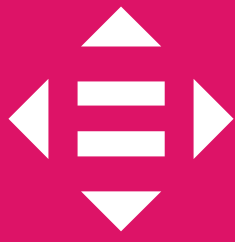


10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Reduce Inequalities

Reduce inequalities for all.



10

Yang Berat Sama Dipikul, Yang Ringan Sama Dijinjing

SDG 10, which aims to reduce inequality within and among societies, is well captured by the Malay proverb “*Yang berat sama dipikul, yang ringan sama dijinjing*” (“We bear the heavy together, the light we share as one”). This proverb highlights the spirit of unity, equity, and shared responsibility in addressing social and economic disparities. At Universiti Malaya (UM), this value is embodied through inclusive policies and initiatives that support students and staff from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

From needs-based financial aid and accessible education programmes to disability-friendly infrastructure and diversity-focused student engagement, UM is committed to creating a more equitable and inclusive campus. By ensuring that every member of the community has the opportunity to succeed, the university contributes meaningfully to the broader goal of reducing inequality in all its forms.

A Caring University

Universities, as a centre of academic excellence, must free themselves from the nuances of exclusivity of an ivory tower; instead, they have the responsibility of advancing civilisational wisdom while nurturing values and principles amongst their campus community, in the hope of inspiring equitable actions for the betterment of society. In embracing the aspirations, Universiti Malaya embedded the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI) virtues into the operations, governance, and myriads of campus initiatives and activities to promote a welcoming and honourable environment for its cherished community—creating a safe space where individuals are recognised and supported without prejudice or malice.



Creating A Nurturing Environment

In Universiti Malaya, we believe that everyone, regardless of their socio-economic upbringing or varying life challenges, deserves the right to quality education and access to an ecosystem of growth. This includes persons with disabilities (PWD), who, more often than not, were deprived of a dedicated support system to accommodate their uniqueness,

thus limiting them from reaching their fullest potential. In doing so, the university had created an intricate network of empathy to ensure a level playing ground for all of its students and staff, leading to a more fulfilling and enriching campus experience.

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A Two-Pronged Approach



Institutional

Centre for Counselling and Disability Empowerment (CCDE)

CCDE is a centre under the purview of the Registrar's Office, which functions as a one-stop centre for complementary professional psychological and emotional support for the UM campus community. It is also entrusted with coordinating and facilitating the social welfare care services of PWD students and staff members.



Organic

Persatuan Mahasiswa Istimewa Universiti Malaya (PERMIUM)

PERMIUM is a registered student association under the UM Student Affairs Department that provides a platform for growth and collective voice for PWD students. As a recognised body, it sends representatives to the UM Student Congress to raise concerns on development and welfare, contributing to a more inclusive agenda.

Enhanced Support for PWDs

Disability Liaison Officer

In creating an inclusive and nurturing environment for all, UM empowers and trains dedicated staff members to act as DLOs at every responsibility center (PTJs): academic and non-academic. In 2024, more than 30 DLOs have been trained and deployed to respective PTJs. **#CCDE**



Community Support

UM empowers its community to embark on a journey of self-discovery and co-creation. As such, PERMIUM as a student-founded, student-led collective, which draws its ranks of familiarity, provides a solace and platform to promote tolerance. **#PERMIUM**

10



Buddies@CCDE

In supporting the university's caring community vision, CCDE welcomes the voluntary students' participation in a peer support system. The Buddies will be trained and serve as the bridge between the centre and the campus community. **#CCDE**



A Year of Inclusion: Throwback to 2024

Hari Interaksi PERMIUM, PERMIUM's Day Out, Majlis Apresiasi PERMIUM

In creating a strong community for students with disabilities on campus, PERMIUM regularly held gathering events targeted to PWDs that is also open to all community members of Universiti Malaysia. The aim is to increase interaction between the association members, solidifying the relationship between the members. The events held are generally field with interactive activities where all members could take part in. By providing these opportunities to the new students, it will help them to connect with the existing communities and senior students where they

can share their experience and act as mentors to the new students coming into the university. These events were done in the hope of instilling the spirit of togetherness knitting a strong bond where members and general communities could rely with each other. Such motivation was captured by the following quotes.

