SDG 16

PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

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01 Elected Representation

Elected Representation in University Governance

Universiti Malaya (UM) operates under the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the University of Malaya 2010. Together they give each of the University's main constituencies - academic staff, non-academic staff and students - a voice in institutional decision-making.

Academic staff

The Senate for 2025-2027 includes 20 full-time professors elected by all full-time professors and associate professors to serve three-year terms (Section 22(1)(d)). The Senate in turn elects one of these professors to sit on the Board of Directors, UM's highest governing body (Section 17(1)(e)). Academic staff therefore choose their own representative on the Board, rather than having one appointed by the University.

Students

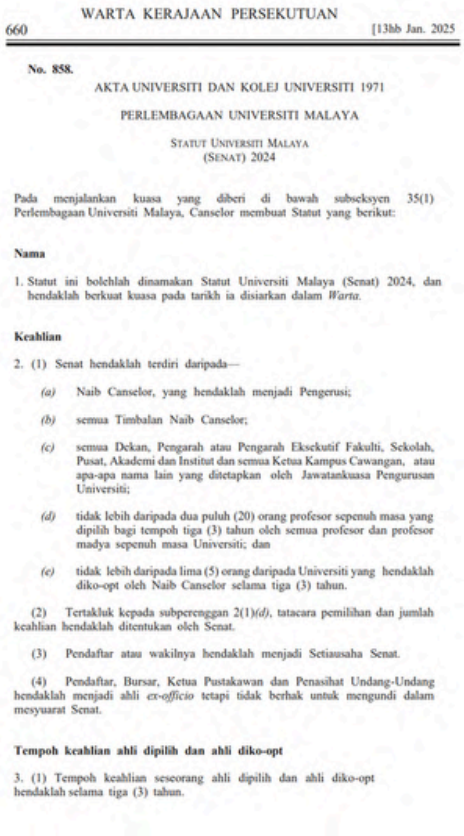
Students elect the Universiti Malaya Students' Union (Kesatuan Mahasiswa Universiti Malaya, KMUM) by secret ballot each year (Section 57), in elections run by the student-led UM Campus Election Committee. Universiti Malaya's Constitution provides for student participation in Senate meetings through Section 22(2), which empowers the Senate to invite any person, including students, to attend its meetings. This provision allows both undergraduate and postgraduate students to be invited, providing an avenue for student representation and participation in university-level academic governance.

Non-academic Staff

Non-academic staff are represented by their own staff bodies, the Kesatuan Kakitangan Am Universiti Malaya (KKAUM) and the Persatuan Pegawai Tadbir & Ikhtisas Universiti Malaya (PEKERTI). The Senate also includes senior administrators such as Executive Directors and the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Corporate Strategy), who bring administrative and operational perspectives as ex officio members.

Elections and Vacancies

The Statut Universiti Malaya (Senat) 2024, gazetted on 13 January 2025, allows the Senate to set its own election procedures and to fill mid-term vacancies through elections, and it distinguishes elected members from those co-opted by the Vice-Chancellor. The Senate Membership List 2025-2027 confirms the composition during the reporting period.



WARTA KERAJAAN PERSEKUTUAN

660 [13hb Jan. 2025

No. 858.

AKTA UNIVERSITI DAN KOLEJ UNIVERSITI 1971

PERLEMBAGAAN UNIVERSITI MALAYA

STATUT UNIVERSITI MALAYA
(SENAT) 2024

Pada menjalankan kuasa yang diberi di bawah subseksyen 35(1) Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya, Canselor membuat Statut yang berikut:

Nama

1. Statut ini bolehlah dinamakan Statut Universiti Malaya (Senat) 2024, dan hendaklah berkuat kuasa pada tarikh ia disiarkan dalam *Warta*.

Keahlian

2. (1) Senat hendaklah terdiri daripada—

(a) Naib Canselor, yang hendaklah menjadi Pengerusi;

(b) semua Timbalan Naib Canselor;

(c) semua Dekan, Pengarah atau Pengarah Eksekutif Fakulti, Sekolah, Pusat, Akademi dan Institut dan semua Ketua Kampus Cawangan, atau apa-apa nama lain yang ditetapkan oleh Jawatankuasa Pengurusan Universiti;

(d) tidak lebih daripada dua puluh (20) orang profesor sepenuh masa yang dipilih bagi tempoh tiga (3) tahun oleh semua profesor dan profesor madya sepenuh masa Universiti; dan

(e) tidak lebih daripada lima (5) orang daripada Universiti yang hendaklah diko-opt oleh Naib Canselor selama tiga (3) tahun.

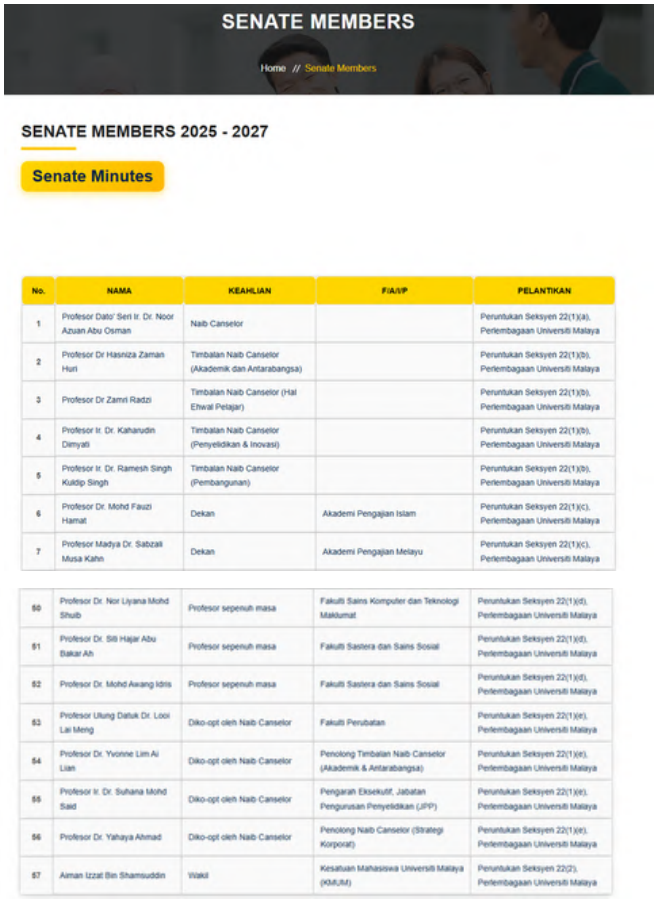
(2) Tertakluk kepada subperenggan 2(1)*(d)*, tatacara pemilihan dan jumlah keahlian hendaklah ditentukan oleh Senat.

(3) Pendaftar atau wakilnya hendaklah menjadi Setiausaha Senat.

(4) Pendaftar, Bursar, Ketua Pustakawan dan Penasihat Undang-Undang hendaklah menjadi ahli *ex-officio* tetapi tidak berhak untuk mengundi dalam mesyuarat Senat.

