

# Govt-linked varsities launch flexible curriculum

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STARTING next month, students from an alliance of four government-linked universities (GLU) have the option of enrolling for courses from its member universities.

Launched recently, the joint offering comprises massive open online courses (MOOCs), open electives and Gluminor courses from Universiti Teknologi Petronas (UTP), Multimedia University (MMU), Universiti Tenaga Nasional (Uniten) and Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UNIKL).

With the offering of the Gluminor special academic package, students will be able to experience the niche areas of the member universities, which are leaders in their respective domains – oil and gas for UTP; information and communication technology (ICT), and creative multimedia for MMU; energy for Uniten; and aviation for UNIKL.

In addition, students opting for the MOOCs and open electives can apply for credit transfers from the host universities to academic programmes at their respective universities, according to a press release dated July 29.

Students may also choose to complete the courses within a year during the study period or after completing their registered degree programmes.

This latest initiative by the GLU alliance comes under its academic pillar of collaboration. The other three pillars are research, sustainability and governance, and student experience.

MMU academic and international relations vice president Prof Dr Ho Chin Kuan, who heads the GLU'S academic pillar, said these courses are to be taken outside of the prescribed programme structures to enhance students' knowledge in the fields of their interests.

"This initiative also offers students the opportunity to network with other students from member universities and to experience different academic culture," he added.

In his speech at the online launching ceremony, GLU chairman and UTP vice-chancellor Prof Dr Mohamed Ibrahim Abdul Mutalib described the collaboration as a symbiotic relationship that should be emulated by other universities in Malaysia.

"The Covid-19 pandemic, rapid deployment of remote learning, growth of MOOCs, and mounting financial pressure have provided us with an opportunity to share courses.

"I am glad to see that the pandemic is not an impediment for our GLU alliance to further enhance our academic offerings," he said.

Also present at the virtual ceremony were Uniten vicechancellor Prof Datuk Dr Kamal Nasharuddin Mustapha, MMU president and chief executive officer Prof Datuk Dr Mazliham Mohd Su'ud, and UNIKL acting president and CEO Prof Dr Shahrulniza Musa.

Founded in 2016, the GLU aspires to be a globally recognised alliance of industry-driven universities. It works alongside the government and policymakers to ensure conditions are optimal for private universities in Malaysia to thrive, and to create the best learning environment and outcomes for students.