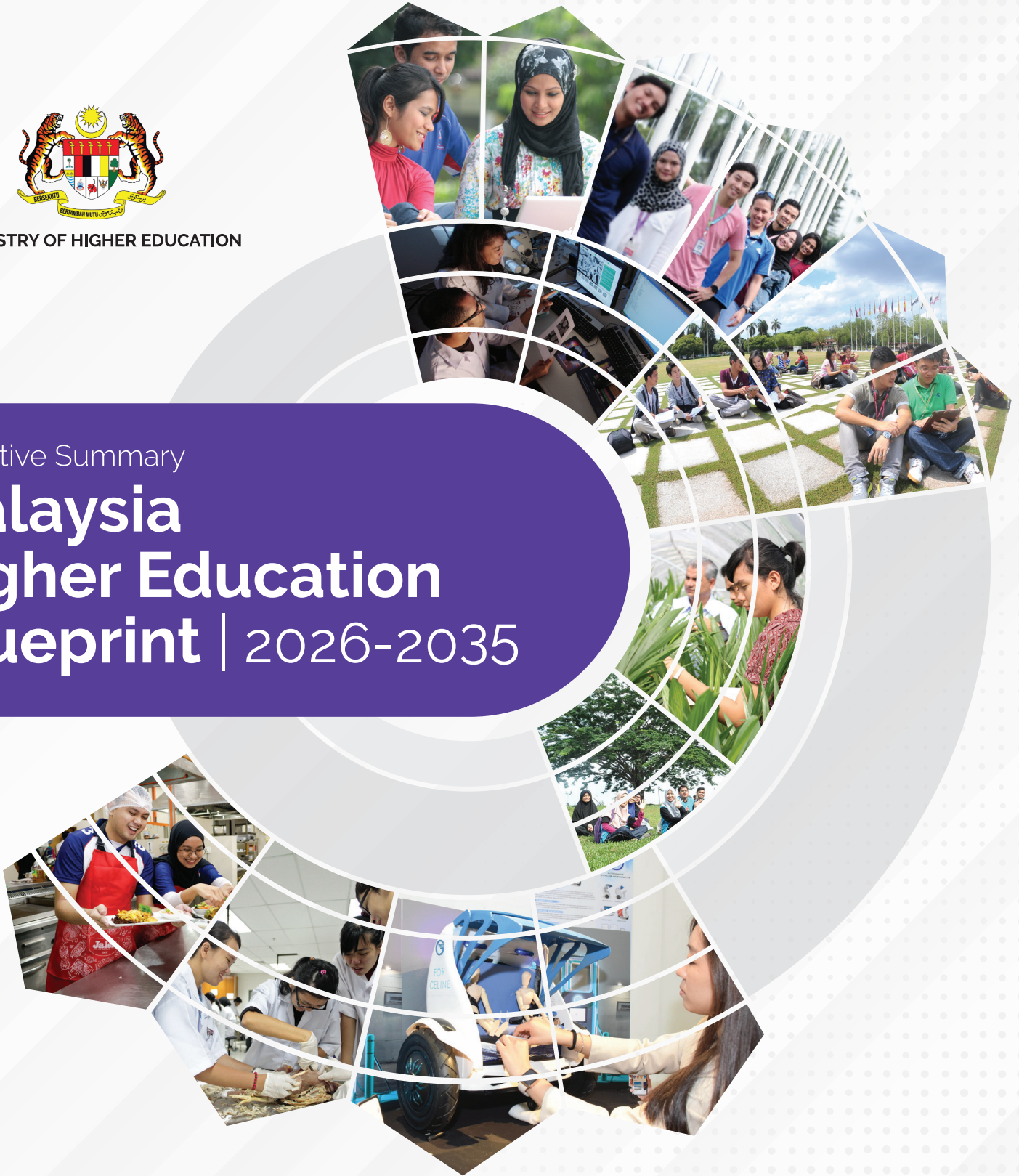




MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Executive Summary

# Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint | 2026-2035





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Malaysian higher education system continuously adapts to global economic, social, technological, and environmental transformations, supporting the megatrends shaping the system. For the last ten years, Malaysia has emphasised the need to tackle inequities, foster lifelong learning, and equip graduates for a digital and knowledge-based economy. A globally competitive and sustainable education prepares graduates for the complexities of an interconnected world.

The implementation of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education) or MEB 2015-2025 (HE) provided valuable learning opportunities despite some challenges, including changes brought about by the merging and later separation of education ministries. As a living document, the blueprint evolves in response to emerging trends and challenges, ensuring its strategies remain relevant and effective. The COVID-19 pandemic catalysed significant innovations in teaching and learning, accelerating digital transformation and new approaches to education delivery. Additionally, political and leadership transitions offered opportunities to realign priorities, refine higher education reforms, and explore ways to strengthen international partnerships, academic freedom, and institutional autonomy. These experiences have laid the groundwork for a more resilient and adaptable education system.

A transformative strategy to enhance Malaysia's higher education system is needed to ensure its relevance and competitiveness in an era of disruption and rapid change. In return, equitable access to high-quality education, agility in responding to global challenges, and a shift toward lifelong learning and flexible education pathways will be realised. This transformative vision highlights the collective responsibility of stakeholders to ensure Malaysia's learners and institutions thrive in an evolving global landscape.



## MALAYSIAN HIGHER EDUCATION: TWO DECADES OF GROWTH TOWARD A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Malaysian higher education has significantly transformed over the last two decades, reflecting the nation's evolving priorities and opportunities. Malaysian universities have evolved through four stages. First-generation universities focused on teaching and learning, second-generation universities added research, third-generation universities emphasised society and environmental impact, and fourth-generation universities focus on humanistic values and sustainability. This reflects a commitment to holistic education, innovation, societal impact, and global goals for sustainability and inclusivity. The establishment of the Malaysia Qualifications Agency (MQA) in 2007 marked a critical milestone in ensuring quality assurance and standardisation, enhancing global recognition of Malaysian qualifications. The focus has shifted from producing graduates to cultivating holistic, entrepreneurial learners equipped with the skills needed for a dynamic, interconnected world.

The MEB 2015-2025 (HE) set ambitious goals for governance reform, internationalisation, and alignment with industry needs. During this period, universities improved their global rankings,

strengthened collaborations with industries and communities, and reinforced the system's relevance to national development through initiatives like public-private partnerships and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes.

Challenges have become opportunities for innovation and growth. Efforts to balance academic excellence with inclusivity have expanded access for marginalised communities, fostering a more equitable system. Rapid technological advancements and the complexities of post-normal times have encouraged institutions to adopt innovative approaches, enhancing their resilience and adaptability.

Guided by aspirations for sustainability, humanity-centric values, and global competitiveness, Malaysia's higher education system continues to evolve, shaping resilient nation-builders prepared to contribute to an advanced and sustainable future. In summary, the evolution of Malaysian higher education has progressed from foreign dependency to local sufficiency. It now focuses on interconnectivity and interdependency, reflecting a shift towards self-reliance and active global engagement.



## DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

The Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint 2026-2035, or MHEB 2026-2035, was developed through a collaborative and consultative process driven by leading Malaysian thinkers with over 8,000 stakeholders and individuals engaged in providing input and feedback. The stakeholders included Malaysian and global education experts, university administrators, university Boards, the academic community, unions and associations, Ministry staff,

industry bodies and employers, relevant agencies, parents, students, and public members. The development process began with a comprehensive review of current performance through scoping, data collection, surveys, and stakeholder engagements, involving more than 100 documents, 8,000 stakeholders, and a detailed analysis of the MEB 2015-2025 (HE). The development of the MHEB 2026–2035 was structured into three distinct phases:

### PHASE 1 Review, assessment and analysis (May 2024–July 2024)

The Ministry started with a comprehensive review of current performance through scoping, data collection, survey and stakeholder engagements. This phase identified issues and gaps.