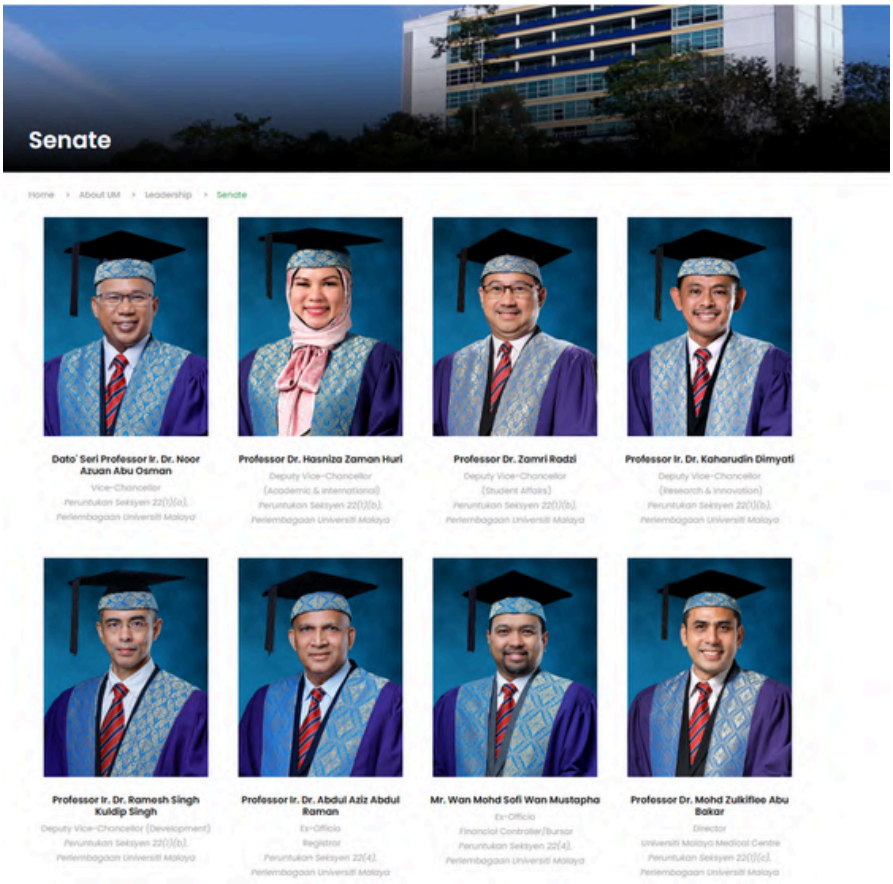
Tempoh keahlian ahli dipilih dan ahli diko-opt

3. (1) Tempoh keahlian seseorang ahli dipilih dan ahli diko-opt hendaklah selama tiga (3) tahun.



No.	NAMA	KEAHLIAN	F/A/I/P	PELANTIKAN
1	Profesor Dato' Seri Ir. Dr. Noor Azuan Abu Osman	Naib Canselor		Peruntukan Seksyen 22(1)(a), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya
2	Profesor Dr Hasniza Zaman Huri	Timbalan Naib Canselor (Akademik dan Antarabangsa)		Peruntukan Seksyen 22(1)(b), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya
3	Profesor Dr Zamri Radzi	Timbalan Naib Canselor (Hal Ehwal Pelajar)		Peruntukan Seksyen 22(1)(b), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya
4	Profesor Ir. Dr. Kaharudin Dimyati	Timbalan Naib Canselor (Penyelidikan & Inovasi)		Peruntukan Seksyen 22(1)(b), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya
5	Profesor Ir. Dr. Ramesh Singh Kuldip Singh	Timbalan Naib Canselor (Pembangunan)		Peruntukan Seksyen 22(1)(b), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya
6	Profesor Dr. Mohd Fauzi Hamat	Dekan	Akademi Pengajian Islam	Peruntukan Seksyen 22(1)(c), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya
7	Profesor Madya Dr. Sabzali Musa Kahn	Dekan	Akademi Pengajian Melayu	Peruntukan Seksyen 22(1)(c), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya

50	Profesor Dr. Nor Liyana Mohd Shuib	Profesor sepenuh masa	Fakulti Sains Komputer dan Teknologi Maklumat	Peruntukan Seksyen 22(1)(d), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya
51	Profesor Dr. Siti Hajar Abu Bakar Ah	Profesor sepenuh masa	Fakulti Sastera dan Sains Sosial	Peruntukan Seksyen 22(1)(d), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya
52	Profesor Dr. Mohd Awang Idris	Profesor sepenuh masa	Fakulti Sastera dan Sains Sosial	Peruntukan Seksyen 22(1)(d), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya
53	Profesor Ulung Datuk Dr. Looi Lai Meng	Diko-opt oleh Naib Canselor	Fakulti Perubatan	Peruntukan Seksyen 22(1)(e), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya
54	Profesor Dr. Yvonne Lim Ai Lian	Diko-opt oleh Naib Canselor	Penolong Timbalan Naib Canselor (Akademik & Antarabangsa)	Peruntukan Seksyen 22(1)(e), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya
55	Profesor Ir. Dr. Suhana Mohd Said	Diko-opt oleh Naib Canselor	Pengarah Eksekutif, Jabatan Pengurusan Penyelidikan (JPP)	Peruntukan Seksyen 22(1)(e), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya
56	Profesor Dr. Yahaya Ahmad	Diko-opt oleh Naib Canselor	Penolong Naib Canselor (Strategi Korporat)	Peruntukan Seksyen 22(1)(e), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya
57	Aiman Izzat Bin Shamsuddin	Wakil	Kesatuan Mahasiswa Universiti Malaya (KMUM)	Peruntukan Seksyen 22(2), Perlembagaan Universiti Malaya



02 Universiti Malaya Students' Union

Institutional Recognition and Student Representation

Universiti Malaya (UM) formally recognises the Universiti Malaya Students' Union (UMSU) / Kesatuan Mahasiswa Universiti Malaya (KMUM) as its official student representative body. Established in the 1950s, UMSU represents students' interests in university governance, advocates for student rights and welfare, and organises activities that enrich campus life. Its institutional recognition and functions are publicly documented on UM's Student Affairs Department website.

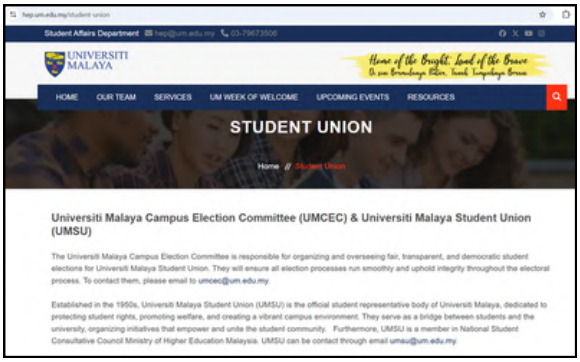
Democratic Representation and Operational Autonomy

UMSU's representative structure is supported by democratic student elections. Under Section 57 of the Constitution of Universiti Malaya, students elect their representatives to the Students' Representative Council through a secret-ballot process. These elections are overseen by the Universiti Malaya Campus Election Committee (UMCEC), which is responsible for ensuring fair, transparent and democratic elections.

