on local/traditional/religious knowledge – is an important dimension in humanising education. This

could not only further unlock the wisdom of ages from the community in our collective quest for viable (sustainable) solutions to our shared concerns about environmental preservation and sustainable economies, but also, more importantly, lead to an abandonment of the delusory assumption that there is a single universal path to progress.

Institutional readiness is part of the IIUM *Sejahtera* Strategic Ecosystem, which was originally depicted in IIUM Roadmap 2019-2020, and also refined and adapted in IIUM Roadmap 2021-2022. The strategic ecosystem consisted of three (3) crescents leading to IIUM’s strategic direction of ‘Humanising Higher Education through *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī’ah* and SDGs’. The crescents are made up of three layers of operational components identified as critical strategies. Firstly, institutional readiness as the foundation to embark on the process. One aspect of the readiness is a strong understanding among the IIUM community on the concept of *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī’ah* to ensure it is consistently embraced and embedded through the entire execution and evaluation process. Secondly, the specific organisational processes that will bring in the changes needed to achieve the outlined vision, missions and strategic direction. Thirdly, the four (4) main stakeholders of the university - staff, student, neighboring community and the institution itself – to achieve the state of balance and harmony as illustrated in the following diagram.

Sejahtera Strategic Ecosystem



“
If a Muslim plants a
tree or sows seeds,
and then a bird,
or a person or
an animal eats from
it, it is regarded as
a charitable gift
(sadaqah)
for him.”

(Bukhari)



A WHOLE NEW TRANSFORMED EDUCATION

SAF is seen as a major breakthrough from WIT point of view towards revamping the concept of education at IIUM. SAF helps to tie up the different aspects of WIT which aims to humanise education. Through SAF implementation, education will be values-based, which is of paramount importance in the pursuit of balanced graduates. SAF is also key in the quest of "humaniversity." Linking formal education to community engagement in a more objective and structured framework will ensure the potential of students' involvement in transformational change is realised (Galimberti, 2020).

Education under SAF is also comprehensive, both in terms of knowledge and delivery. As aforementioned, education will no longer be the sole ambit of academics, but everyone in IIUM. In other words, everyone will have roles to play in the delivery of education and also in the shaping of the ecosystem nurturing students to become balanced graduates and ultimately *Insān Sejahtera*. Teaching and learning will not only be confined to the classroom, but also through daily interactions between staff and students, between students and the communities, and between students and their surrounding environment. Thus, everyone and every KCDIOM must begin to explore how best they can contribute and facilitate this transformation in education. Staff and KCDIOM must not rest on their laurels, thinking that they have done their best and there is nothing more that they can offer. Status quo must be challenged and red-tapes must be eliminated, so that SAF can be successfully implemented.

Students must also take part and play their roles in ensuring the success of SAF. Students must be willing to go the extra mile to harness their skills and competencies. They must be free of the spoon-feeding mentality, instead strive to put forward their own ideas and opinions. They must be steadfast in adopting and practising values and ethics as a Muslim imbued with KHAIR attributes.

RCE GREATER GOMBAK AS A NEW MODEL OF A 'JAMI'AH INSĀNIAH'

The continuous changes in the higher education landscape especially for the past 20 years have forced universities to respond with a diverse model of university to make themselves relevant. The pressure is getting stronger when university activities are put to almost complete halt by the COVID-19 pandemic. Now every single university in the world is searching for a new model that is very resilient not only to withstand any disruption but more importantly a model that can transform the challenges faced into a learning platform and

opportunities. An RCE with its structure of a very close collaboration vertically, horizontally and diagonally, among some of the internal and external stakeholders namely community, university, government agencies and industries can serve as a perfect co-learning platform and ecosystem for any real-world issues – a *Jami'ah Insāniah*.