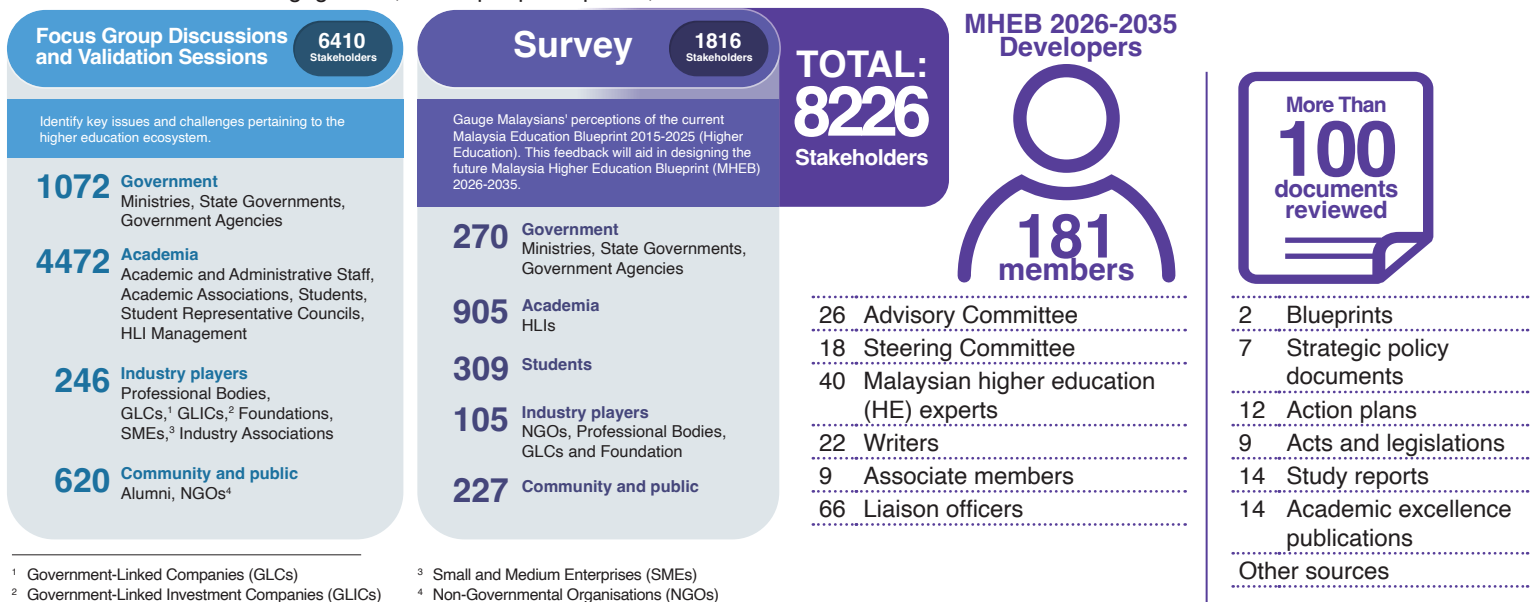
### PHASE 2 Conceptualisation of the 10 Shifts (August 2024 to October 2024)

Based on the review team's findings and in consultation with stakeholders, 10 Shifts were identified to elevate the Malaysian higher education system to the next level. These Shifts were also carefully aligned with existing national plans.

### PHASE 3 Finalisation of the MHEB 2026–2035 (November 2024 to mid-February 2025)

The details of these 10 Shifts were finalised following another extensive round of public consultation and guidance from the Cabinet.

### Exhibit 1: Stakeholder engagement, developer participation, and document review



## CURRENT PERFORMANCE

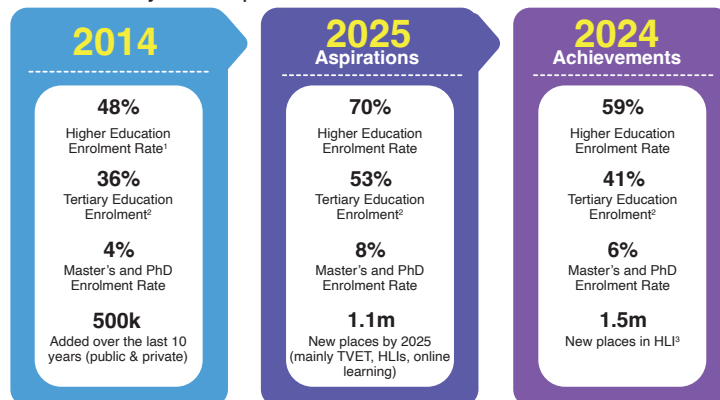
The Ministry has made significant progress in fulfilling its core aspirations for higher education, most notably in broadening access and expanding overall system and institutional quality.

### ACCESS

### The access to higher education has considerably expanded

Malaysia has made notable progress in higher education enrolment, increasing from 48% in 2014 to 59% currently, though still below the 70% target set for 2025. Tertiary enrolment grew from 36% to 41%, remaining short of the 53% goal, while postgraduate enrolment rose from four to six percent but has yet to reach the eight percent target. Despite these gaps, the system exceeded its target for new places, achieving 1.5 million between 2014-2024, surpassing the 1.1 million planned by 2025. These achievements highlight Malaysia's commitment to expanding access to education while building an inclusive and globally competitive system. The growing enrolment, coupled with exceeding infrastructure targets, underscores the nation's strategic investments in higher education to support socio-economic development and global engagement.

Exhibit 2: System aspiration: Access



Source: MOHE (as at 31 December 2023)

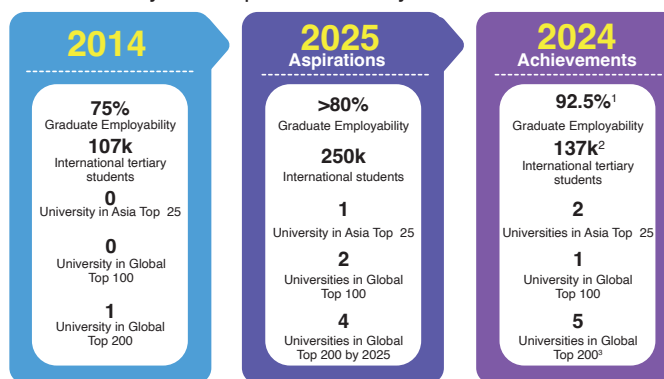
- Higher Education comprises International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 3+ (Post-Secondary, Non-Tertiary Education such as Pre-U, Matriculation, STPM, A-Level, Certificate Year 1, and Diploma Year 1), ISCED 5, 6,7 and 8.
- Tertiary Education comprises of ISCED 5 (Year 2 Certificate, Year 2 & 3 Diploma, Advance Diploma), ISCED 6,7 and 8.
- New places refer to the number of additional participations in higher learning institutions, including flexible education and lifelong learning.

### QUALITY

### Advancing higher education with improved employability

Malaysia showed significant progress in achieving improved graduate employability surpassing the 2025 target, rising to 92.5% from 75% in 2014, exceeding the >80% goal. International tertiary student numbers increased from 107,000 in 2014 to 137,000 but fell short of the 2025 target of 250,000. Malaysia's higher education system is increasingly recognised as a key driver of socio-economic development. By prioritising quality education, innovative teaching and learning methods, and comprehensive support systems, the nation is well-positioned to maintain its upward trajectory in higher education, further strengthening its global standing and contributing to its vision of becoming a leading higher education destination.