Student representation also extends to university-level governance, with a representative of UMSU serving as an invitee to the UM Senate under Section 22(2) of the Constitution of Universiti Malaya. This arrangement provides a formal avenue for student perspectives to be represented in university-level deliberations.

Beyond the university, UMSU is also a member of the National Student Consultative Council (Majlis Perundingan Pelajar Kebangsaan, MPPK) under the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. This membership extends student representation to the national level and provides an avenue for UMSU to participate in consultations and discussions concerning student affairs and higher education.

The Universities and University Colleges (Amendment) Act 2024 further strengthens student representative bodies by permitting them to collect contributions and establish and manage their own funds, subject to applicable legal and university regulations. These provisions provide a legal basis for greater student autonomy in managing resources and activities.





Student Governance, Welfare and Campus Life

Through its elected representatives, UMSU provides a platform for students to contribute to university governance, communicate welfare concerns and participate in decisions affecting the student community. For example, under its Student First: Pilot initiative on 21 November 2025, UMSU conducted an on-the-ground data collection exercise around the university to gather feedback on issues affecting students, providing an avenue for student concerns to inform its representation and advocacy efforts.

Beyond governance, UMSU actively supports student welfare through various assistance programmes. Its Food Kit Aid programme, initiated on 21 November 2025, distributes essential food supplies, including rice, eggs and biscuits, to students experiencing financial constraints. Additional food bank and food distributions are also organised around faculty locations throughout the year. UMSU further provides welcome starter packs containing food, stationery and cutlery to students during new academic sessions, as well as examination starter packs containing food and drinks to support students during examination periods.

Other welfare initiatives include facilitating laptop distribution to students in need and providing menstrual health support through UMSU CARE (Community Aid & Resource Empowerment), which collaborated with Blood Malaysia to distribute sanitary pads and raise awareness of menstrual health. UMSU also provides an anonymous reporting platform for students to report sexual harassment, offering an avenue for students to raise sensitive concerns and seek support.







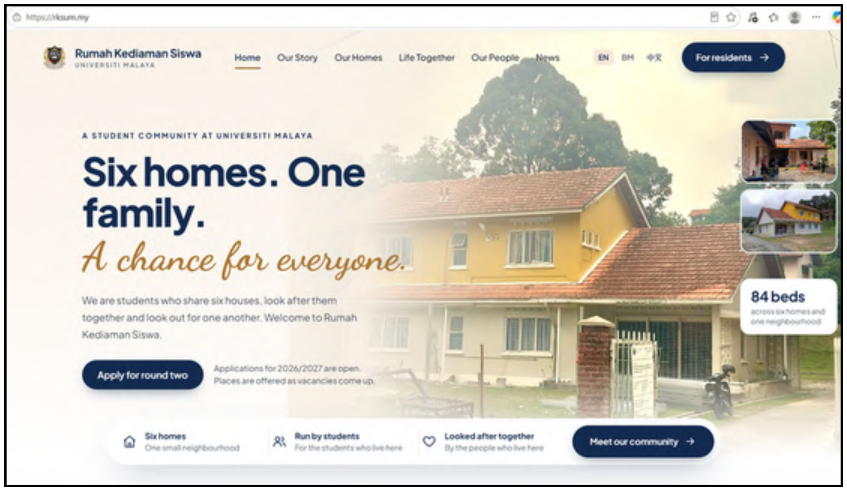




UMSU contributes to student development through partnerships and skills-development programmes. For example, UMSU collaborated with CAKE and its strategic partner, Bank Islam Malaysia Berhad, to organise the Hire Me! Resume & Career Skills Workshop, providing students with opportunities to strengthen their employability and career preparation skills. UMSU also provided social activities by organizing exciting exhibition where students can explore diverse clubs, meet new people, and engage in dynamic activities, run by the Secretary of Clubs and Societies on 9 April 2025.

In addition, UMSU plays a role in fostering student community and engagement through its involvement in managing the Rumah Kediaman Siswa (RKS UM). The six student residential houses belong to Universiti Malaya and are collectively looked after by the university, UMSU and the Jawatankuasa Rumah Kediaman Kesatuan Siswa (JKRKS), a committee of student volunteers. This collaborative arrangement supports student residential life, community participation and a sense of belonging among residents.

Through these governance, welfare and student engagement initiatives, UMSU demonstrates its role as an active and recognised student representative body that contributes to student representation, support and campus life at Universiti Malaya.







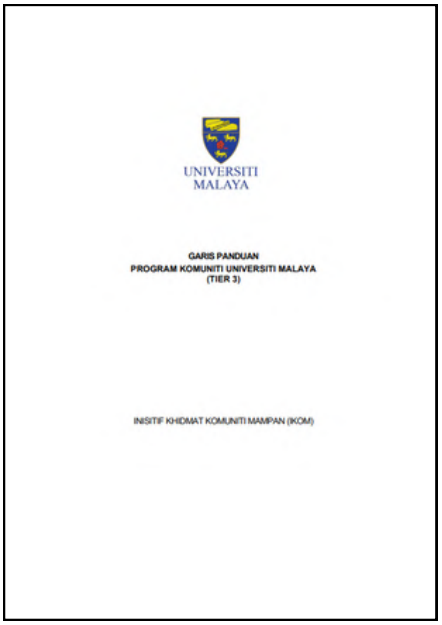
03 Identify and Engage with Local Stakeholders

UM Community Engagement Policy – the institutional commitment



The UM Community Engagement Policy sets out the University's overarching commitment to identifying and engaging local communities, government agencies and civil society organisations. It gives UM a structured approach to understanding and addressing the needs of its surrounding communities, so that University activities are inclusive and responsive. The policy is still valid and was recently reviewed and was in force throughout the 2025 reporting period.

UMCares UM-IKom Community Programme Guideline – putting the policy into practice



The UMCares UM-IKom Community Programme Guideline and UMCares programme page shows how this commitment is operationalised, through structured procedures for community engagement projects run by UM's residential colleges. Under the guideline:

- Identify the need: every project must respond to a need found through fieldwork or early observation in the community – answering what the community asks for, not what the University assumes it needs.
- Identify and agree partners: colleges are encouraged to involve alumni, NGOs, government agencies and businesses, and each partner's contribution must be documented. Community members confirm their involvement by signing support and participation forms.
- Engage directly: every project must include at least one exchange with local residents – knowledge, technology or skills shared in either direction, or a service activity carried out together.
- Review and approve: proposals go first to the college's main committee and then to an evaluation panel appointed by UMCares, which may ask students to present their plans.
- Sustain and report: activities are designed so that the community can continue them after the project ends, and each college submits a report on outcomes and community impact within 30 days of completion.
- Together, the policy sets the institutional commitment and the guideline shows how it is implemented in practice: a written, publicly available process for identifying local stakeholders, engaging them as partners and accounting for the results.

04 Participatory Bodies for Stakeholder Engagement

Community Representation in University Governance

UM's local community has a formal and permanent voice in the University's highest decision-making body. Section 17(1)(d) (Page 11) of the Constitution of Universiti Malaya reserves a seat on the Board of Directors for "one person to represent the community at the place where the University is located." As this representation is provided for in the University Constitution, the community representative participates directly in Board decisions, including those relating to University strategy, policies and budget. The Board also includes two officers of the public service under Section 17(1)(c), providing government representation alongside the community.