*Only if we **understand**, can we **care**. Only if we **care**, we will help. Only if we help, we shall be saved.*

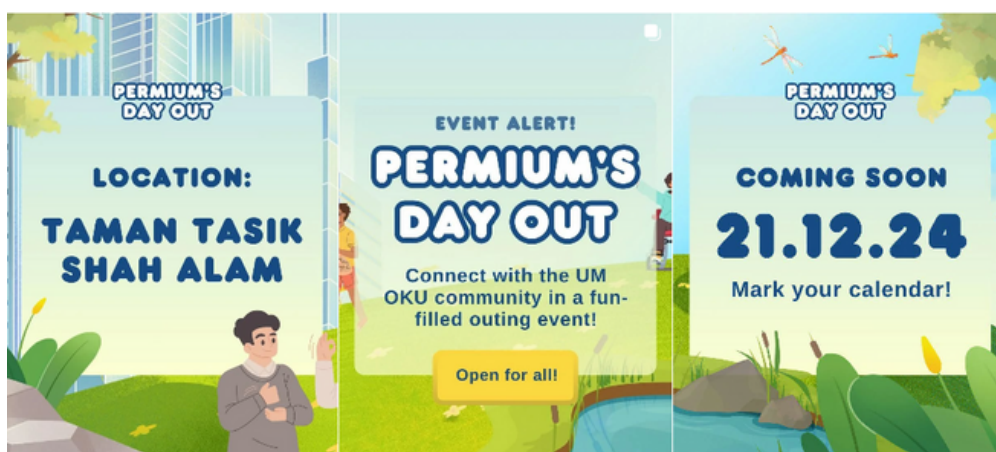
— Jane Goodall, UN Messenger of Peace



Above: “Malam Apresiasi PERMIUM” activity poster held on 1st June 2024



Above: “Hari Interaksi PERMIUM 2024/2025” activity poster held on 15th December 2024



Above: “PERMIUM's Day Out” activity poster held on 21st December 2024

Future for Disabled: Industrial Visit

Apart from interaction events, PERMIUM also conducts other events. In collaboration with the Hong Leong Foundation Scholars Club, PERMIUM had organised an industrial visit for its members on the 17th of May 2024 at the Hong Leong Tower. The aim of the visit is to empower disabled students in their career path while boosting awareness on work opportunities open for PWDs. The day started with a company tour where students were exposed to the operation of Hong Leong Bank and the landscape of the financial sector in Malaysia.

It was followed by a career talk session led by Hong Leong employees where they shared their workplace experiences and opportunities within the banking industry. A mini forum/discussion session was also held so that students can get better insights and curated answers to their inquiries throughout the whole day. The execution of events such as this highlights the emphasis that the university puts on ensuring the availability of pathways and opportunities for the PWDs after graduation.



Above: Activities snapshots of the "Future for Disabled: Industrial Visit" held on 17th May 2024

Irama Bahasa

On the 26th of May 2024, *Sekretariat Rakan Muda Universiti Malaya* had organised a one-day sign language workshop called “Irama Bahasa” for the campus community. The name Irama Bahasa which is translated to the rhythm of language in linguistics studies refers to the natural flow and beat within a language. In this specific context, it would refer to the motion and pattern done in producing a fluid sign language. The event which was held with the support of #SIGNON, a non-profit independent organisation focusing on creating awareness on the usage of sign language, has attracted participation from staff and students alike. The focus on the day is to teach basic sign language with the aim of achieving basic communication using the sign languages taught.



Above: Activities snapshots of “Irama Bahasa” held on 28th May 2024

Dining as If Blind



Above: “Dining as If Blind” activity poster held on 7th June 2024

Empathy is seeing with the eyes of another, listening with the ears of another, and feeling with the heart of another

— Alfred Adler, renowned psychiatrist

The quote encapsulates the concept of empathy as the ability to understand another person's wants, needs, fears, and viewpoints by putting oneself in their place and experiencing their perspective without them having to articulate it. Understanding this concept, CCDE had organised an event on the 7th of June called “Dining as If Blind” which is an event that provides the participants experience on how visually impaired individuals navigate mealtimes. By momentarily stepping into their world, participants gained valuable insight into the daily challenges faced by visually impaired individuals and developed a deeper appreciation for their lived experiences. By understanding others better, we can strive to live together in harmony while accommodating each other's needs.