Exhibit 3: System aspiration: Quality



Source: MOHE (as at 31 December 2024)

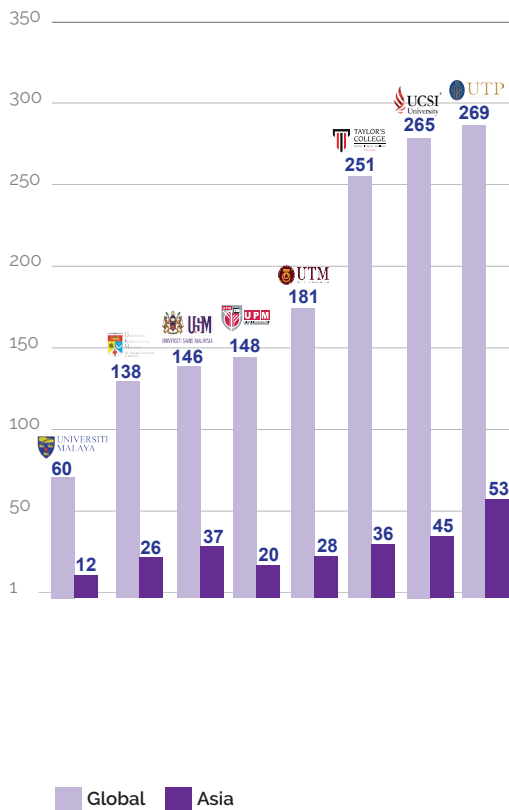
- Graduate Tracer Study System or *Sistem Kajian Pengesanan Graduan* (SKPG), MOHE
- MyMoheS and e-IPTS, MOHE
- QS World University Rankings 2025

## Malaysia's universities achieving regional and global success

Malaysia successfully achieved its goal of having two universities in Asia's Top 25, with Universiti Malaya ranked 12th and Universiti Putra Malaysia ranked 20th. Similarly, the target for universities in the Global Top 100 was met by Universiti Malaya, which secured the 60th position in the QS World University Rankings. Notably, Malaysia also achieved its goal of having five universities in the Global Top 200 by 2025, ahead of schedule (Exhibit 4).

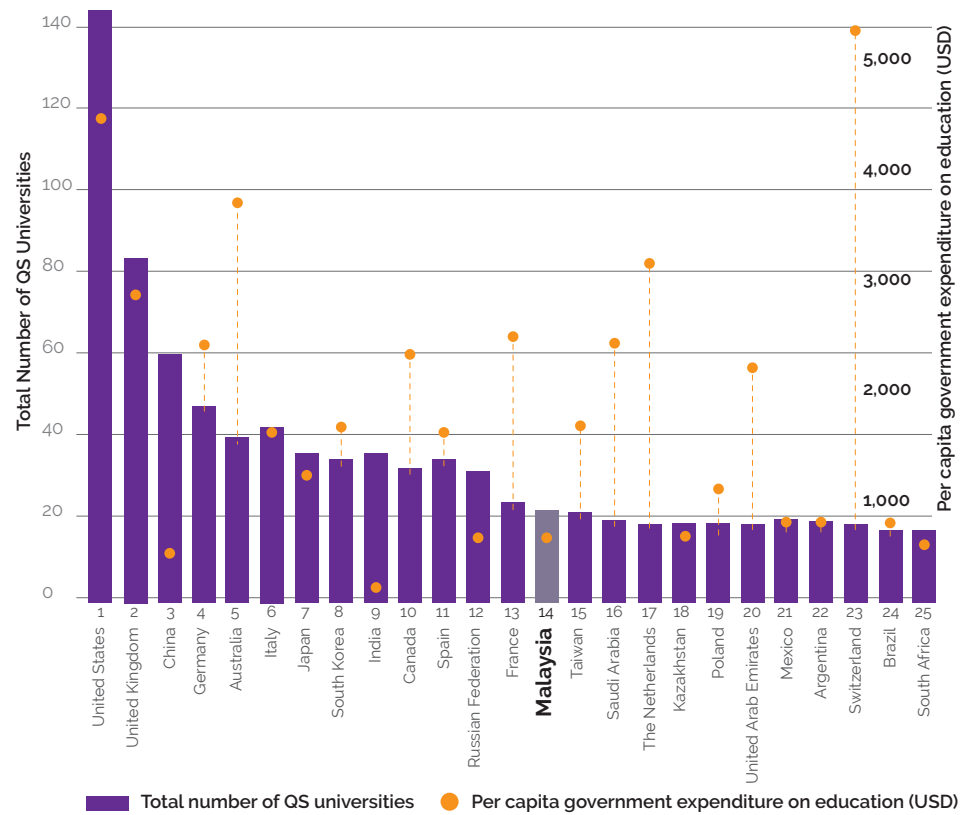
Furthermore, according to the Global Education Index 2024, Malaysia was ranked 14th among the 25 countries with the best education systems (Exhibit 5). These accomplishments reflect the nation's steadfast commitment to strengthening higher education through strategic investments in research, innovation, and teaching excellence. Malaysian universities continue to gain international recognition, reinforcing their reputation for academic rigour and pioneering research. These achievements affirm the country's dedication to developing globally competitive institutions and realising its vision of becoming a premier higher education hub.

**Exhibit 4:** Malaysian universities global ranking



Source: QS World University Rankings 2025

**Exhibit 5:** Global Education Index top 25 countries with best education system in the world

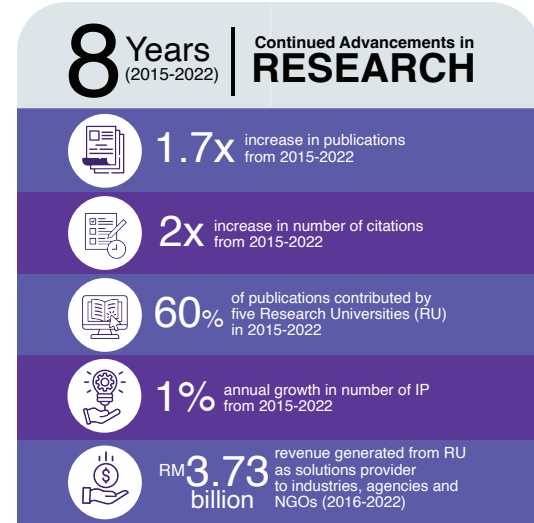


Source: Insider Monkey Global Education Index, 2024

## Sustained growth in research excellence

Between 2015 and 2022, Malaysia saw substantial growth in research output, with publications increasing by 1.7 times and citations doubling. The five Research Universities (RU) contributed 60% of the nation's total publications. Intellectual Property (IP) filings grew by one percent annually, while revenues from these universities, serving as solution providers for industries, agencies, and NGOs, reached RM3.73 billion. These advancements demonstrate Malaysia's growing influence in the global research ecosystem, driven by its commitment to fostering innovative and impactful studies. By bridging academia and industry, Malaysia's RU continue to position the country as a hub for knowledge generation and real-world solutions, driving excellence and innovation in support of national and global development goals.

Exhibit 6: Continued advancements in research

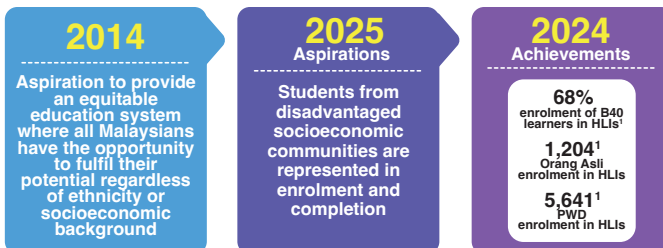


Source: Malaysia Research Assessment Instrument (MyRA) Data 2015-2022, MOHE

## EQUITY

## Towards equitable access to higher education in Malaysia

Exhibit 7: System aspiration: Equity



Source:

<sup>1</sup> MyMoheS and e-IPTS, MOHE (as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024)

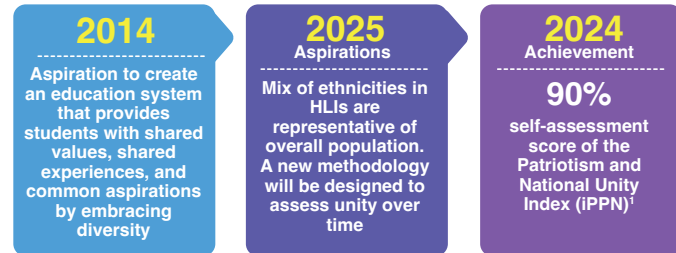
Malaysia aims to create an equitable higher education system ensuring all citizens, regardless of socioeconomic background, can fulfil their potential. By 2025, the goal is to prevent underrepresentation of students from disadvantaged communities in enrolment and completion. Currently, 68% of B40 (low-income group) students are enrolled in higher learning institutions (HLIs), along with 719 Orang Asli students. From 2015 to 2023, Orang Asli enrolment grew steadily from 480 to 1006, however, their proportional enrolment remains low, with Orang Asli at 0.04% in 2023 while Persons with Disabilities (PWD) enrolment remains around 0.18%. These figures underscore ongoing efforts to enhance inclusivity in Malaysian higher education.