Engagement at the Operational Level and Beyond the Campus

The UM Comunity Engagement Centre (UMCares) provides an important platform connecting the University with surrounding communities, particularly in Lembah Pantai, the urban parliamentary constituency in Kuala Lumpur where UM is located. It works with community leaders, parliamentary representatives and local authorities, including Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) and Petaling Jaya City Council (MBPJ). Under UMCares guidelines, community projects are expected to begin with needs identified together with local residents, with community participation formally confirmed.

UM also works with communities and local authorities in different parts of Malaysia through the UMCares programme. In Taiping, a town in the northern state of Perak, UM established an adopted-community initiative in January 2025 together with the Taiping Municipal Council and the local Member of Parliament. The engagement began with a community needs assessment and agreed action plan, and was further strengthened through the launch of UMCares@Taiping and the signing of an UM–Taiping Municipal Council MoU in May 2025.

Similar partnerships were developed in Sepanggar, Sabah, in East Malaysia, where UMCares@Sepanggar was launched on 18 October 2025; in Kota Tinggi, Johor, in southern Peninsular Malaysia, where local communities, NGOs and local authorities collaborated on activities including forest restoration, catchment clean-ups and green-zone initiatives; and in Ranau, Sabah, where UMCares@Ranau was implemented in collaboration with the district office of Malaysia's national unity department.

The scale of this engagement is reflected in the UMCares Progress Report of May 2025, which recorded academic-led community projects under Tier 2 and CAKnA across 34 parliamentary constituencies, involving 27 project leaders. Together, these initiatives demonstrate UM's approach to involving external stakeholders not only through formal governance structures, but also through policy consultation, community needs assessment, partnerships with local authorities and sustained community-based action

External Input into University Policy

On 16–17 December 2025, UM convened a Sustainability & ESG Policy Development Workshop, where representatives from relevant government agencies reviewed and provided input on UM's draft sustainability and ESG policies prior to their adoption.

05 University Principles on Corruption and Bribery

Universiti Malaya's Commitment to Integrity, Anti-Corruption and Anti-Bribery

UM's Principles on Corruption, Bribery and Organised Crime

The commitment. Under Pillar 5 (Social), Key Implementation Mechanism 2 of the UM Sustainability Policy 2021–2030 (p. 29), the University commits "to eliminate all forms of abuse, discrimination, corruption and bribery at all levels at the University," and does so by publishing its principles and commitments on organised crime, corruption and bribery.

Anti-bribery and corruption

UM's public anti-bribery page, maintained by the Integrity Centre and last updated on 14 April 2025, states that UM enforces strict policies to prevent bribery and corruption in line with national legislation, and that staff must not accept or give gifts related to their official duties except in specific circumstances. The page publishes UM's Policy on Receiving and Giving Gifts (*Dasar Penerimaan dan Pemberian Hadiah*) and UM's adoption of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2009 (Act 694).

Reporting and enforcement

The Integrity Centre also publishes a Whistleblowers Policy, a Conflict of Interest Policy, the UM Code of Ethics and a misconduct complaint procedure. On 20 May 2025 the Board of Directors approved upgrading the Integrity Unit into the Integrity Centre, strengthening the body that enforces these principles. Its 2025 activities included Hari Integriti UM 2025 and the Sembang Integriti sessions.





06 Academic Freedom Policy

Academic Freedom in Universiti Malaya

Universiti Malaya (UM) formally recognises and supports academic freedom through its UM Sustainability Policy 2021–2030, endorsed by the Board of Directors on 9 December 2021 and reviewed on 1 September 2023.

Under Pillar 5 (Social), Key Implementation Mechanism 3 (page 29), the University explicitly commits:


Pillar 5: Social

Promote peaceful, inclusive and justice society and institution through partnership

Aim: To facilitate UM community (staff and students, senior and junior) to work towards a strong institution aligned with the efforts in promoting peace, justice and inclusiveness in the campus through strategic partnership across all level, which include teaching and learning, research, operations, leadership and networking.

Key implementation mechanism:

3) To support academic freedom in choosing the area of research, speaking and teaching publicly about the area of research while ensuring public access to the information including the University's financial data.

RELEVANT POLICIES, GUIDELINES, DIRECTIVES AND PLANS

NATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION PLAN

THE GLOBAL GOALS

UNIVERSITI MALAYA SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

DASAR KELESTARIAN UNIVERSITI MALAYA

29

"To support academic freedom in choosing the area of research, speaking and teaching publicly about the area of research."

This institutional commitment applies to academic staff across all academic ranks, including junior and senior academics, supporting their freedom to choose research areas and to teach and communicate publicly about their research.

The policy addresses two key dimensions of academic freedom:

- Freedom of research: Supporting academics, regardless of seniority, in choosing their areas of research.
- Freedom of teaching and academic expression: Supporting academics, regardless of seniority, in teaching and speaking publicly about their research.

Supporting Academic Research through UM Living Labs

As an example of institutional support for researcher-led initiatives, UM provides competitive research funding through its UM Living Labs programme, coordinated by the UM Sustainable Development Centre (UMSDC). The programme is open to academic staff, including permanent and contract academics, who may propose their own research projects within designated sustainability priority areas.

Through research activities, publications and public engagement, the programme provides more freedom and opportunities for academics to pursue and communicate research in their specific areas sustainability concerns.

07 Supporting Government with Expert Advice

UM academics advise government at every level, from local councils to federal ministries and regional bodies. In 2025, experts in law, health, psychology, social policy, the built environment and Islamic studies gave policy guidance, sat on government committees and supplied the evidence behind public decisions.

Support provided includes:

Policy Guidance:

- **Expert Advice on Malaysia's Biotechnology Ethics Guidelines** **(Page 12)**
- **Expanding Social Protection for Migrant Workers** **(Page 12)**
- **ASEAN Roundtable on Inclusive Policy for Persons with Disabilities** **(Page 13)**
- **Strategic Legal Partnership with Attorney General's Chambers** **(Page 13)**
- **UM Psychologists Advise on National Cyberbullying Guidelines** **(Page 14)**

Participation in committees:

- **Expert Contribution to National Bioethics and Biosafety Committees** **(Page 15)**
- **Expert Input into Amendments to the Mental Health Act 2001** **(Page 15)**
- **Expert Advice Across Local, State and National Government** **(Page 16)**

Provision of evidence:

- **Evidence-Based Input for National Living Cost Guidelines** **(Page 17)**
- **Research Contribution to Criminal Law Reform in Malaysia** **(Page 17)**

Expert Advice on Malaysia's Biotechnology Ethics Guidelines

Universiti Malaya (UM), through its Academy of Islamic Studies, contributed specialist expertise to the development of Malaysia's Guidelines for Biotechnology Ethics in collaboration with the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI). From May to October 2025, Dr Abdul Halim Ibrahim was part of UM's consultancy team supporting the development of the national guidelines and an accompanying policy paper. The initiative demonstrates UM's role in providing expert advice to a government ministry on ethical considerations in biotechnology.