IIUM, as the centre of the RCE, has long been striving to promote such a concept of learning environment within its institution and with the surrounding community. The living and learning in IIUM have been designed to align with and for Islamic practices which by default encapsulate the concept of *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah*. The introduction of the sustainability concept is perfecting the ecosystem of the university. With the WIT, IIUM views the campus operations and facilities management of the university as not just a physical operation but rather part of an academic tool to provide learning opportunities to its students' and staff' daily routines. It is undeniable that the student learning time spent outside the formal curriculum is relatively higher. Thus, in IIUM, all routine operations and facilities which have been usually taken for granted need to be adjusted so that it should be translating and showcasing a sustainable lifestyle. In realisation of this need, it is not an overstatement to propose that until and unless this model is fully adapted and adopted, the effort to achieve institutional sustainability will not be successful. The success of the RCE agenda of education for sustainable development starts inside out whereby it is so much dependent on how IIUM as a sub-community can function as a sustainable community itself before extending its internal culture to the surrounding community.

In a more general implication of RCE's framework, the whole university's functions, from the formal graded courses to extra-curricular activities, the various research activities, and everyday operation in administrative offices, cafeterias, hostels and every place in the university should be geared and re-oriented towards sustainable development-oriented ecosystem with the implication of *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah* reinstated in all appropriate occasion. For instance, any course on environmental education would emphasise on the negative consequences of plastic usage but this lesson will be of limited value when the university communities encounter cafeterias that are still offering plastic straws and mineral water bottles are still readily available for purchase everywhere in the campus without any notices and reminders on their environmental impact. The WIT approach implies the integration of sustainability aspects in every aspect of university governance and administration and the delivery of the three fundamental functions - teaching and learning, research and development and community engagement - in a more structured and pre-designed way. Concurrently, with the integration of *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah* into the university strategies and performance measurement, the IIUM community is sensitised and realised that all the environmental practices are very well aligned with the teaching of Islam and the concept of Islamisation that the university has been advocating for the past many years.

The RCE framework requires a WIT of IIUM. As previously mentioned, the WIT approach is a pragmatic way to develop a person who uses their head or specifically their cognitive ability to know, their hand to do or their psychomotor domain for mastering skills, and their heart to be, which refers to the affective domain in forming values and attitude which will later translated into actions. These three components make up a person, which will then learn to live together with others in harmony, respectful and peaceful society. This is in line with the four pillars of learning set out in a report for UNESCO by the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century in 1996 which

Abu Rayhan al-Biruni (973 – after 1050) was a polymath during the Islamic Golden Age. Well versed in physics, mathematics, astronomy, and natural sciences, he was also a historian, chronologist and linguist. Among other things, he was considered "founder of Indology", "Father of Comparative Religion", "Father of modern geodesy", and the first anthropologist.

emphasise on the four pillars that make up education throughout life; which are learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together. Most of formal education only stops at learning to know which focuses on numeracy, literacy and critical thinking, and learning to do which concerns more of skills and competency. Little emphasis was given onto learning to live together which involve the development of social skills and values, and learning to be, which foster personal development to act with creativity, judgment, and responsibility. Putting it together, the head, the hand, and the heart must integrate to materialise learning to live together (Dzulkifli Abdul Razak, 2019). Here is where the IIUM model of university, as one of the stakeholders in RCE, distincts itself from the other teaching and learning models while serving as the epicenter for the university in community.

As an Islamic university, IIUM is strongly grounded by the fundamental and teachings of Islam in all of its functions and operations. In the teaching of Islam, the concept of education is more rightly defined as tarbiah (nurture) - to develop a person to be a human being, not just a human capital. The 'knowledge' imparted and possessed is just a piece of information until it is being applied to benefit others or it gives meaning to oneself. With this definition, two critical equal concepts of sustainable development are implied; one, application of knowledge and second, transfer of knowledge. And the same concept is being advocated in the Humboldtian model of education (that is - the integration of teaching, learning, and research) and integrates it with service to humanity. In other words, knowledge is not acquired just for the sake of knowledge, but rather because education strives for a higher ideal

of applying that knowledge to address human needs, concerns, and problems. It is exactly for this purpose that mainstreaming the humanising of higher education is imperative towards meeting sustainable development goals.