## UNITY

### Advancing diversity and unity in Malaysian HLIs

Malaysia aspires to create an education system that fosters shared values, experiences, and aspirations among students while embracing diversity. By 2025, the aim is for the ethnic composition in HLIs to reflect the overall population, supported by a new methodology for assessing unity over time. Currently, the Patriotism and National Unity Index (iPPN) shows a high self-assessment score of 90%, indicating strong unity within HLIs. These efforts emphasise the importance of diversity and unity in strengthening national cohesion through education.

**Exhibit 8: System aspiration: Unity**

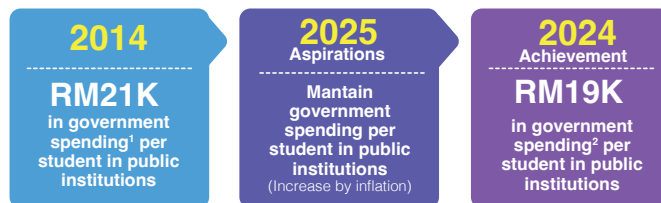


Source: MOHE (as at 31st December 2023)

## EFFICIENCY

### Balancing cost and quality in public education

**Exhibit 9: System aspiration: Efficiency**



<sup>1</sup> Includes operating expenditure (OE) (RM16,200) and development expenditure (DE) (RM4,500) of public HLIs and ministry expenditures (eg, teaching hospitals, MQA, Divisions under Ministry). This is the portion of government contribution to the overall cost per student. Excludes operating expenditure covered by non-government sources, e.g., tuition fees, investment income, rentals, among others.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to government spending per student, the total cost per student in public institutions is supplemented by minimal tuition fees and the institutions' generated income.

Source: MOHE, 2023

Malaysia's education system aspires to maintain efficient government spending per student in public institutions while adjusting for inflation. In 2014, the government spent RM21k per student, which has decreased to RM19k in recent years. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of government spending from 2013 to 2023 stands at negative one percent, aligning closely with the 2025 target. It is important to note that the total cost of educating a student at public HLIs is funded by government grants, tuition fees paid by the students and the income generated independently by the institution. The emphasis on measuring cost per student highlights the importance of optimising costs while sustaining the quality of public education. It also reflects Malaysia's commitment to balancing fiscal responsibility with the delivery of quality education. By investing strategically and focusing on efficiency, the system ensures the long-term sustainability of public education while fostering equitable access to learning.

**Exhibit 10:** Summary of issues and challenges in Malaysia's higher education



Source: Desk research and focus group discussions

# 11 Main Gaps and Challenges

## 1 Ethical leadership and values

- Strengthening the emphasis on ethical values is essential for shaping responsible future leaders.
- While there are growing concerns around academic integrity and the impact of technology on ethical behavior, there are also opportunities to enhance ethical leadership through targeted initiatives and education.

## 2 Global competitiveness and exposure

- Challenges remain in enhancing global citizenship, with barriers to international mobility, credit transfers, and inclusivity for international students.
- Prioritising global exposure is essential to prepare students for an interconnected world.

## 3 Future-ready skills and employability

- The current gap in future-ready skills and practical, industry-relevant training is contributing to both unemployment, where graduates face challenges in securing jobs, and underemployment, where they are employed in roles that do not fully utilise their skills and qualifications.
- Declining enrollment in certain areas presents further challenges in aligning educational outcomes with the evolving demands of the industry. Addressing these issues requires rethinking educational approaches to better equip graduates for meaningful and suitable employment.

## 4 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

- Insufficient opportunities for *Orang Asli* and Natives of Sabah and Sarawak, Persons with Disabilities (PWD), and marginalised groups remain a significant challenge within the education system.
- At the same time, barriers persist for international students due to inclusivity and language issues. Ensuring equity across all levels of the system is essential for creating a more inclusive, diverse, and competitive educational environment.

## 5 Mental health and well-being

- The increasing concern for mental health and well-being is heightened by a shortage of professionals, limited services, and insufficient support systems.
- Both learners and staff experience challenges such as academic pressures, workload demands, and uncertain career pathways, contributing to stress and emotional strain that may affect their overall well-being and progression.

## 6 Entrepreneurial ecosystem and innovation

- The entrepreneurial ecosystem in higher education would benefit from a broader approach, focusing on developing diverse entrepreneurial skills beyond traditional business ventures.
- Additionally, there is a strong reliance on government funding, and more effective impact tracking is needed. Strengthening this ecosystem to drive innovation, particularly in Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI)-based industries, is essential for economic growth.

## 7 Unity, national identity, and sustainability

- HLIs must play a greater role in fostering unity, with a need for cross-ministry collaboration.
- The curriculum should better reflect the global sustainability and planetary health agenda, encouraging students to contribute to national unity while addressing critical issues such as climate change, environmental protection, and sustainable development.

## 8 Governance and accountability

- Governance structures in HLIs require further enhancement, particularly in addressing issues like political appointments and limited board effectiveness.
- Strengthening accountability and improving governance practices are essential to ensuring transparent and effective leadership across the education sector.

## 9 Financial sustainability and institutional stability

- HLIs face financial pressures, with some private institutions closing due to unsustainable funding models, impacting education quality, research output, and overall resilience.
- Establishing a sustainable financial framework is crucial for ensuring the long-term stability of HLIs, enabling them to maintain high-quality education while adapting to evolving demands.

## 10 Infrastructure and accessibility

- Inadequate physical and digital infrastructure limits access to education, especially in rural areas. Investing in both infrastructure and infostructure is vital to ensure broader accessibility to quality education.

## 11 Research, innovation, and societal impact

- The higher education system must focus on ensuring that research and innovation efforts are both responsible and impactful. This includes aligning research activities with national priorities and the planetary health agenda, benefiting society and the environment, while driving economic growth through commercialisation.
- Enhancing the connection between research, innovation, and societal needs will strengthen the role of HLIs in contributing to sustainable development and global well-being.

## THE NEW HIGHER EDUCATION FOCUS

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The New Higher Education Focus outlines a transformative shift in Malaysia's higher education system to align with future demands and global challenges. It marks a transition from structured education and formal learners to the unbundling of education that supports lifelong and life-wide learning, offering flexible pathways for diverse learners. The focus on industry-ready job seekers evolves to producing present- and future-ready job seekers and job creators, equipping graduates with entrepreneurial and innovative skills. Similarly, the shift from values-based and output-driven talent emphasises cultivating values-internalised and impact-driven talent grounded in ethics and purpose.

The blueprint moves from process-driven decision-making to fostering intrapreneurial, empowered, and systems-thinking leadership that drives innovation and adaptability. A differentiated system transforms into a harmonised and collaborative ecosystem promoting unity and efficiency across institutions. The focus on technology literacy progresses to STEAM-enabled competencies, integrating Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics. Centralised funding and resources transition to ensuring sustainable funding through responsible governance.

Additionally, the goal of being a regional educational hub expands to establishing Malaysia as a global educational hub with international recognition. Lastly, the adoption of sustainability-led initiatives advances into leadership in planetary health and sustainability, embedding environmental responsibility at the core of higher education. This holistic transformation emphasises innovation, lifelong learning, sustainability, and global competitiveness to prepare Malaysia's education system for an evolving world.