Drawing on expertise in Islamic bioethics and the ethical implications of modern biotechnology, UM contributed academic perspectives to support the development of guidelines relevant to agricultural and industrial biotechnology. The engagement also included a knowledge-transfer session organised by MOSTI on 7 October 2025, which focused on biotechnology ethics in these sectors. Through this collaboration, UM supported the development and dissemination of national guidance to inform ethical considerations in biotechnology, demonstrating how university expertise can contribute to government policy development and strengthen ethical governance in emerging technologies.

Expanding Social Protection for Migrant Workers

On 14 January 2025, UM's Social Wellbeing Research Centre (SWRC) and SUHAKAM, the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia, co-organised a roundtable on the extension of Employees Provident Fund (EPF) coverage to migrant workers. It brought together 45 participants from government, business and academia.

SWRC senior research fellow Dr Zulkiply Omar presented SWRC's analysis to the roundtable: at current rates, mandatory EPF contributions for foreign workers could generate between RM3.25 billion and RM6.91 billion in savings a year. He also pointed out that foreign workers are covered by SOCSO's Employment Injury Scheme but not its Invalidity Scheme, leaving gaps in their protection, and that mandatory contributions could help reduce Malaysia's dependence on unskilled labour. The Edge Malaysia reported the roundtable's findings. In March 2025, the EPF Act was amended to make contributions mandatory for non-citizen workers from October 2025.



ASEAN Roundtable on Inclusive Policy for Persons with Disabilities

From 20 to 22 September 2025, Universiti Malaya (UM) was represented by Puan Nor Nismawati Mokhtar, Chief Psychology Officer of CDE, at the ASEAN Roundtable on Persons with Disabilities, organised by Universiti Utara Malaysia in collaboration with ILC PERMAI UUM. The session brought together public universities, government agencies, and NGOs to discuss strategies for more inclusive policies at the regional level.



During the roundtable, UM shared expert insights, contributed recommendations, and helped shape proposals to guide the development of inclusive disability policies across ASEAN. This engagement highlights UM's role in providing expertise to inform policy-making, fostering regional collaboration, and supporting governance initiatives that promote equality and inclusivity.

Strategic Legal Partnership with Attorney General's Chambers

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Attorney General's Chambers (AGC), witnessed by Tan Sri Mohd Dusuki Mokhtar, marks a key milestone in strengthening Malaysia's legal ecosystem. The collaboration establishes a framework for joint initiatives in research, capacity building, professional training, and policy development, reflecting a shared commitment to the rule of law, justice, and the Federal Constitution.



Through this partnership, expert advice and academic support are provided to the AGC, leveraging research and institutional expertise to enhance national governance. The MoU also aims to nurture future legal professionals grounded in integrity and fairness, while strengthening Malaysia's legal and policy framework through sustained government–academic collaboration.

UM Psychologists Advise on National Cyberbullying Guidelines

From 26 to 28 May 2025, the Ministry of Higher Education (KPT) appointed four UM psychologists – Pn. Lizawati Abd Sane, Pn. Vijayah Malar Palanisamy, Pn. Maznah Azis and En. Amar Firdaus Ibrahim – as panel members to develop the national Guidelines on Handling Cyberbullying for higher education. They provided expert input to make the guidelines evidence-based, practical and responsive to the needs of students and staff, supporting the Ministry's efforts to create a safer online learning environment.



Expert Contribution to National Bioethics and Biosafety Committees

Dr Mohammad Firdaus Abdul Aziz of UM's Faculty of Law contributes his expertise in bioethics, biosafety and biotechnology governance through participation in several national advisory bodies. These include the Technical Advisory Committee on Dual-Use Research, the National Sub-Committee for Laboratory Biosafety and Biosecurity, and the National Committee on Ethics of Cell Research and Therapy.

These committees address important issues relating to responsible scientific research, laboratory safety, biosecurity and the ethical application of biotechnology. Through his involvement, Dr Mohammad Firdaus contributes specialised academic knowledge to national discussions on research governance and ethical oversight. His appointments demonstrate the role of university academics in supporting government advisory processes and promoting responsible scientific practices in Malaysia.

Expert Input into Amendments to the Mental Health Act 2001

Associate Professor Dr Muhammad Muhsin bin Ahmad Zahari from the Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Malaya (UM), serves on the Standing Committee on Amendments to the Mental Health Act 2001 and the Mental Health Regulations 2010 (*Jawatankuasa Tetap Pindaan Akta Kesihatan Mental 2001 dan Peraturan-peraturan Akta Kesihatan Mental 2010*). His appointment, covering October 2024 to September 2026, reflects the involvement of university expertise in reviewing Malaysia's mental health legislation and regulatory framework.

The committee's work concerns legislation governing mental health services and associated regulations. Through his participation, Associate Professor Dr Muhammad Muhsin contributes professional and academic perspectives to discussions on legislative and regulatory matters. His involvement demonstrates the role of university academics in supporting government review processes and the development of regulatory approaches relevant to mental health in Malaysia.

Expert Advice Across Local, State and National Government

In 2025, UM expertise reached all three tiers of Malaysian government.

In Petaling Jaya, Madam Azrin Md Kasim carried out access audits and gave the city council (Majlis Bandaraya Petaling Jaya, MBPJ) recommendations on making public spaces in Section 14 and the Mentari Business Centre (PJS 8) more accessible.

In Selangor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Azmil Zainal Abidin joined a technical panel of the state Islamic Religious Department (Jabatan Agama Islam Selangor, JAIS) in March 2025.

At federal level, Dr. Noor Munirah Isa helped draft policy documents for the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI).

From building access to religious administration to science policy, each shows university research feeding directly into public decisions.



16

Evidence-Based Input for National Living Cost Guidelines

A collaboration with the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) continues to support the development of the Belanjawanku Guide, a reference tool estimating the minimum monthly expenses required for a decent standard of living. The guide provides evidence-based input for policy development, including revisions to the Basic Savings amount and the RIA Framework, strengthening household financial security through data-driven insights. This initiative is supported through research expertise from Universiti Malaya's Social Wellbeing Research Centre (SWRC), ensuring policy relevance and methodological rigour.





As part of preparations for the Belanjawanku 2026/2027 edition, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted in Georgetown, Penang, gathering household expenditure data from over 50 participants across diverse household types. Covering essential needs such as food, housing, and transport, the exercise provided critical insights to ensure the guide reflects real living costs in Malaysia, supporting more informed social and economic policy planning.

Research Contribution to Criminal Law Reform in Malaysia

Associate Professor Zuraida Rastam Shahrom from the Faculty of Law, Universiti Malaya (UM), contributed research expertise to a government-agency project examining the reform of Malaysia's criminal laws. Conducted over the 2025–2026 period, the project, *Semakan dan Kajian Pembaharuan Undang-undang Jenayah Melibatkan Kanun Keseksaan [Akta 574], Kanun Tatacara Jenayah [Akta 593] dan Akta Keterangan 1950 [Akta 56]*, examines potential reforms to three key components of Malaysia's criminal justice framework: the Penal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code and the Evidence Act 1950.

