



MOBILITY

Activities are not only held in classrooms, but also outdoors.

# An intercultural summer offering

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**A**WAY to better understand people and encourage collaboration is to get to know their culture by engaging with them personally. The best manner of doing this is to experience other countries first-hand.

Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) has been offering this opportunity to international students via exchange programmes, since the late 1990s, focusing on practical training and research in the field of science and technology, such as veterinary medicine.

In 2016, UPM introduced the Putra Experience — a mobility programme that comprises semester mobility programmes, internship, research attachments and special niche programmes initiated by its various faculties.

The Putra Experience aims to give inbound international students the opportunity to study and experience the diversity of Malaysian culture.

This year, UPM will expand the Putra Experience to include a summer school programme, dubbed "Putra Experience 2018: Travel, Explore and Learn".

Its Putra International Centre director, Associate Professor Zelina Zaiton Ibrahim, said the summer school will include 19 programmes, each within a duration of two weeks, offered by 16 faculties and one learning centre.

It will run from June to October.

"UPM has encouraged each of its faculties to offer a summer school as part of their teaching and learning outreach activities.

"Each programme is designed according to the faculty's niche and to provide experiential learning to international students in the Malaysian context."

She said the summer school was designed to be a diverse learning experience in academics and cultural exposure in Southeast Asia.

Activities will not only be held in classrooms, but also include outdoor learning activities, such as industrial and historical visits, homestay programmes, skills development and cultural experiences.

The courses offered in the programme will be conducted in English. After its completion, participants will be awarded with a participatory certificate.



Zelina Zaiton Ibrahim

"The minimum duration for each summer school is two weeks, although some programmes will be offered for a longer duration," Zelina said.

Asked to explain how the programmes are crafted to a faculty's niche, Zelina gave the example of the Faculty of Forestry's "Forest Trail" programme.

"This programme (Forest Trail) will allow students to understand the

importance of forests to society and the world. Participants will develop knowledge and understanding about the forest ecosystem, as well as learn forestry skills and apply them in the field.

"They will be able to develop key lifetime skills and attributes, such as confidence, collaboration, communication and other soft skill abilities, from their experience. In addition, participants may be able to gain credit transfer at their home institution."

Through the summer school programme,

## Courses offered:

- Putra Agriculture Summer Programme
- Tropical Forest Trail
- Vet Summer Programme 2018
- Kuala Lumpur Summer Business Programme@UPM
- Halal Awareness Programme: Experiencing Halal Ecosystem in Malaysia
- ExplorENG Summer Programme (True Engineer Thru Exploration)
- Traditional Malay Sports
- Putra Science Summer Programme
- Malaysian Food Heritage Summer 2018
- Embracing Malaysian Cultural Diversity and Heritage
- Escapade 2018: An Interactive Multicultural Journey through Languages
- Putra Architecture Summer School 5 (PASS 5.0)
- Putra Architecture Summer School 2 (PASS 2.0)
- Summer School for Environmental and Occupational Health Professionals
- The CSIT\_TEX Summer Programme
- Bio Trek - The Life Science Experience
- Fun with Nature
- Student Leader Summit Diversity in Academia Culture and Agriculture
- Language and Culture Course

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Zelina said UPM hoped to increase its visibility internationally to attract more international students to further their studies there.

"Increased number of inbound mobility students could contribute to the national Key Performance Indicators on International Mobility Students.

"The summer school programme can strengthen and enrich UPM's internationalisation achievement through activities conducted together with international students currently studying at the university."

She said the programme provided exposure and experience to international students of studying in Malaysia's unique cultural environment.

"On the part of our teaching staff, their teaching skills will be enhanced in their interaction with international students from a different academic culture."

Although "Putra Experience 2018: Travel, Explore and Learn" is mainly for international students, Zelina said local students are also welcomed to experience it.

The application deadline varies, with the earliest being on May 30. For details, students may visit [www.intl.upm.edu.my](http://www.intl.upm.edu.my), and click on the Mobility menu.

"UPM plans to offer this summer school programme annually. We hope to receive more participants in years to come," Zelina said.



A hands-on learning activity in a laboratory.



Malay culture experience through immersion.