

# UCSI University gets UN recognition

Varsity receives RCE status for its promotion of goals covering various global issues

**PETALING JAYA:** UCSI University is the first private university in Malaysia to be recognised as a Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) by the United Nations University (UNU) – the academic and research arm of the UN.

This comes after UCSI's Sarawak campus distinguished itself as a regional leader in the promotion of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a collection of 17 global goals that cover social and economic development issues.

RCE status is conferred on universities that promote education for sustainable development through research and capacity development, generating impact at the local level to promote societal, economic and behavioural change.

UCSI University vice-chancellor and president Senior Prof Datuk Dr Khalid Yusoff (*pic*) who welcomed the recognition, said that it affirmed UCSI's efforts to make a profound difference beyond the campus.

"This global acknowledgement is the culmination of the hard work our students and staff have put in to impact communities, change outcomes, maintain an ecological balance and raise public awareness on the importance of sustainability," he said.

"UCSI is committed to Go beyond; Be Profound: Make a difference. We are committed to pushing the university further and higher and we constantly strive to bring meaning and value to higher education.

"This SDG initiative comes at the right moment for us," he added.

Prof Khalid said being recognised by the UNU shows that it is on the same platform with other visionary universities in the world.

In Sarawak, UCSI is championing six initiatives that focus on Quality Education (SDG4), Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6), Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11) and Life on Land (SDG 15).

Another initiative by UCSI is the formation of the RCE Youth Ambassador Programme



that sees students collaborating with local communities and government agencies to run outreach initiatives such as 3R (reuse, reduce, recycle) campaigns and water conservation projects.

Prof Khalid also thanked the respective state agencies, non-profit organisations and local leaders for supporting UCSI's initiatives to champion sustainability.

These include the Sarawak Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture Youth and Sports, the Sarawak Natural Resources and Environment Board, the Sarawak Forestry Board, the North and South Kuching city councils, WWF Malaysia, the local communities of Kampung Semedang and Kampung Annah Rais, as well as other education institutions.

RCE Kuching is now set for an official launch in December in conjunction with the QS Subject Focus Summit on Hospitality and Tourism, which will be held at UCSI's Kuching campus.

With the addition of RCE Kuching, Malaysia is now home to four regional centres of expertise – Universiti Malaya runs RCE Central Semenanjung, Universiti Sains Malaysia helms RCE Penang while Universiti Teknologi Malaysia leads RCE Iskandar.

The RCE on Education for Sustainable Development comprises a network of individuals, experts and organisations who are committed to achieving a sustainable future through education by eradicating poverty, protecting the planet and ensuring peace and prosperity.

As of September 2018, there are 166 RCEs around the world.

The RCE conferment is another milestone for UCSI in a year that has distinguished it as Malaysia's best private university and a top 10 university in Malaysia in the QS World University Rankings 2019, as well as one of the world's top 70 universities under 50 years old.

In March, three UCSI alumni were inducted into the Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia 2018 list for social entrepreneurship, an accolade that recognised their efforts to empower refugees.



**Great honour:**

UCSI's Sarawak campus in Kuching has distinguished itself as a regional leader in the promotion of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.