The research focuses on reviewing existing legislation and identifying potential areas for reform. Through her involvement as a co-researcher, Associate Professor Zuraida contributes legal research expertise to the examination of statutory provisions and issues relevant to criminal law and procedure. This initiative demonstrates UM's engagement in government-related research that can provide an evidence base for reviewing and improving Malaysia's legal framework.

08 Policy- and Lawmakers Outreach and Education

UM takes its research directly to the people who make policy and law. In 2025, UM trained and briefed government lawyers from the Bangsamoro region of the Philippines, ASEAN social protection policymakers, Members of Parliament and officials of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI).

Support provided includes:

- **BAGO 2025 Public Policy & Syariah Law Programme (28 April 2025)** **(Page 19)**
- **Enhancing ASEAN Social Protection: SWRC Capacity-Building Training for Policymakers, with UNICEF (19 June 2025)** **(Page 20)**
- **Briefing for Parliamentarians on the Legal Landscape of Gig Economy Workers (19 August 2025)** **(Page 21)**
- **Knowledge Transfer on Biotechnology Ethics for MOSTI (7 October 2025)** **(Page 21)**

BAGO 2025 Public Policy & Syariah Law Programme

On 28–30 April 2025, Universiti Malaya (UM), through its Centre for Leadership and Professional Development (UM LEAD), in collaboration with the International Institute of Public Policy and Management (INPUMA), conducted the Public Policy and Syariah Law Programme for officers of the Bangsamoro Attorney General's Office (BAGO), Philippines. The programme aimed to strengthen the professional capacity of lawyers and legal assistants responsible for advising on, drafting and implementing regional laws within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

The programme provided participants with insights into Malaysia's dual legal system, particularly the administration of civil and Syariah law, judicial processes and institutional governance. Through expert lectures and knowledge-sharing sessions, participants explored Malaysia's approaches to Syariah judicial administration, policy formulation and the application of Islamic legal principles. Speakers included representatives from Malaysia's Attorney General's Chambers, offering practical perspectives on legal administration and the implementation of national policies.

The programme also featured institutional visits to key Malaysian government agencies, including the Department of Syariah Judiciary Malaysia, the Federal Territories Mufti Department and the Selangor Syariah Judiciary Department, as well as the Philippine Embassy in Malaysia. These engagements provided first-hand exposure to Malaysia's legal and governance frameworks while fostering international knowledge exchange. The initiative demonstrated UM's contribution to international capacity-building and institutional collaboration, supporting efforts to strengthen legal governance and the administration of justice in BARMM.



Enhancing ASEAN Social Protection: SWRC Leads Capacity-Building Training for Policymakers

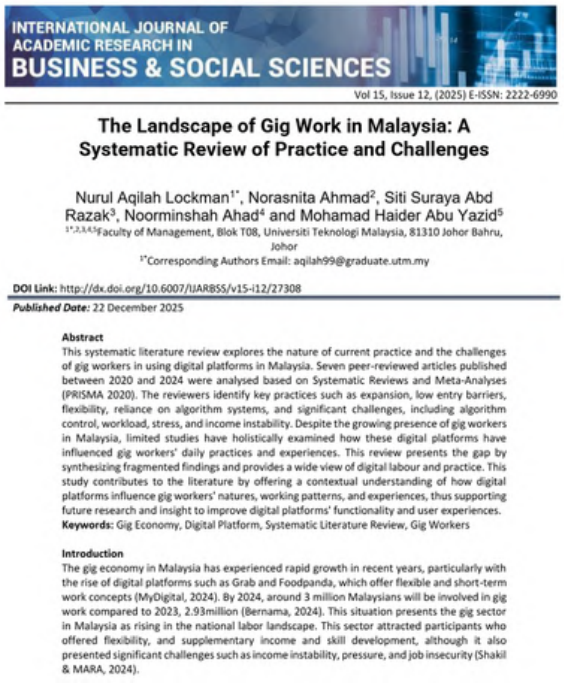
On 19 June 2025, the Social Wellbeing Research Centre (SWRC), in collaboration with UNICEF, successfully hosted the Capacity-Building Training on Social Protection Policy and Implementation in ASEAN. The programme brought together policymakers, practitioners, and experts to explore key challenges in social protection, focusing on inclusive and sustainable frameworks for the region. The initiative aligned closely with the vision of the ASEAN Social Security Association (ASSA), which promotes robust social security systems through knowledge-sharing and regional collaboration.



The training addressed crucial areas such as building integrated social protection systems, extending coverage to informal and vulnerable groups, ensuring long-term fiscal sustainability, and adopting international best practices including ILO conventions. UNICEF highlighted child-focused social protection and the impact of ageing societies, reinforcing the importance of holistic policy approaches. Sessions led by SWRC experts fostered dialogue and practical understanding of policy design, financing, and implementation strategies, equipping participants with insights to strengthen social protection frameworks across ASEAN.

The programme concluded with a roundtable discussion emphasising continued regional collaboration, knowledge exchange, and strategic planning to enhance social wellbeing for all. By providing a platform for learning and engagement, the training strengthened the capacity of policymakers and stakeholders to design and implement policies that are inclusive, sustainable, and responsive to the needs of diverse populations in the ASEAN region.

Briefing for Parliamentarians event titled "The Legal Landscape of Gig Economy Workers in Malaysia: A New Shift Paradigm?"


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The Landscape of Gig Work in Malaysia: A Systematic Review of Practice and Challenges

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Abstract

This systematic literature review explores the nature of current practice and the challenges of gig workers in using digital platforms in Malaysia. Seven peer-reviewed articles published between 2020 and 2024 were analysed based on Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020). The reviewers identify key practices such as expansion, low entry barriers, flexibility, reliance on algorithm systems, and significant challenges, including algorithm control, workload, stress, and income instability. Despite the growing presence of gig workers in Malaysia, limited studies have holistically examined how these digital platforms have influenced gig workers' daily practices and experiences. This review presents the gap by synthesizing fragmented findings and provides a wide view of digital labour and practice. This study contributes to the literature by offering a contextual understanding of how digital platforms influence gig workers' natures, working patterns, and experiences, thus supporting future research and insight to improve digital platforms' functionality and user experiences.

Keywords: Gig Economy, Digital Platform, Systematic Literature Review, Gig Workers

Introduction

The gig economy in Malaysia has experienced rapid growth in recent years, particularly with the rise of digital platforms such as Grab and Foodpanda, which offer flexible and short-term work concepts (MyDigital, 2024). By 2024, around 3 million Malaysians will be involved in gig work compared to 2023, 2.93million (Bernama, 2024). This situation presents the gig sector in Malaysia as rising in the national labor landscape. This sector attracted participants who offered flexibility, and supplementary income and skill development, although it also presented significant challenges such as income instability, pressure, and job insecurity (Shakil & MARA, 2024).

On 19 August 2025, Associate Professor Dr. Nurhidayah Abdullah of the Faculty of Law, Universiti Malaya ("UM"), was invited by the Kelab Penyokong Kerajaan Madani, the Government Backbenchers Club ("BBC") of Members of Parliament, to brief its Chairman on "The Legal Landscape of Gig Economy Workers in Malaysia: A New Shift Paradigm?". Drawing on her research in commercial law, contract law and the digital economy, she set out how Malaysian law currently treats gig workers and why protecting them calls for a new legal approach.