Specifically, the main implication of RCE on IIUM's education process is to structurally nurture students who are balanced and harmonious (*Insān Sejahtera*) as stipulated in the *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan* crafted on values-based holistic and integrated education for sustainable development (Education 2030) through the teaching and learning that provide conducive shared learning (culture of *iqra'*) ecosystem geared towards the convergence of knowledge founded on the *Tawhīd* approach towards realising "comprehensive excellence". Together with these functions, the IIUM research agenda is to engage in research and innovation that are relevant to the *Maqāṣid Ash-Sharī'ah* and in meeting the United Nations' SDGs aimed at mercy for all (*Raḥmatan lil-Ālamīn*).

Contrary to the belief that being recognised as RCE means a total reconstruction of the university's direction, the recognition serves as a booster to strengthen the curriculum, efforts and initiatives towards sustainability which have been fully embedded in the initial establishment of IIUM. The mission towards sustainable development had been explicitly stated in IIUM Mission Statement No 2; To produce better quality intellectuals, professionals and scholars by integrating the qualities of faith (*īmān*), knowledge (*ilm*), and good character (*akhlāq*) to serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress as well as sustainable development in Malaysia and in the Muslim world.

An RCE is a network of existing formal, non-formal and informal organisations that facilitate learning towards sustainable development in local and regional communities. Community is part and parcel of the university learning ecosystem, not just to serve as a venue for co-curricular activities. The purpose of an RCE is to connect the formal education institutions with the local stakeholders in the efforts towards sustainable development, hence, the concept of university in community. The term community is not only limited to the neighbouring community but society at large in different areas beyond the locality of the campus, either in the region or internationally where the community is facing with sustainable development challenge. This RCE network is very global that it can serve as another platform to fulfill the IIUM Mission Statement No. 6 and Mission Statement No. 7, which are "To enhance intercultural understanding and foster civilisation dialogues in Malaysia as well as across communities and nations" and "To develop an environment that instills commitment for life-long learning and a deep sense of social responsibility among staff and students".

As a working framework, there are four (4) main components of RCE that contribute to its function as a platform for education for sustainable development namely governance, collaboration, research and development, and transformative education. The details of each components are as follows;

1. Governance - addressing issues of RCE management and leadership to steer the learning ecosystem
2. Collaboration - addressing the engagement of actors from all levels of formal, non-formal and informal education to ensure diverse learning experiences
3. Research and development - addressing the role of research and its inclusion in RCE activities, as well as contributing to the design of strategies for collaborative activities, including those with other RCEs to optimise linkage between different disciplines
4. Transformative education - contributing to the transformation of the current education and training systems to satisfy ambitions of the region regarding sustainable living and livelihood

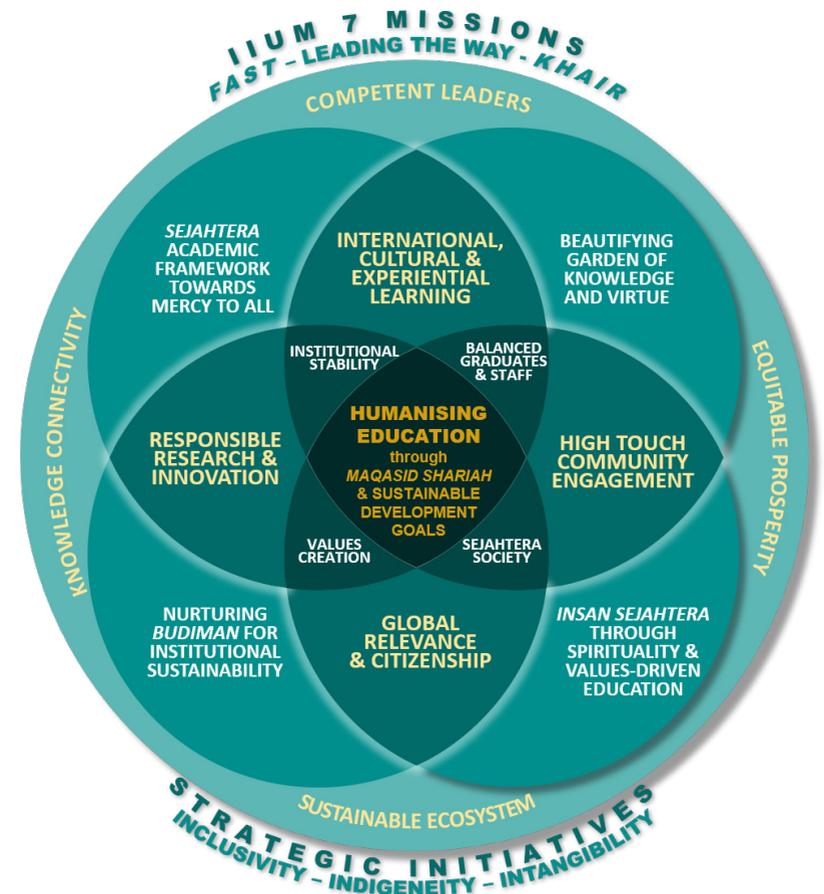
Through these four components, it is hoped that it can create a synergistic co-learning ecosystem that will optimise the learning experiences of not only IIUM students but community members as well. Rather than a total reconstruction, transformative education that is taking place is part of revamping the current curriculum to be more structured in the realisation of sustainable development.