Exhibit 11: The new higher education focus

## THE NEW HIGHER EDUCATION FOCUS



<sup>1</sup> In this Blueprint, "learners" is used instead of "students" to convey a broader scope that includes individuals engaged in lifelong learning. This usage aligns with the Blueprint's emphasis on the unbundling of education, which enables flexible and self-directed learning pathways beyond traditional academic structures.

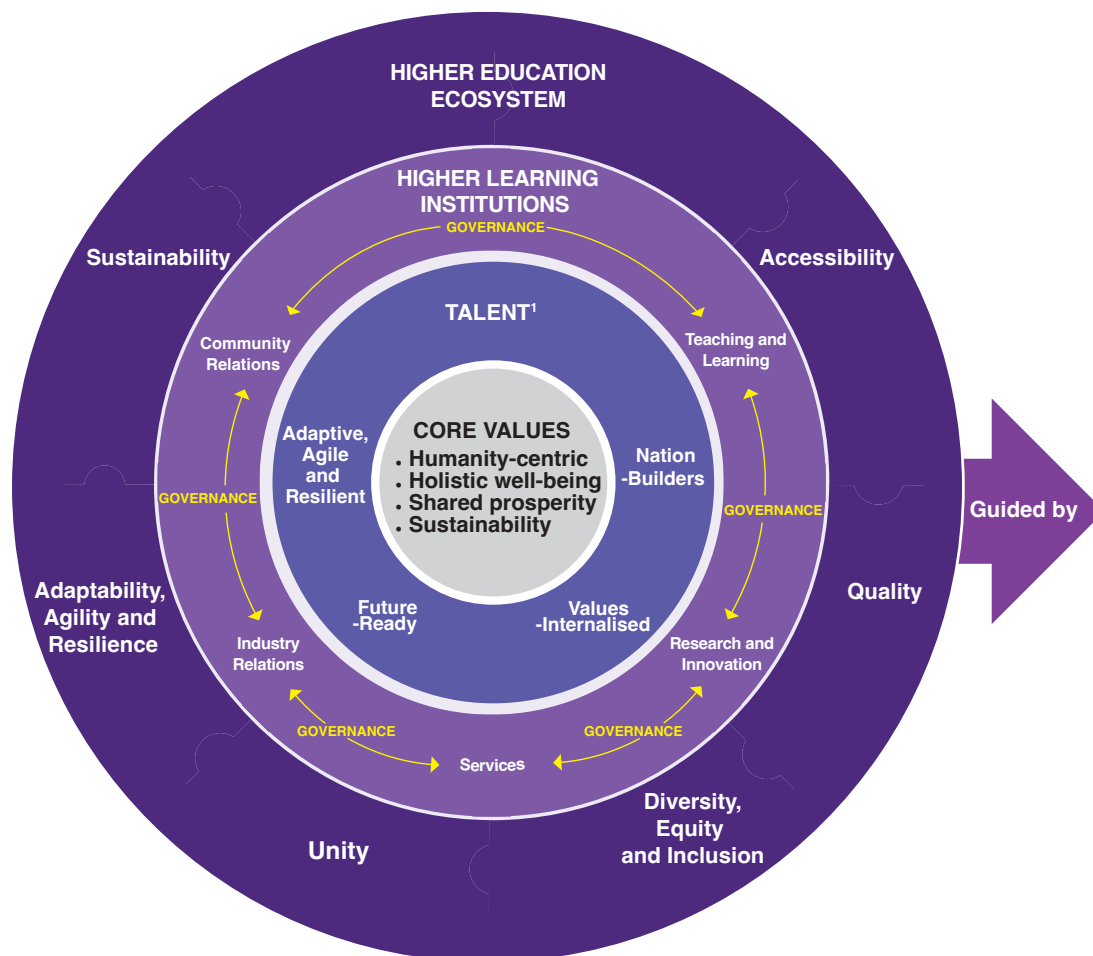
<sup>2</sup> "Values" is used instead of "value" to avoid the economic connotation that "value" might imply. "Values" refer to a set of principles, moral standards, or cultural norms that individuals or groups adopt and integrate into their identity.

# MALAYSIA HIGHER EDUCATION FRAMEWORK AND ASPIRATIONS

## Purpose of Malaysia's Higher Education

The Malaysian higher education framework articulates the aspiration to achieve the ultimate purpose of higher education; producing humanity-centric purpose-driven nation builders for a harmonious, prosperous, advanced, and sustainable future. It aims to nurture talent across all levels of the higher education ecosystem, encompassing learners, as well as academic and administrative staff.

**Exhibit 12:** Higher education framework



### National Education Philosophy

Education in Malaysia is an ongoing effort towards further developing the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonious based on a firm belief in and devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, possess high moral standards, and who are responsible and capable of achieving a high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, society and the nation.

### MADANI

keMampanan (Sustainability)  
 kesejAhteraan (Prosperity)  
 Daya cipta (Innovation)  
 hormAt (Respect)  
 keyakiNan (Trust)  
 Ihsan (Compassion)

<sup>1</sup> Talent refers to the learners developed by the system, as well as the academic and administrative staff within the system.

**The purpose of Malaysia's higher education is driven by the following core values:**

- **Humanity-centric** reflects a dedication to prioritising human dignity, compassion, empathy, planetary stewardship, and societal well-being, fostering inclusive, empathetic growth while adapting and showing resilience to change.
- **Holistic well-being** promotes balance and harmony across intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical dimensions, ensuring individuals thrive comprehensively with *adab*.
- **Shared prosperity** emphasises diversity, inclusion and equity in advancing societal and economic growth, ensuring collective progress and opportunities for all.
- **Sustainability** for generations highlights a commitment to responsible practices that safeguard environmental, social, and economic well-being for present and future generations.

This framework establishes overarching aspirations for Talent, Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) and the Higher Education Ecosystem. Talent aspirations envision individuals as nation-builders who are knowledge-driven, and future-ready, with internalised values and competencies that equip them with adaptability, agility, and resilience.

As enablers, HLIs must excel in dynamic teaching and learning, impactful research and innovation, meaningful community and industry engagement, and comprehensive services. These functions are unified by strong governance, driving holistic development and sustainable progress aligned with both national and global aspirations.

The aspirations of Talent and HLIs collectively drive the realisation of the Higher Education Ecosystem aspirations. The aspirations for the higher education ecosystem focus on:

- Accessibility
- Quality
- Diversity, equity and inclusion
- Unity
- Adaptability, agility, and resilience
- Sustainability

The framework is aligned and guided by the National Education Philosophy and the “MADANI” principles (Sustainability, Prosperity, Innovation, Respect, Trust, and Compassion) which reinforces its dedication to inclusion and diversity.<sup>1</sup>

The core values of the framework, along with the aspirations for talents, HLIs and higher education ecosystem, are explained in greater detail.



<sup>1</sup> Prime Minister's Department (2024). *Malaysia Madani*. <https://malysiamadani.gov.my>



# Core Values

The MHEB 2026-2035 will therefore build on the four core values set out in the Higher Education Framework: humanity-centric, holistic well-being, shared prosperity and sustainability.

Values	Definition
<b>Humanity-centric</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seamlessly integrating collaborative (smart) and digital (sharp) skills with inclusive knowledge, these individuals embody a balance between knowledge and character (adab).</li> <li>They prioritise the well-being of people, the preservation of the planet, and the pursuit of shared prosperity.</li> </ul>
<b>Holistic well-being</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The National Education Policy emphasises the holistic development of intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically balanced individuals.</li> <li><b>Intellectually</b>, it cultivates curiosity, critical thinking, creativity, knowledge and value creation for innovation and problem-solving.</li> <li><b>Spiritually</b>, it nurtures moral and ethical values like integrity, compassion, and responsibility.</li> </ul>
<b>Shared prosperity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prosperity is a core value that <b>fosters holistic well-being</b> through <b>inclusive economic growth, social harmony, and personal fulfilment</b>.</li> <li>In alignment with the MADANI concept, it <b>prioritises shared success, equitable resource distribution, and innovation that addresses societal challenges</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>In alignment with the MADANI concept</b>, sustainability emphasises <b>moral and ethical stewardship, inclusivity, and environmental awareness</b>, guiding talents to adopt eco-friendly practices, promote social equity, and foster green innovation.</li> <li>Implementing <b>equitable solutions that protect ecosystems</b> while ensuring <b>shared prosperity</b>.</li> </ul>

# Aspirations

Talent

Higher Learning  
Institutions

Higher Education  
Ecosystem



# Talent Aspirations

Talent aspirations encompass four key dimensions aimed at fostering a progressive, dynamic, and inclusive future workforce. These dimensions are Adaptive, Agile and Resilient, Nation Builders, Values-Internalised, and Future-Ready. Talent refers to the learners developed by the system, as well as the academic and administrative staff within the system.