The briefing was timely. It took place shortly before Parliament debated the Gig Workers Bill 2025 ("the Bill"), which the Dewan Rakyat passed on 28 August 2025. Among its provisions, the Bill extends social security protection to gig workers through mandatory contributions to the Social Security Organisation ("PERKESO"). Engagements of this kind let legislators weigh research evidence before a bill is debated rather than after it, and put their questions directly to the researchers involved.

Knowledge Transfer on Biotechnology Ethics for MOSTI



On 7 October 2025, members of the UM team (including Prof. Emeritus Datuk Dr. Azizan Baharuddin and Dr. Noor Munirah Isa) that developed Malaysia's Guidelines for Biotechnology Ethics presented on ethics in industrial biotechnology and the circular economy at a knowledge-transfer session of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI), equipping ministry officials to apply the new guidelines.

09 Participation in Government Research

UM researchers work with ministries, agencies and state governments on policy-focused studies, many of which examine how laws and regulations work and how they could be improved. In 2025 this ranged from halal regulation and planetary health to national SDG implementation, trustee law reform and anti-corruption.

UM led or contributed to national studies with JAKIM, the Academy of Sciences Malaysia and MOSTI, APPGM-SDG and the Ministry of Economy, and its 2025 research register lists 16 further studies funded by government bodies, many concerned directly with law and regulation.

Support provided includes:

- **Academic Expertise Supporting the National Halal Policy 2025–2035** (Page 23)
- **Research Contributions to Malaysia's National Planetary Health Action Plan** (Page 24)
- **Strategic Collaboration with APPGM-SDG and Government Agencies on National SDG Policy Implementation** (Page 25)
- **Government-Funded Studies** (Pages 26–27)
- **Engagement in Policy Review on Intellectual Property and Innovation Commercialisation** (Page 28)
- **Government Collaboration on Malaysia’s Circular Economy Research** (Page 28)

Academic Expertise Supporting the National Halal Policy 2025–2035

Universiti Malaya (UM), through the Universiti Malaya Halal Research Centre (UMHRC), was entrusted by the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) to undertake the development of the National Halal Policy 2025–2035. Led by Associate Professor Dr Zalina Zakaria from the Department of Shariah and Law, Academy of Islamic Studies, the multidisciplinary research team brought together academic expertise from several faculties to support evidence-based national policy formulation. The initiative demonstrates UM's direct contribution to government-led policy development through research collaboration with a federal government department.

The research involved a comprehensive approach to gathering evidence and stakeholder perspectives to inform the policy's strategic direction. The team conducted literature reviews, six public dialogue sessions across Malaysia, public surveys, and international field studies to examine developments and practices relevant to the halal industry. These activities provided opportunities to gather insights from the public, industry stakeholders and international contexts, helping to identify current challenges, emerging priorities and areas for policy improvement. The research findings were presented to JAKIM's Director-General, Dato' Dr Sirajuddin bin Suhaimee, during a special session attended by senior JAKIM management and representatives from the Ministry of Economy.

The resulting National Halal Policy 2025–2035 establishes a long-term strategic framework to strengthen Malaysia's halal ecosystem over the following decade. Its priorities encompass halal legislation and regulation, certification, coordination among religious authorities, technological innovation, consumer protection, halal research, laboratory analysis and economic development. The policy also seeks to develop competent and ethical human capital, promote informed consumer practices, and support a more inclusive and sustainable halal industry. Through its research collaboration with JAKIM, UM contributed academic analysis and stakeholder-informed recommendations to support the development of a comprehensive policy framework responsive to national needs and the evolving global halal landscape. This collaboration illustrates how university research can inform government decision-making, strengthen public-sector policy development and support more evidence-based governance.



Research Contributions to Malaysia's National Planetary Health Action Plan





Universiti Malaya (UM), through its Faculty of Medicine, contributed academic expertise to the development of Malaysia's National Planetary Health Action Plan (NPHAP), a national framework that integrates environmental sustainability, public health and human wellbeing. Developed under the mandate of the National Science Council and led by the Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM) with the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI), the plan addresses interconnected environmental and health challenges through a coordinated national approach.

Three UM academics, Academician Distinguished Professor Datuk Dr Looi Lai Meng, Professor Dr Yvonne Lim Ai Lian and Professor Dr Victor Hoe Chee Wai, were identified as key contributors to the plan. Their contributions strengthened its focus on ecosystem restoration, preventive public health strategies, nature-based solutions and environmental vulnerabilities affecting marginalised communities. These perspectives highlight the importance of integrating scientific knowledge on environmental and health issues into national planning and decision-making.



Officially launched in November 2025, the NPHAP provides a framework for coordinated action across areas including governance, environment and health, sustainable food, research and education, and energy transition. UM's involvement demonstrates how academic expertise can contribute to the development of national policy frameworks, supporting evidence-informed approaches to addressing complex environmental and public health challenges in Malaysia.

Strategic Collaboration with APPGM-SDG and Government Agencies on National SDG Policy Implementation

Universiti Malaya established a strategic collaboration with the All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) to support SDG implementation and policy development in Malaysia. The collaboration encompasses joint policy research, issue mapping and field research, district-level SDG Task Forces, and technical support for evaluating community and food security initiatives. It also supports the development of community learning centres as living labs and empowerment and poverty alleviation programmes for marginalised communities across Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak. Through these activities, UM contributes research and technical expertise to inform SDG-related policy discussions, strategies and publications.









This policy engagement was further demonstrated through a forum on consolidating the sustainability agenda among higher education institutions, organised by the Ungku Aziz Centre for Development Studies (UAC) in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Higher Education, APPGM-SDG and SDSN Sunway University on 24 February 2025. The forum brought together approximately 150 university leaders, students, SDG committee representatives and government officials to discuss the proposed Sustainability Framework for Higher Learning Institutions and approaches to strengthening SDG and ESG implementation across Malaysian universities.

Following the forum, UAC submitted a Sustainability Framework report for Higher Education and National SDG Implementation to the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Economy for further consideration and alignment at the national level. This submission represents a tangible research and policy engagement output, translating discussions on sustainability and SDG implementation in higher education into a framework presented to government ministries for consideration. Together, UM's collaboration with APPGM-SDG and its engagement with government agencies demonstrate the university's contribution to policy-focused research and the development of evidence-informed approaches to advancing SDG implementation in Malaysia.

Government-Funded Studies

UM undertakes policy-focused research with government departments at federal and state level. Beyond the national studies described above, the University's 2025 research register lists 16 further projects funded by government ministries, agencies, state governments and religious authorities. In each, the funding body also [CONFIRM and choose what applies: sets the research questions / sits on the project steering committee / provides data / receives the findings and recommendations]. The studies fall into four areas, each examining how laws, regulations and public institutions operate in practice and how they might be strengthened.