In a nutshell, the recognition of RCE Greater Gombak is a platform to synchronise all aspects of curriculum, research and development, and campus operation towards sustainable development, apart from widening the university's global network in implementation of Education for Sustainable Development. Deeply rooted with tawhid and *Rahmatan lil-'Ālamīn* components, RCE Greater Gombak will continue to 'Leading the Whole Community Transformation through Spirituality and *Sejahtera*'.

With the *Sejahtera* Academic Framework in place and fully implemented, the various manifestations of ESD and Community Engagement in SAF will provide more impactful avenues for IIUM to continue driving the RCE Greater Gombak, truly becoming a model of how an Islamic university may become *Rahmatan lil-'Ālamīn*.



IIUM Roadmap 2021-2022



MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER IN SAF

Dzulkifli Abdul Razak

SAF (the acronym for *Sejahtera* Academic Framework) literally in Arabic means a “straight line” – ranks and file. In the *Qur’ān* (*Surah* 61:4), it refers to “a row as though they are a [single] structure joined firmly.” In congregational prayers, the *saf* is of prime importance to epitomise unity, unison and unified higher purpose in the devotion to the Almighty.

The *surah* encourages Muslims and urges them to perfect their faith and trust in God and to defend the Truth no matter what the cost would be. It encourages them to struggle and fight in the cause of God and gives examples from the lives of prophets Moses and Jesus and their struggle and appeal to their people. Lastly it ends with a glad tiding of victory and that the belief in God will prevail.

At the outset (61: 2-3), the believers are asked: O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do? They have been warned that in the sight of God, it is hateful indeed for those who say one thing and do another. He loves those who fight in the cause of the Truth, “standing like a solid structure, against the enemies of God.”

Figuratively, this volume reflects the same in many ways. Namely, it is intended to align the various aspects of SAF as discussed without losing their connectivity in bringing out transformative changes using the whole institution approach. It is akin to “single structure joined firmly” as described in the *Surah*. This is to ensure that Truth is defended at all cost which is the true purpose of knowledge-seeking in IIUM, and Islam generally. And that is consequent to the faith and trust in God, which is also alluded to by the FPK.

The contrast is also clear, in that, not doing what is being advocated. In the case of SAF, it refers to the aims and goals as spelt out at the outset in *Humanising Education for Raḥmatan lil-‘Ālamīn*. This includes the nexus of concepts, frameworks, principles and approaches enumerated in the volume. Thus, walking the talk “in the cause of Truth.” From the organisation viewpoint it could take on other dimensions as well in arriving at the Truth. One such practice relates to good governance as articulated by the International Bureau of Education (IBE), an agency of UNESCO. Being an educational institution that aspires to be active internationally, such an understanding is imperative.

It cannot be overemphasised that IBE recognises “the various sources of systematic barriers within education systems that could derail the design, development, and implementation of quality curricula. Even the best curriculum can be undermined by systematic constraints such as poor governance [and] insufficient consultation with stakeholders in the decision-making process.”