## **Adaptive, agile, and resilient**

Talents equipped to thrive in dynamic and uncertain post-normal time environments, demonstrating resilience, agility, and an entrepreneurial mindset. They embrace continuous learning, adapt swiftly to shifting landscapes, and address complex challenges with innovative and impactful solutions. Guided by a future-focused and humanity-centric approach, they proactively align with evolving stakeholder needs, contributing meaningfully across diverse professions and societal contexts.

## **Nation builders**

Talents with a strong sense of national identity and pride, promoting unity by valuing Malaysia's heritage, values, and diversity. They actively support the nation's progress and harmony, preserving cultural traditions while working towards sustainable development and a stronger, more united future.

## **Values-internalised**

Talents who have fully assimilated the core values into their character, guiding their contributions as ethical, responsible, and compassionate nation-builders. This reflects a transformation from superficial knowledge of values to their intrinsic application in real-world scenarios.

## **Future-ready**

Talents prepared to thrive as both job seekers and creators in an ever-evolving world. Equipped with digital fluency, critical thinking, and adaptability, they leverage collaboration, an entrepreneurial mindset, and expertise in emerging technologies, artificial intelligence (AI), and STEAM skills to excel. Resilient and grounded in mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being, they embrace lifelong learning to navigate complex and dynamic environments. By addressing societal challenges with ethical and purposeful actions, they drive meaningful innovation and contribute to sustainable progress, shaping a better future for all.



# Higher Learning Institution Aspirations

As enablers, HLIs excel in the following areas:

## **Dynamic teaching and learning**

Adapting to evolving needs with innovative approaches that inspire critical thinking and lifelong learning.

## **Impactful research and innovation**

Driving advancements that address societal and global challenges while contributing to knowledge and economic growth.

## **Meaningful community engagement**

Building strong connections with communities to address societal needs, promote well-being, and foster inclusive development.

## **Strategic industry engagement**

Establishing partnerships with industries to drive economic development, enhance employability, and support innovation through collaborative initiatives.

## **Administrative and academic services**

Delivering additional support and contributions beyond teaching and research, encompassing administrative work by academics and administrators that enhances the overall institutional ecosystem.

# Higher Education Ecosystem Aspirations

The MHEB 2026-2035 will, therefore, build on six characteristics of the higher education ecosystems;

- **Accessibility**
- **Quality**
- **Diversity, equity and inclusion**
- **Unity**
- **Adaptability, agility and resilience**
- **Sustainability**

## Accessibility

By 2035, the Ministry aims to expand higher education access, focusing on personalised, flexible learning for diverse learners, including adults and non-traditional learners. This unbundled approach supports lifelong learning, enabling skills development at an individualised pace and preparing learners to adapt and excel in an ever-changing global landscape.

## Quality

The Ministry focuses on producing values-driven, future-ready graduates, cultivating high-performing educators, positioning institutions globally while excelling locally, and creating an agile, ethical higher education system. Emphasising innovation, accountability, and continuous growth, this vision aims to establish Malaysia as a global education hub, supporting national development and preparing the nation for global challenges in a dynamic, knowledge-based economy.

## Diversity, equity and inclusion

The higher education system values diversity in race, gender, and ability while promoting equity by enhancing access for disadvantaged students. It fosters inclusivity by integrating diverse perspectives into curricula and institutional culture. Through inclusive practices, open communication, and accessible resources, the Ministry creates a strong sense of community and belonging in education.

## Unity

The Ministry strives to ensure higher education enrolment reflects Malaysia's ethnic diversity, fostering unity through shared values and experiences. By embracing all backgrounds, the education system promotes understanding and appreciation of all cultures, aligning with Malaysia's multi-ethnic heritage to create a harmonious and inclusive learning environment for all students.

## Adaptability, agility and resilience

Adaptive, agile, and resilient higher education systems address evolving demands by embracing flexibility, innovation, and sustainability. Adaptive systems respond to new technologies and trends, agile systems enable rapid implementation of changes, and resilient systems ensure uninterrupted education during disruptions. Together, these qualities support lifelong learning and ensure institutional relevance and sustainability.

## Sustainability

Sustainability in higher education, grounded in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), ensures long-term educational, social, and environmental roles through responsible resource management, resilience, and equitable access. Visionary leaders drive initiatives like eco-friendly, green campuses, and renewable energy, prioritising people, planet, and prosperity to minimise environmental impact, promote well-being, and support future generations while advancing global sustainability goals.

# WHAT IMPACT WILL THIS TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY HAVE?

The transformation of the higher education system in the MHEB 2026-2035, will lead to a collective set of desirable benefits, rights, and corresponding responsibilities for each stakeholder group:

## Learners will...

- ...benefit from unbundled education and flexible learning pathways, allowing them to customise their learning experiences to suit their individual needs and career aspirations while accessing diverse credentials from multiple institutions or providers.
- ...be humanity-centric, impact-driven, ready to innovate and contribute to society.
- ...receive equitable, high-quality education with global exposure.
- ...be balanced, possess future- and present-ready skills, including AI, digital analytics, and a combination of relevant sharp and smart skills.
- ...gain entrepreneurial and innovation skills and attain unipreneurship opportunities through Research, Development, Innovation, Commercialisation and Economy (RDICE)-informed learning to thrive in a globalised economy.
- ...acquire knowledge, skills and values aligned with sustainability and planet-friendly practices, enabling responsible use of national resources for sustainable development.

**In return, learners will be asked to actively engage in their education, uphold integrity, and contribute to an inclusive environment. They must be agile, adaptive, resilient, future-ready, develop impact-driven mindsets, and align personal growth with societal and global needs.**

## The academic and administrative staff will...

- ...thrive in a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment that fosters an intrapreneurial spirit that is purpose-driven with systems thinking.
- ...benefit from increased opportunities for professional growth through the Differentiated Career Pathways and holistic talent performance indicators that promotes the discovery of purpose, job fulfilment, and good health and well-being.
- ...align with the collective mission of the national higher education ecosystem while upholding academic freedom.
- ...deliver innovative teaching, impactful research, and foster collaboration with the quintuple helix to address societal challenges supported by Academia Research Fund (AReF).
- ...gain international recognition and relevance for excellence in teaching and research innovation.
- ...possess future- and present-ready competencies, including AI, digital analytics, and a combination of relevant sharp and smart skills.
- ...be in a leading position to leverage industry partnerships and unipreneurship opportunities within the RDICE framework.
- ... be referred leaders in planetary health and sustainability education, research, outreach, and policy.

**In return, as drivers of the HLLs, the academic and administrative staff will need to equip themselves with the necessary competencies to deliver innovative teaching and services, impactful research, collaborative solutions and services for the quintuple helix.**

## HLI leaders will...

...enjoy greater autonomy to implement strategies that advance institutional excellence and sustainability.

...integrate intrapreneurial approaches and systems thinking to drive transformation.

...receive financial sustainability support through a strategic study on sustainable infrastructure financing and the implementation of endowment fund matching.

...enjoy transparent governance and improved alignment with national priorities through the appointment of competent Boards of Directors and the implementation of Board Effectiveness Assessment.

...benefit from strengthened legal and governance frameworks through the establishment of an Ombudsman, One Higher Education Act, TVET Act and the National Education Council or *Majlis Pendidikan Negara* (MPN) to ensure seamless continuity and cohesion between the Education and Higher Education sectors.