Karnival Sukan Inklusif

Another event organised by CCDE on campus for the PWD community is **Karnival Sukan Inklusif**. It was held on the 14th of December 2024 with the help from UM Sports Centre and the Faculty of Sports and Exercise Science. The activities conducted on the day include kayak, petanque, beach volleyball, and aerobics exercise. With registration open to all campus communities, it provided the opportunity for university residents to participate in sports activities together with the PWDs community. The event was conducted with the intention of fostering the spirit of inclusivity within the campus community.



Above: “Karnival Sukan Inklusif Universiti Malaysia 2024” activity poster held on 14th December 2024

RHB Ocean Harmony 2024



Above: Prof. Dr. Nazirah Hassan, UMMC Director, giving an TV interview, held on 26th October 2024, extracted from Berita RTM YouTube Channel

Universiti Malaya in collaboration with RHB Bank, Universiti Malaya Medical Centre, and Universiti Malaysia Terengganu had organised **RHB Ocean Harmony 2024**, an environmental conservation initiative which focused on marine life protection. The unique aspect of the programme is the integration of scuba diving as a method of therapy for disabled patients. With assistance from Adaptive Diveheart, a non-profit organisation that provides and supports educational scuba diving programmes for the PWDs community, the scuba diving rehabilitation initiative was successfully held with the attendance of UMMC Director, Prof. Dr. Nazirah Hassan and representatives from the Rehabilitative Medicine Department.



Above: “Selamat Pagi Malaysia” episode on RHB Ocean Harmony 2024 programme, extracted from Berita RTM YouTube Channel

Shaping the Future of Higher Learning

Driving Inclusivity Policies Across Campuses



KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN TINGGI

SESI LIBAT URUS YB MENTERI PENDIDIKAN TINGGI BERSAMA GOLONGAN ORANG KURANG UPAYA (OKU) BAGI PELAN PEMBANGUNAN PENDIDIKAN TINGGI MALAYSIA (PPPTM) 2026-2035



Above: Engagement Session with PWDs for the development of the Malaysian Higher Education Development Plan (PPPTM) 2026-2035, held on 24th October 2024

Universiti Malaya as the nation's premier public higher education institution has always provided its expertise and support in the formulation and execution of national plans. On 24th October 2024, an engagement session was organised between the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia (MOHE) and the PWDs community in Malaysia at Auditorium Kompleks Perdana Siswa, Universiti Malaya. The purpose is to get feedback and suggestions directly from the PWDs community on the National Higher Education Plan 2026-2035.

The session was attended personally by the Minister of Higher Education, YB Dato' Seri Diraja Dr. Zambry Abd Kadir, Secretary General MOHE, Dato' Seri Ir. Dr. Zaini Ujang, experts, and representatives from various PWDs communities in Malaysia. With involvement directly from PWDs in the formulation, a more robust and inclusive Education Plan could be constructed that considers the needs and restrictions faced by PWDs in navigating their daily life at higher education learning institutions.

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Above: Highlights of the engagement session, extracted from MoHE activities broadcast

Mainstreaming Accessibility and Inclusivity

Other than involvement in formulation of national plans such as the Malaysian Higher Education Development Plan (PPPTM) 2026-2035, the University also offers their expertise by sharing their knowledge through media appearances. Over the year 2024, several media appearances have been made by staff and students of Universiti Malaya discussing the topic of disability and inclusivity, providing critical insights grounded on their lived experiences to bring awareness onto the potential and ways to overcome the preconceptions and biases against the PWDs communities. In hope of promoting a tolerance towards creating a caring society.



