

Changes augur well for developing critical thinking

THE Malaysia Education Blueprint will allow higher learning institutions to focus on instilling more specific and sophisticated skill sets.

Academicians say the education reform will produce better quality students entering higher learning institutions who no longer require remedial training.

Universiti Putra Malaysia vice-chancellor Datuk Dr Radin Umar Radin Sohadi said educators at tertiary level could concentrate more

on developing problem solving and critical thinking skills.

“Currently, there is a large gap between skills acquired during secondary school and those needed to successfully undergo degree programmes.

“Many freshmen struggle even to converse competently in Bahasa Malaysia and English, but with the new measures we will hopefully welcome students who are already equipped with sufficient verbal and

non-verbal skills,” he said yesterday.

He added the quality of students was vital because post secondary learning was progressive and required them to master more difficult subject matters.

“At the bachelor’s degree level, knowledge application is not sufficient, students also need to analyse.

“At the master’s level, they are expected to go beyond that and learn to synthesise, whereas at the PhD level, they are expected to eval-

uate,” he said, adding that a strong foundation would enable a smooth progression of those skills.

Radin added that the higher education policy was perfectly in tandem with the national education philosophy and expressed hope that this consistency would create a more holistic society.

He hoped higher education institutions would be given more decision-making autonomy.