...operate within an inclusive, flexible and agile governance structure that includes relevant ministries, industry and societal leaders.

...gain increased autonomy and flexible RDICE funding, and receive recognition for leadership in planetary health and sustainability efforts, as well as for guiding stakeholders to adopt global best practices.

**In return, HLI leaders will be asked to foster excellence, diversity, equity, inclusivity, and innovation, empower staff and students, integrate systems thinking into governance, build sustainable partnerships, and align their institutions with higher education reform goals, including global competitiveness and social equity.**

## Industry will...

...benefit from graduates who are values-internalised and humanity-centric, equipped with ethical awareness, empathy, and a strong sense of social responsibility, enabling them to contribute meaningfully as nation-builders.

...access future-ready talents with relevant skills and impact-driven mindsets, balanced, possess future- and present-ready skills, including AI, and a combination of sharp and smart skills.

...received Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) graduates who excel in advanced technical skills in emerging technologies like AI, Internet of Things (IoT), and cybersecurity while also being polished in critical soft skills.

...gain access to cutting-edge research and a skilled workforce with in-demand STEAM competencies through RDICE.

...acquire talent to drive sustainable practices, meet environmental, social and governance (ESG) goals, and boost global competitiveness.

**In return, the industry will be asked to collaborate with HLIs by co-developing curricula, supporting research, offering internships, and aligning efforts with societal needs. They should provide opportunities for students to apply skills and contribute to a future-ready, impact-driven talent pipeline.**



## Community will...

- ...benefit from knowledge transfer, innovative solutions, and empowerment opportunities provided by HLIs.
- ...participate in initiatives and access resources to improve socio-economic outcomes.
- ...possess technical knowledge to contribute to a highly developed nation, with TVET education offered as a flexible and viable pathway alongside traditional programmes.
- ...directly benefit from RDICE's focus on impactful research addressing pressing socio-economic challenges.
- ...gain lifelong skills in planetary health and sustainability through a community engagement platform that fosters experiential learning, supports innovation, and enables researchers and academics to create societal impact and value.
- ...be provided with a flexible option of TVET education as main pathways of education in addition to the traditional programmes.

**In return, communities will be asked to collaborate with HLIs to address local and national challenges, provide programme feedback, engage in lifelong learning, and support socio-economic projects. They should also advocate for higher education's role in fostering societal progress and development.**

## Government will...

- ... enjoy a talent pool that is humanity-centric, adaptive, and entrepreneurial, capable of enhancing global competitiveness and national resilience, contributing to a prosperous, harmonious, and advanced society.
- ... benefit from a future-ready, globally competitive workforce that attracts foreign direct investment, stimulates economic activity, and enhances Malaysia's position in the dynamic, technology-driven global economy.
- ... secure societal well-being, inclusive growth, regional development, and equitable opportunities by linking higher education outcomes to Malaysia's socio-economic objectives and aligning education policies with national economic priorities.
- ... benefit from governance promoting DEI and a whole-of-nation approach, fostering collaboration among stakeholders, reducing

## Ministry will...

- ...have a harmonised and collaborative ecosystem, enabling seamless coordination across higher education stakeholders, including an integrated governance structure for TVET.
- ...enjoy enhanced governance and capacity to formulate inclusive and globally competitive policies, ensuring stakeholder engagement, strengthening HLIs-industry collaboration, and positioning Malaysia as a leader in higher education.
- ...be able to streamline policies and governance, reducing administrative complexities, providing clearer educational priorities, and supporting coordinated efforts across HLIs.
- ...have strengthened oversight of the RDICE ecosystem, empowering it to achieve measurable impacts on socioeconomic development, planetary health and sustainability, supported by robust monitoring of key performance indicators and an integrated approach to TVET governance.
- ...be able to strengthen financial sustainability through the transformation of the PTPTN business model.

**In return, the Ministry of Higher Education will be asked to lead by example, streamline policies and governance incorporating diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), and ensure equitable funding distribution. It should promote collaboration, adopt a whole-of-nation approach, engage stakeholders, monitor outcomes, drive internationalisation, and align reforms with national priorities. Officers must remain responsive and outcome-focused and act as role models for transformative changes.**

policy fragmentation, and ensuring cohesive development of the higher education sector and the nation.

- ... gain from enhanced global positioning through a strengthened Malaysian higher education system. As a globally trusted brand, it enhances the nation's reputation, attracts international collaborations, and drives inbound investments in research, talent, and economic development.

**In return, the government will be asked to strengthen policy frameworks, ensure sustainable funding, and support inclusive collaboration among stakeholders. It must commit to enhancing governance, prioritising equitable access to education, and driving initiatives that align higher education outcomes with national priorities. By championing innovation and inclusivity, the government must support ongoing advancements in the higher education sector.**

Exhibit 13: 10 Shifts



To achieve this new higher education focus, the MHEB outlines 10 strategic shifts designed to build humanity-centric purpose-driven nation builders for a harmonious, prosperous, advanced, and sustainable future. These shifts emphasise a comprehensive transformation of the higher education system to meet global and national demands while fostering sustainability and inclusivity.

The first shift prioritises humanity-centric, entrepreneurial, and adaptive learners, preparing graduates to thrive in an ever-changing interconnected world. The second shift focuses on purpose-driven, high-performance talent, ensuring a workforce equipped with the skills and mindset needed for evolving industries. The third shift emphasises advanced TVET competency, strengthening technical expertise and industry readiness for complex and specialised sectors. Financial sustainability, addressed in the fourth shift, promotes the efficient use of resources and the long-term resilience of institutions.

The fifth shift focuses on agile and resilient governance, enhancing institutional adaptability and strategic decision-making. The sixth shift emphasises Responsible RDICE, driving ethical, impactful research and innovation.

The seventh shift highlights global prominence, strengthening Malaysia's international standing. The eighth shift prioritises flexible education and lifelong learning, ensuring accessibility and continuous skill development for diverse learners. The ninth shift addresses planetary health and sustainability, integrating environmental and social consciousness into education. Finally, the tenth shift ensures responsive and dynamic delivery, emphasising adaptability in teaching, learning, and institutional operations to meet evolving needs. Together, these shifts lay the foundation for a transformative higher education ecosystem for Malaysia.



## Shift 1

### Humanity-centric, entrepreneurial and adaptive learners

#### Why does it matter?

The nation needs effective members of society that starts with a good human being. It is the core business of the higher education institutions to ensure this is achieved. As primary contributors to the development of talents, higher education institutions are

entrusted to nurture adaptable, ethical, and resilient individuals who are able to address national and global challenges in post-normal times.

#### What will success look like?

Learners will embody humanity-centric, innovative, entrepreneurial, and adaptive skills and be future-ready to drive lifelong and life-wide learning. They will be ethically grounded with spiritual strength and resilience to thrive with integrity and purpose. Equipped with soft, sharp, and smart skills, these humanity-centric, entrepreneurial and adaptive learners will

leverage AI and emerging technologies, systems thinking, and interdisciplinary approaches to address challenges and real-world problems making an impact and becoming enablers for sustainable nation-building and economic growth. These learners are global players with internalised values to support national identity and unity.

#### How will we achieve this?

To achieve these outcomes, the Ministry and HLIs will focus on developing more holistic and integrated curricula and enhancing the ecosystem for learner development. Key initiatives include:

- **Enhancing curriculum for humanity-centric, ethical, inclusive, and future-ready learners** by embedding values, diversity, equity and inclusion, ethics, research and problem-solving skills, systems thinking, AI and emerging technologies and focusing on learner empowerment, intercultural competencies to make them unity-enabling and future ready nation builders.
- **Creating an innovative, entrepreneurial, and sustainable learning framework** by offering personalized learning pathways, supporting lifelong and life-wide learning through modular programmes, fostering innovation with entrepreneurial projects, enhancing experiential learning, building sustainable partnerships, and strengthening entrepreneurial ecosystems with mentorship and shared resources/venture funds for start up.
- **Strengthening learning infrastructure and outcome-driven support systems** by applying Universal Design for inclusivity, upgrading digital infrastructure for learning, establishing mental health support system, ensuring equitable access for under-represented learners, and developing necessary policies and regulations.