Law Reform and Legal Frameworks

Three projects deal directly with the content and implementation of Malaysian law. For the Prime Minister's Department ("JPM"), Dr. Mary Mathews of the Faculty of Law is leading a study on proposed amendments to the Trustee Act 1949 (Act 208), the principal statute governing trusts in Malaysia. For the National Institute of Valuation ("INSPEN"), Dr. Sik Cheng Peng, also of the Faculty of Law, is conducting a critical study of the legal issues arising from the co-proprietorship of land. For the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission ("MCMC"), Dr. Noor Hashimah Hashim Lim of the Faculty of Built Environment is examining the role of state governments and local authorities in adopting the GPP-I guidelines and gazetting the Uniform Building By-Laws ("UBBL") Amendment 2021. That study looks at the stage at which a federal regulatory change becomes enforceable law at state and local level.

Integrity, Anti-corruption and Accountability

Four projects strengthen the integrity of public and financial institutions. For JPM, Dr. Eric Koh Hsieng Yang of the Faculty of Business and Economics is examining governance, integrity and anti-corruption risks in Malaysia's financial and banking sector, together with interventions to address them. For the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission ("MACC"), Dr. Thinaranjeney Thirumoorthi of the same Faculty is assessing corruption risk in the tourism sector. For the Accountant General's Department of Malaysia, Dr. Ooi Kok Loang is developing a forensic digital auditing framework to strengthen internal controls, compliance and fraud prevention in public-sector auditing. For the Social Security Organisation ("PERKESO"), Dr. Muhammad Shamshinor Abdul Azzis of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is writing PERKESO's integrity module, which sets the standards of conduct expected within the statutory body.



Economic, Digital and Regulatory Governance

Four projects inform national policy and regulation. For the Ministry of Economy, Prof. Dr. VGR Chandran Govindaraju of the Faculty of Business and Economics is conducting a short-term study of Malaysia's environmental, social and governance ("ESG") ecosystem to support a national ESG framework and roadmap. Dr. Noor Ismawati Jaafar is leading a study on policy development for the global services sector, also for the Ministry. For the Ministry of Health, Dr. Tan Yee Shin of the Faculty of Science is modelling food safety risk governance and consumers' perception of risk, with direct relevance to how food safety rules are regulated and enforced. For MCMC, Dr. Madiha Baharuddin of the Academy of Islamic Studies is examining digital content access norms and ethical perspectives among young citizens, contributing evidence to the regulation of online content.

State Public Administration and Islamic Governance

Five projects support state governments and religious authorities. For the Selangor State Government, Dr. Nor Liyana Mohd Shuib of the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology is identifying the digital skills that state public officers need. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zalina Zakaria of the Academy of Islamic Studies is assessing the potential for collaborative governance among the agencies involved in Selangor's halal chicken production ecosystem. For the Kelantan State Government, Prof. Dr. Abdul Halim Mokhtar of the Faculty of Medicine is developing a policy model for Islamic-friendly sport, grounded in Islamic values and principles, in preparation for SUKMA 2028. For the Kelantan Department of Islamic Religious Affairs ("JAHEAIK"), Dr. Mohd Khairulnazrin Mohd Nasir is developing a model for strengthening aqidah and addressing healing practices that do not comply with Shariah. For the Negeri Sembilan Islamic Religious Council ("MAINS"), Dr. Nor Fahimah Mohd Razif is studying how MAINS runs its pawn services in which Muslims pledge their property titles as security.



Engagement in Policy Review on Intellectual Property and Innovation Commercialisation

On 18 June 2025, the Universiti Malaya Centre of Innovation and Enterprise (UMCIE) took part in the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation's (MOSTI) review of the National Intellectual Property and Innovation Commercialisation Policy (2021–2025), contributing institutional perspectives and expertise in innovation and commercialisation to the review alongside representatives of government and industry.



Government Collaboration on Malaysia's Circular Economy Research

As part of Malaysia's Circular Economy (CE) Research Study, the Ungku Aziz Centre for Development Studies (UAC) at Universiti Malaya (UM) designed and hosted Focus Group Discussion 2.0 on 20–21 March 2025 with the Ministry of Economy and non-governmental organisations, gathering stakeholder input on implementation challenges and potential initiatives. These findings feed into the study's recommendations.







10 Neutral Platform for Dialogue

Universiti Malaya as a Neutral Platform for Dialogue on Public Issues

Universiti Malaya (UM) provides institutional platforms for open and constructive dialogue, bringing together stakeholders with different political perspectives, professional backgrounds and societal interests to discuss important national and regional challenges. Through its academic centres, public forums and student-led initiatives, UM facilitates the exchange of diverse viewpoints and the examination of alternative approaches to public policy and societal issues.

Institutional Platforms for Open Dialogue

The Universiti Malaya Centre for Civilisational Dialogue (UMCCD), established approximately three decades ago, provides an institutional platform for dialogue among people of different cultures, beliefs and perspectives. Its mission emphasises mutual understanding and constructive engagement to address differences and reduce divisiveness. Other university platforms, including student-led forums, provide opportunities for policymakers, political representatives, academics, civil society and the wider public to engage in discussions on contemporary challenges.

Examples of neutral dialogues:

(1) National Healthcare Forum 2.0: Dialogue Across Political Perspectives





A notable example is the "National Healthcare Forum 2.0", organised at UM on 29 May 2025. The student-led forum brought together former Minister of Health Khairy Jamaluddin, who served under a Barisan Nasional-led government, and former Deputy Minister of Health Dr Lee Boon Chye, who served under a Pakatan Harapan-led government, to discuss healthcare affordability and reform in Malaysia. The forum provided a shared platform for examining different policy approaches to healthcare financing and governance, including proposals concerning independent oversight of public hospitals, an Employees Provident Fund (EPF)-linked insurance model and public healthcare fees. By bringing together individuals from different political backgrounds to discuss competing policy proposals, the forum demonstrated UM's role in facilitating constructive dialogue on an important national policy challenge.

(2) Women, Peace and Security: Advancing Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Community Mediation





UM also facilitates dialogue on peace, security and inclusive governance through initiatives involving government agencies, academic institutions and civil society. On 10 January 202, UMCCD convened the national roundtable "Malaysian Women Building Peace through Community Mediation", in collaboration with the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation and Al-Bukhary International University. The roundtable provided a platform for discussing women's contributions to peacebuilding and the role of community mediation in promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. The discussions subsequently informed UMCCD's response to Malaysia's "National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security", presented at a government briefing in Putrajaya on 27 February 2025. This initiative demonstrates UM's role in facilitating dialogue on peace and security while connecting academic and stakeholder perspectives with national policy discussions.

(3) Intercivilisational Dialogue for Inclusivity and Governance





UM's commitment to constructive dialogue is further reflected in the International Conference on Civilisational Dialogue 2025 (ICONCIDI'25), held on 15 April 2025. The conference brought together government leaders, academics and civil society representatives to discuss inclusivity, sustainability, social harmony and responsible governance. Through these initiatives, UM provides opportunities for dialogue across different cultural, societal and intellectual perspectives, complementing its role as a platform for discussions involving diverse political stakeholders.

Together, these established institutional platforms and documented activities demonstrate UM's contribution to facilitating open dialogue, constructive engagement and the consideration of diverse perspectives on important public issues.