

STUDY QUEST

AeU making education more flexible, accessible and attainable

As economies the world over become more knowledge-based, working professionals find themselves faced with the reality of having to continuously upgrade themselves to keep up. However, modern lifestyle commitments may mean people find it hard to make time to go back to university. What to do?

If you turned to Prof. Dato' Dr. Ansary Ahmed, he would, of course, advise you to play smart, and opt for the open learning concept. The President and CEO of Asia e University (AeU) puts it this way: "Do you want to go back to university or have the university come to you?"

Prof. Ansary is well-positioned to make a statement like that with his university being an internationally recognised brand in the business that caters to the adult learners. AeU was selected by the Higher Education Ministry, under the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP), as "the gateway university" for international education for distance and online learning, a decision that, Prof. Ansary says, reflects how AeU is considered "the most appropriately positioned Malaysian university". Through "the AeU gateway", collaborating institutions have access to an Integrated E-learning platform. Partner institutions use the online gateway to

deliver their programmes, provide expertise and can conduct assessment and quality assurance, while AeU through the gateway is in a position to provide the necessary administrative support, on behalf of the partner institution.

"AeU is among only 70 universities in Asia that cater to the workforce using the open university concept. "We made the conscious decision that we are the university that comes to you," Prof. Ansary says. AeU believes in removing barriers for an individual to choose what he or she wants to study. "It gives you a second chance to do what you like to do because as you mature and gain life and work experience, interests change. And that is where we come in," says Prof. Ansary.

Open learning does not put any pre-requisite to enrolling in a programme. For example, you can decide to do an engineering programme without having a credit in mathematics as opposed to close learning where you must have a pass or a distinction for the university to consider your application.

AeU practices the fifth generation of distance learning which uses the internet and smart mobile devices like tablet computers (e.g Ipad). The first generation used postal to correspond, followed by the use of radio



Personalised student counselling on special registration day at AeU main campus

and television, a concept initiated by the first open university founded in the UK. "The sixth generation, Web 2.0 is coming and it will promote collaborative learning using social networking," says Prof. Ansary.

One distinguishing feature of AeU is the way our programmes are delivered. Crafted to suit the demanding schedules of working professionals and adult learners, independent learning is the focal component of our courses. Our students also benefit from the valuable real world experiences of their peers through numerous interactive op-

portunities. AeU adopts a flexible and practice-focused teaching and learning approach and offer programmes that are rigorous, multi-mode and relevant – factors that are highly valued by busy executives who demand learning that can be tailored to suit their busy schedules, and knowledge and skills that are immediately applicable to their jobs.

AeU offers quality education and recognised academic programmes, allowing you to pick and choose the perfect learning solution for you. It offers undergraduate, postgraduate

diploma, Master's and Doctorate programmes, executive education and professional courses. All programmes are taught by highly qualified lecturers and academic facilitators.

In addition to normal entry, relevant work experience is very much considered as part of AeU's Open Entry admission. Open Entry refers to non-restrictive entry requirements that are applicable for students with working experience that can be assessed and matched with courses' learning outcomes. It allows prospective students a second chance at higher education as prior learning experience is acknowledged as valuable learning and used to compensate for paper qualifications.

Prof. Ansary said, "This is part of AeU's continuing effort to serve our community. The University is determined to reach out to an ever wider diversity of adult learners in Malaysia, by working with government and private organizations to promote the cause of lifelong learning and upgrading. Since our inception, AeU has steadfastly held on to this mission by investing resources and creating multiple pathways to make it possible for those who formerly have no avenue to earn a degree to enter university."