Good Governance in Education

IBE defines the concept of governance to represent “the norms, values and rules of the game through which public affairs are managed in a manner that is transparent, participatory, inclusive and responsive.” In addition, it refers “to structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation.” In a broad sense, governance is about the culture and institutional environment in which citizens and stakeholders interact among themselves and participate in public affairs. It is more than the organs of the government. It therefore can be subtle and may not be easily observable, a point that is often missed when one is fixated to the rule of law, or the exercise of authority or power, as some understand what good governance is conventionally.

Eight elements of Good Governance



More interestingly, IBE cited that governance has also been interpreted as ‘power relationships,’ ‘formal and informal processes of formulating policies and allocating resources,’ ‘processes of decision-making’ and ‘mechanisms for holding governments accountable.’ (emphasis added). In this regard, it is crucial to differentiate “governance” from “management” so as to avoid confusion and the tendency to equate the two. From the IBE standpoint, “management” refers primarily “to the planning, implementation and monitoring functions in order to achieve pre-defined results. Management encompasses processes, structures and arrangements that are designed to mobilize and transform the available physical, human and financial resources

to achieve concrete outcomes. Management refers to individuals or groups of people who are given the authority to achieve the desired results.” In contrast, “[g]overnance systems set the parameters under which management and administrative systems will operate. Governance is about how power is distributed and shared, how policies are formulated, priorities set and stakeholders made accountable. The term ‘good governance’ is also frequently used as a necessary pre-condition for creating an enabling environment in meeting outcomes related and sustainable human development in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and more recently the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Table 5.1 below summarises the main differences between governance and management:

Governance	Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Set and norms, strategic vision and direction and formulate high-level goals and policies. · Oversee management and organisational performance to ensure that the organisation is working in the best interests of the public, and more specifically the stakeholders who are served by the organisation’s mission. · Direct and oversee the management to ensure that the organisation is achieving the desired outcomes and to ensure that the organisation is acting prudently, ethically and legally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Run the organisation in line with the broad goals and direction set by the governing body. · Implement the decisions within the context of the mission and strategic vision. · Make operational decisions and policies, keep the governance bodies informed and educated. · Be responsive to requests for additional information.

Realising the discrepancy between the two based on the ideals that SAF espouses and what is “not” carried out or aligned to the values system is an important “reality-check.” It could be the much-needed brief moments to better prepare oneself at times when moral and ethical dilemmas are being subtly put to test. This will go a long way to merely play safe and gradually fails to put KhAIR in its proper place. Over time it gets worse when no one is willing and able to keep the saf true to its meaning and purpose in a disciplined way. Ultimately, the Whole Institution Transformation, complemented strongly by the Whole Curriculum Transformation (SAF) in tandem to the institutional one will also suffer.

REACHING TO THE PREFERRED SCENARIO

The *Sejahtera* Academic Framework is both “old” and “new”. It is “old” in the sense that the core values and the vision and mission of the University continue to be the bedrock. It is “new” in that it weaves together the current and future major agenda while demanding each and everyone of us - at both the individual and organisational levels - reflect on our roles and responsibilities to move the University into the future.

And what is the future?

Chronologically, the “future” is a specific time ahead that we are planning for. So what are we planning for? This is where foresight studies may help us understand the possible futures. For the purpose of the foresight studies, 2040 is chosen as the next “station.” UNESCO has put 2030 as its time goal for its 5 pillars of learning. With SAF launched in 2020, coupled with Education 2030, 2040 is a good time period to expect the full manifestation and impact of these 2 major initiatives reflected in IIUM.

Moving ahead to 2040, there are several probable scenarios*.

Scenario 1. The University community in 2020 has chosen not to change, for we seem to be doing well, and things have been working, though not flawlessly, but things get done - students graduate, staff get promoted - the University has even won several awards at both the national and international level. With that choice, in 2040, it is expected that the University will become a “Museum of Yesterday” - the Garden of Knowledge and Virtue is essentially a deserted and abandoned garden. No longer competitive programme-wise and not willing to change organisational-wise, the University no longer attracts much less retain the brightest minds, it is merely existing, as long as the government continues to fund it. Meanwhile, the world outside continues to change, at times exponentially.

