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Only one varsity rated excellent

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PUTRAJAYA: The report card is in with Universiti Malaya coming tops to earn itself the rating of "excellent" under the Rating System for Malaysian Higher Education.

Four other local institutions of higher learning were rated "very good", namely Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and Universiti Putra Malaysia in the research intensive university category and Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia and Universiti Teknologi Mara in the broad-based university category.

The rating system, approved by the Cabinet in 2005, was conducted by a five-member team led by Professor Dr Che Husna Azhari, director of the Institute of the Malay World and Civilisation of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, and co-ordinated by the

Malaysian Qualifications Agency.

Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Khaled Nordin, who announced the results yesterday, said the ratings would allow the ministry to gauge the quality and identify the weaknesses and strengths of the universities.

"The information gathered from 87 indicators under six main domains will give us an idea as to what needs to be done to improve the quality of universities in this country."

The six main domains are the reputation of the academic staff, student selection, research, academic programmes and management.

"The rating will also allow the university management to focus their efforts on areas that need improvements."

The universities that were rated as "good" were Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Universiti

Malaysia Sarawak and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.

Universities that earned the "satisfactory" rating are Universiti Teknologi Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Malacca and Universiti Malaysia Pahang.

Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, Universiti Darul Iman Malaysia and Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia were not included in the rating exercise because they were too new and did not have sufficient data.

Khaled said the ministry would provide help to universities which only earned a rating of "satisfactory".

"The assistance will range from funding to policy. They did not score high because

they are still new and have fewer resources compared to the well-established universities which have been around for so long."

However, he said a detailed report of the universities would not be made public. Only the universities themselves would know the contents of the report.

He said the rating system would also be used to help improve the international ranking of local universities.

In two months' time, Khaled said seven local universities, two of which are private, would know whether they would be taking part in the accelerated programme for excellence to compete with top-ranked universities worldwide.

"They have drawn up their master plan for the programme."

"In two months, you will know who they are."

HOW THE UNIVERSITIES FARED

EXCELLENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universiti Malaya
VERY GOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Universiti Putra Malaysia Universiti Teknologi Mara Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia
GOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universiti Sains Malaysia Universiti Malaysia Sabah Universiti Malaysia Sarawak Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
SATISFACTORY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universiti Teknologi Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris Universiti Malaysia Perlis Universiti Malaysia Terengganu Universiti Utara Malaysia Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Malacca Universiti Malaysia Pahang