Above: Promotional posters of RTM's "Selamat Pagi Malaysia" slots, featuring UM PWDs staff and students, held on 15th October 2024 and 30th December 2024

Vibrant Campus Community

Celebrating the Pioneers through "Sulung 3.0"



Above: Promotional poster of "SULUNG 3.0" for academic session 2024/2025

Program Pembangunan Siswa Sulung (SULUNG) has come again in 2024, offering financial aid to first generation students from underprivileged families. Continuing the mission of providing equitable education, the University has steadily participated in this initiative introduced by the MOHE. First introduced as a pilot program in 2022 involving 8 pioneer public universities, the programme model has been refined to ensure the sustainability of its execution. Students accepted into the programme enjoy the benefit of being exempted from academic fees throughout their whole study period. The aim of the programme is to break the cycle of poverty by giving these students opportunities, support, and resources so that they and their families can have better socio-economic outcomes. Going forward, the University will always work towards providing avenues for underprivileged and underrepresented communities to further their studies in higher education institutions.

Empowering Accessible Higher Education

The inclusivity aspect on campus is not only limited to local students, but the University has also increased its efforts to recruit talented students from low income and lower middle-income countries. Throughout the year 2024, the University has actively participated in student fairs all around the world to promote academic programmes offered by the university. To better engage with international audiences, UM has built a partnership with Education Malaysia Global Services (EMGS), a company limited by guarantee under the purview of the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE). EMGS operates a One-Stop Centre for international student services pursuing higher education in Malaysia which operates by leading marketing and promotional activities for Malaysian education institutions and products globally, including tours and participation in international exhibitions and conferences. Through the partnership, with a strategic marketing and branding approach, UM could push itself as one of the preferred education institutions in the world. To date, our campus was represented by more than 80 nationalities, making us a truly global university.



Above: Highlights of UM Recruitment Drive in 2024 aimed at promoting global exchange of ideas and talents



Above: Promotional posters for international students' aid offered by UM and its partners

International Students Aid

Dedicated to assisting in providing equitable education for all, Universiti Malaya has offered several financial support programmes that are open to international students. These opportunities provide a medium for international students especially from underprivileged or underrepresented backgrounds to complete their postgraduate studies in one of the top universities in the region. The application period of each programme differs from each other so interested students should regularly check with the Marketing and Recruitment Division or Academic Services Department on the availability of support programmes for application.

Disabled Students Aid

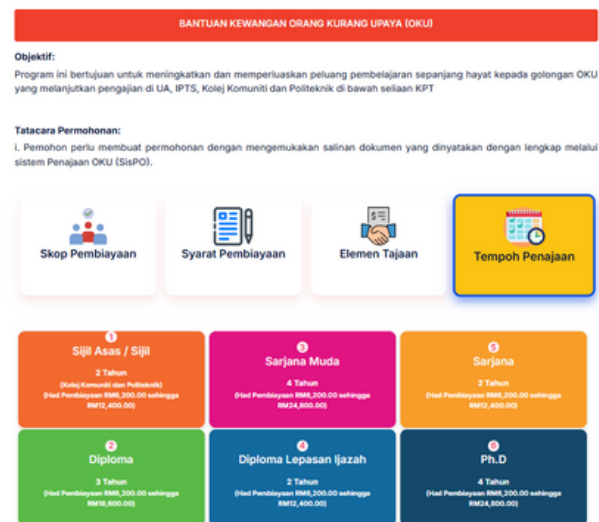
Not forgetting students with disabilities, Universiti Malaya also provides a series of financial aid targeted to support PWDs complete their studies on campus. Reflecting the wish of the Ministry of Higher Education in providing accessible education, the University offers a 50% fees reduction scheme for postgraduate students with disabilities. To further expand the range of support, the scheme is also extended towards senior citizens.

Other than that, as a public university, Universiti Malaya benefited from the initiative done by the Ministry of Higher Education. Bantuan Kewangan OKU (BKOKU) is a continuous support programme designed to provide PWDs with financial assistance in the form of monthly allowances and tuition support. Interested individuals may contact our Academic Services Department and Centre for Counselling and Disability Empowerment for further details.



This scheme is open to local candidates enrolled (active status) in a Masters or Doctoral programme.
The fee reduction for the Disabilities and Senior Citizens is only 50%, which is the teaching fee and the research fee.

Above: UM's Fee Reduction Scheme for PWDs and Senior Citizen



Above: Financial Assistance Scheme for PWDs Students (BKOKU) by the MoHE