Scenario 2. The University community in 2020 has chosen to change marginally. Everyone understands that some things have got to change, but the changes are done only as and when needed, why rock the boat too much? Just row the boat ahead but don’t rock it. With that choice, in 2040, it is expected that the University will transform into a *Sejahtera* community. This does not seem like a bad decision to have made in 2020 then. Until the details are looked into and we see that is it essentially a stagnant community that is resistant to change, and everyone continues to be in their comfort zone - textbook and exam-oriented pedagogies, low-impact research done mainly for getting promotions, technology-slave and follower culture - these images permeate the assembly-line setting. There is still too much bureaucracy and too much emphasis on maintaining legacy or heritage blindly. The “*Sejahtera* Transformer” in this *Sejahtera* community remains more of a litany and a concept than the reality, for in the end, it continues to be about the paper qualification and instant self-glorification.

Scenario 3. The University community in 2020 is happy with the achievements and wants to continue leading the way, while maintaining the concept of “ummatan wasatan,” hence they have chosen to take the adaptive change route. With that choice, in 2040, IIUM becomes “The Sanctuary” and the aspired university. The University is seen not just as a place to seek knowledge, instead it generates knowledge at a viral level. It humanises and Islamicises Artificial Intelligence for the benefit of humankind. It offers a personalised education where students choose what they want to learn and earn a series of certifications leading to a degree. The IIUM Culture is like a family where you feel wanted in a nurturing, warm, honest and welcoming environment, and people keep coming back for support and advise. The teachers are Murabbis, nurturing self-learning. There is green-tape governance, and diversity is embraced. The 7 missions are in place once again in navigating the required changes. The Garden of Knowledge and Virtue is also now a sanctuary.

Scenario 4. The University community in 2020 feels blessed with the achievements and is thirsty for more. KhAIR and the 7 missions are well-grounded in the IIUM community. The COVID19 disruption shows that more needs to be done - sooner rather than later - hence they have decided to go for the radical change. With that choice, in 2040, IIUM becomes an oasis of knowledge. With the metaphor of the rising phoenix, IIUM leads the renaissance of knowledge, in the Islamic world and beyond. This is achieved by becoming a hybrid global university. The global aspect of the mission is achieved - there are scholars and students around the world, engaged in knowledge seeking, impactful research that generates knowledge while improving societies around the world - all under the IIUM mantle and high standards. The scholarly community and the public flock to campuses - those virtual ones, and the physical ones - for the environment is both a sanctuary and a verdant garden of knowledge and virtue. No longer relying on government funding, as well as fully autonomous, IIUM is able to move forward faster than before. IIUM is the preferred choice, and it is borderless, and inclusive - all languages are spoken in IIUM, and they all speak the same language - that of mercy to all the worlds and glorification of Allah.

The Preferred Scenario (IIUM 2040)

With the 4 possible scenarios presented above, it is clear that change is a must. Not changing is not an option. So the question is how much change, and what kind of change. It is perhaps also clear by now that marginal change is insufficient, not if we want to be leading the way, not simply just to remain relevant. The preferred scenario combines the best of being radical yet adaptive. The metaphor of IIUM 2040 is the good tree. The details are subject to further consultation as the scenario is cascaded to the community and extensive engagement with all is done. In general, in 2040, it is envisioned that IIUM graduates will truly be -the khalifahs - nurtured in an inclusive, green and happy environment, going through an academically rigorous yet meaningful and flexible programme, with the best facilities and having instructors who

are murabbis - the IIUM graduates will continue to bring goodness and positive changes to their respective communities. Administratively, the University continues to adapt such that there is optimum efficiency with full transparency and accountability to materialise the various University agendas (including the Roadmap 2021-2022), designed for optimum positive impact. The *Sejahtera* Academic Framework has become one of the major catalysts to move things forward, and it can be seen in full-swing by 2040.

*from the IIUM Foresight Series of Workshop (Nov-Dec 2020)

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“
Occupy yourself with
every good deed
and hasten to do it
before something
prevents you from
doing so.”

