Boosting students’ achievements

By RUBY LIM
rubylim@thestar.com.my

NURTURING global minds has always been the focus of Sunway Education Group’s chief executive officer Elizabeth Lee.

“The world has become borderless and it is so easy to travel around. Even if you are not travelling, you are bound to work with people from around the globe,” she said.

“As such, we need to be more international, to nurture our students so that they are able to operate in any part of the world. Language may be more difficult but what we can do is to mentally and emotionally prepare our students to have a global outlook,” she said.

Academic partnerships

Sunway University works closely in collaborating with world-class partners Lancaster University and Le Cordon Bleu International.

With these partnerships, Sunway University’s home-grown degrees in the areas of business, accounting, banking and finance, psychology, communication, computing and information systems, biological and medical sciences are validated by Lancaster University, while its international hospitality management and culinary management degrees are accredited by Le Cordon Bleu International.

“Students enrolled in Sunway University for undergraduate degree programmes which are validated and recognised by Lancaster University will receive two scrolls upon graduation, one from Sunway University and another from Lancaster University,” she said.

On top of delivering quality higher education, this would also boost our graduates’ confidence,” she said.

Apart from its dual degrees with Lancaster and Le Cordon Bleu International, Sunway University offers a wide range of its own home-grown diplomas and postgraduate degrees.

Its American Degree Transfer Programme enables students to transfer to the top 10% of universities in the United States including Johns Hopkins University, Cornell University, Washington University in St Louis and University of Michigan—Ann Arbor.

Sunway University also partners Harvard University, University of Oxford and University of Cambridge to promote a two-way flow of scholars and researchers.

Its partnership with the University of California (UC), Berkeley, is aimed at developing its entrepreneurship programmes and bi-directional information exchange between it and the UC Berkeley Suzanne Centre for Entrepreneurship and Technology.

“This may be costly for students to go and study a whole degree in the UK or US so we offer them the option to go for a term via the study abroad programmes such as to the London School of Economics (LSE), Lancaster University or UC Berkeley,” she said.

The first batch of 10 students enrolled in Sunway University for Undergraduate degree programme in the Summer School until Aug 16.

“Our continuously look for opportunities for our students. In China, our partnership with Peking University enabled a two-way flow for our students as well as their students to learn from each other and explore different cultures,” she said.

Lee says learning is continuous even though students have graduated.

Other partnerships

The Jeffrey Cheah Foundation’s (JCF) partnership with the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network Association (SDSN) and renowned economist Prof Jeffrey Sachs of Columbia University, who is also the director of SDSN, aims at developing the global expertise needed to move Malaysia and Southeast Asia forward in the area of sustainable development.

In line with the partnership, the Jeffrey Sachs Centre on Sustainable Development was established at Sunway University to deliver academic and executive programmes on sustainable development while it also serves as a regional hub for research and policy practice.

With the Jeffrey Sachs Travel Grants, the Harvard community is able to travel to Southeast Asia for research and study and vice versa for scholars and practitioners on Southeast Asia to travel to Harvard.

Continuous learning

Aside from the opportunities available, another significant thing that Lee highlighted is life-long learning.

“Learning is continuous even though you have already graduated.

“When you start your career, you must be hungry to learn more. Be humble and know that you do not know enough and yet be sufficiently skilled to do the basics, but be able to think and find solutions. The whole idea is to be innovative.

“To stimulate ideas and innovations, we have together with Sunway Ventures developed the Sunway Innovation Labs (Sunway iLab) for students to bring their ideas to the next level.

“In line with Sunway iLabs, we have the Makers Space to facilitate students from Sunway University, Monash University Malaysia and Sunway College to build their prototypes from ideas while they can gather to learn from and inspire each other,” she added.

“Research is the key component to unlock new achievements. If there is no research, there will be no future, it is as simple as that,” she said.

There are various research centres on the university’s campus which include the Centre for Biomedical Physics, Centre for Higher Education Research, Centre for Virus and Vaccine Research and Research Centre for Crystalline Materials, among others.

As part of its expansion plan, Sunway University will have its Engineering School by the end of next year.

Construction for an art centre across the road from the university’s main entrance is expected to be completed in a few years time.

In another two years, Sunway International School will have a new building, she added.
This material may be protected by the Malaysia Copyright Act. It may only be used for private study or research. Downloading or reproduction in excess of “fair dealing” may constitute copyright infringement.