(Imam Ahmad Ibn)

GLOSSARY

<i>Abd</i>	Servant or creation of Allah
<i>Adab</i>	Islamic etiquette or Islamic behaviour
<i>Akhlaq</i>	behaviour; ethics
<i>al kawn</i>	the universe
<i>al-'Alaq</i>	Chapter 96 of the Holy <i>Qur'ān</i>
<i>al-mal</i>	Wealth or properties
<i>al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm</i>	the true path
<i>amānah</i>	trust or upholding trusts
<i>an-nafs</i>	life
<i>an-nasl</i>	lineage
<i>'aqīdah</i>	belief or creed
<i>'aql</i>	Reason
<i>Biah</i>	Condition Premise Environment
Co-curricular	Activities that complement students' learning in University
Electives	Optional courses
<i>Falah</i>	holistic well-being
<i>Falsafah pendidikan Kebangsaan</i>	National Philosophy of Education
<i>Fasad</i>	relating to corruption
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
Free Electives	optional courses offered by one kulliyah that can be taken by student from other kulliyahs
<i>hifz ad-din</i>	Faith
<i>'ibādah</i>	practices of worship
<i>Ikhlas</i>	Sincerity
<i>'ilm</i>	knowledge
<i>iman</i>	faith
<i>imārāt al-kawn</i>	construction of the universe
<i>Inṣāf</i>	realisation of the truth
<i>Insān</i>	human being
<i>insān kāmīl</i>	perfect human being
<i>iqra'</i>	To read
<i>islah</i>	reform
<i>islamicise</i>	bring under influence of Islam
<i>Istiqamah</i>	Steadfastness unwavering resolute
<i>Jasad</i>	the body flesh
JERIHAS	a Malay acronym of <i>Jasmani emosi rohani intelek hamba Allah alam sekitar sosialisasi</i> ; Physical Emotional Spiritual Intellectual
JERIHAS	Servant Environment Socialization a Malay acronym of <i>Jasmani Emosi Rohani Intelek Sosialisasi Alam Sekitar Hamba Allah</i>
KhaAIR	an acronym of <i>Khalifah Amānah Iqra' Raḥmatan lil-Ālamīn</i> ;

<i>khalifah</i>	a ruler or a leader
LLL	Life-long Learning
LWL	Life-wide Learning
<i>mahallah</i>	hostel or students' accomodation
<i>maqāṣid shari'ah</i> or <i>Maqāṣid Ash-Shari'ah</i>	the purpose of shari'ah
<i>masjid</i>	Muslims' place of congregational prayer
MPU	Muslims' place of congregational prayer
<i>murabbi</i>	educators
Kulliyah	Faculty; Centre of Studies
non-credited extra-curricular	courses taken by students but bear no credit hours such as clubs, societies and sports activities

<i>Rabb al-'ālamīn</i>	master or creator of the universe
<i>Raḥmatan lil-Ālamīn</i>	mercy to all the worlds
<i>raison d'etre</i>	an important purpose for one's being
RCE Greater Gombak	Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development

<i>Rūḥ</i>	the spirit or the soul
<i>Sadaqah</i>	Giving of alms or charity
SAF	<i>Sejahtera</i> Academic Framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SD	Sustainable Development
SFS	Students Feedback Survey
<i>shari'ah</i>	Islamic law or religious precepts based on the <i>Qur'ān</i> and the prophets

<i>Taqwa</i>	piety or the state fear towards Allah
<i>tawazun</i>	a form of balance in the world
<i>tawḥīd</i>	the concept of oneness of God or monotheism

<i>Tilawah</i>	Recitation of the <i>Qur'ān</i>
<i>Ukhuwah</i>	Brotherhood or solidarity of Muslim society

<i>ummah</i>	brotherhood or muslim society
UNGS	University General Studies courses
UniCORE	University Required Courses
Undergraduate Studies	relating to Bachelors' Degrees programme

Postgraduate

<i>wahy</i>	relating to Master's and Doctoral degree programme
WIT	divine revelation
Homo-sapiens	Whole Institution Transformation
UNESCO	human being

the purpose of shari'ah

Muslims' place of congregational

Mata Pelajaran Umum
 educators
 Faculty; Centre of Studies
 courses taken by students but bear no credit hours such as clubs, societies and sports activities
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*We are also hugely indebted to the entire IIUM community, past and present,
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ISBN 978-967-467-018-4