## Shift 2

### Purpose-driven high-performance talent

#### Why does it matter?

Aligned to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), purpose-driven high-performance talent ensures a competent, committed and values-aligned HLI workforce that harmonises excellence with the purpose of HE. This fosters greater job fulfilment, compliance to the highest ethical standards, and resilience in the face of adversity that enables HLIs to make a positive impact on both local and global communities.

Purpose-Driven talent across diverse roles - academics (educators, researchers, industry practitioners, leaders), administrators and support staff will unite HLIs towards a shared mission of excellence, collective resilience and global competitiveness. Evidence-informed holistic talent governance and management as well as robust leadership succession planning will help foster a high-performing HLI workforce that are adept and agile in addressing the fast-evolving challenges in post-normal times.

#### What will success look like?

As core drivers of the Malaysian Higher Education ecosystem, HLI talent will serve the collective purpose of “One Higher Education” and develop a stronger sense of belonging. By creating an environment that promotes holistic competency-relevant, values-internalised, and purpose-driven flexible and differentiated professional development pathways, every individual will have the opportunity to realise their full potential. Nobody will be left behind. Led by MOHE, the democratisation of access to the refined talent development frameworks and continuous professional development opportunities will enable all HLIs to create a conducive environment that promotes mission-oriented staff who are able to lead innovations and the unbundling of the higher education system.

Meanwhile, the Higher Education Leadership Academy (AKEPT) will spearhead the development of leadership talent across HLIs, aligning

with each institution’s unique DNA, the evolving priorities of higher education, and the broader demands of national and global contexts.

By facilitating greater evidence-informed staff talent management, staff mobility, and sharing of resources between HLIs, critical national talent gaps and disparities between institutions across the HE landscape will be markedly reduced. Despite the uncertainties of a post-normal future, the renewed focus on inclusivity, diversity, equity, mutual respect, and integrity will ensure that HLI talent is able to achieve high levels of well-being and job fulfilment. The impact of the enculturation of purpose-driven high-performance talent is manifested through their impact on local and global knowledge creation and translation, socio-economic transformation, sustainable development, and planetary health.

#### How will we achieve this?

The Ministry of Higher Education is committed to nurturing purpose-driven high-performance talent within HLI, empowered by a dynamic framework and a supportive ecosystem. By championing lifelong and life-wide learning opportunities, this vision will prepare HLI leaders and talent to excel in an ever-evolving global landscape. This mission is anchored in three core strategies, each driving impactful initiatives:

- Enhancing integrated talent management and leadership sustainability:** Institutionalising a competency-relevant, values-internalised and purpose-driven talent framework with relevant learning and development opportunities to produce leaders with enhanced capabilities and strengthen succession planning.
- Empowering talent governance and enhancing talent well-being:** Mainstreaming evidence-informed approaches to talent governance, balanced and equitable performance indicators and remuneration, and promoting mental, physical, economic, and emotional health and well-being to boost job fulfilment and impact.
- Fostering a culture of diversity, equity, inclusivity and integrity:** Achieving collective impact by building trust, embracing differences, enhancing collaboration, and safeguarding reputation amongst purpose-driven high-performance talent.



## Shift 3 Advanced TVET competency

### Why does it matter?

Malaysia is poised to achieve top 12 ranking in the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) within 10 years as outlined in the Madani Economy: Empowering People framework. In a globalised economy, countries and industries compete based on the skills and expertise of their workforce. Since TVET is offered by multiple ministries and institutions, Majlis Pendidikan dan Latihan Teknikal dan Vokasional Negara (MTVET) has formulated a National TVET policy framework to ensure coordination at national level.

Malaysia will require competency-based education, aligned with industry needs, ensures employability, addressing global talent shortages and supporting lifelong learning. In line with SDG 4: Quality Education, TVET promotes equitable access to quality education and fosters foundational and advanced competencies essential for nation contribution. Advanced TVET competency plays a pivotal role in equipping learners with technical, analytical and leadership competencies for the evolving workforce.

### What will success look like?

Industries gain access to a pipeline of job-ready talent with skills aligned to evolving needs, addressing critical skills gaps and boosting productivity. Ultimately, it strengthens economic contributions, attracts investments, and builds trust, positioning industries for sustainable growth in a rapidly changing global market.

The Ministry through its HLIs, polytechnics, and community colleges will be developing highly sought after TVET graduates by the industry in recognition of the graduates' competency, attributes, and promotes individual opportunities for career development. With strong industry partnerships, the enrolment in TVET programmes will expand significantly across ministries. Unbundling various TVET Programmes will result in a flexible learning experience.

### How will we achieve this?

To achieve these outcomes, the Ministry will focus on:

- Integrated governance and industry collaboration:** Developing an integrated governance framework through the enactment of the Malaysia Polytechnic Act. Enhancing industry partnerships to align TVET education with workforce needs and future industry demands. Coordinating across institutions ensures curriculum relevance, drives innovation, and strengthens the symbiotic relationship between industry and TVET, promoting sustainable economic growth.
- Recognition, data-driven insights, and competitive salaries:** Adopting automated data systems and a dedicated TVET Chamber of Commerce/Craftsmanship Chamber to refine programme effectiveness and ensure fair wages for TVET graduates. Competitive salaries, performance monitoring, and recognition elevate TVET's appeal and retain skilled professionals for national growth.
- Flexible, relevant, and future-ready programmes:** Enhancing TVET programmes by integrating flexible learning pathways, micro credentials, emerging technologies, and industry-aligned hybrid mode education. This equips learners with adaptable, future-ready skills while fostering lifelong learning and career progression in a dynamic global economy. Reskilling and upskilling will ensure graduates with adaptive mode to upgrade their technical skills. The introduction of Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) Skills (APEL S) as a recognition of prior learning, along with the enhancement of pathways for Malaysian Skills Certification (Sijil Kemahiran Malaysia, SKM) graduates, will create a greater impact.



## Shift 4 Financial sustainability

### Why does it matter?

Financial sustainability allows HLIs to maintain excellence in teaching, research, innovation, and services over the long term, ensuring they can fulfil their role as key contributors to societal and economic progress. A financially sustainable higher education system promotes self-reliance, reducing over-dependence on government support and enabling institutions to adapt effectively to fluctuating funding landscapes.

With secure finances, HLIs can operate efficiently, invest in infrastructure and innovation, and remain adaptable in post-normal economic conditions, ensuring they thrive amid global uncertainties. Financial sustainability enables HLIs to address social and educational gaps by providing robust financial aid and support programmes, ensuring higher education remains accessible and affordable for all segments of society.

### What will success look like?

Public and private HLIs will leverage diverse funding sources to continuously enhance the quality of their programmes while adopting more innovative and efficient resource management practices. They will strengthen financial governance, prioritising accountability and transparency to build stakeholder trust. Advanced business models will drive improvements in student loan initiatives, ensuring more effective and equitable financial support.

Targeted assistance will make enrollment more affordable and accessible, particularly for socio-economically disadvantaged students, fostering inclusivity. Furthermore, the Government will maintain substantial investment in higher education, allocating a significant portion of the national budget and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to ensure the system's long-term resilience and progress.

### How will we achieve this?

To achieve these outcomes the Ministry will adopt a multifaceted approach to support HLIs in achieving financial sustainability. Key initiatives include:

- Reviewing sources and models of development financing** to support the construction and upgrading of HLI infrastructure, strengthening universities' financial sustainability without increasing the ministry's financial burden, underpinned by sound governance and professional fund management.
- Transforming the PTPN business model** to assess progressive and purpose-driven financing approaches aimed at strengthening financial sustainability through the diversification of funding sources, allocation mechanisms, and repayment efficiency. This approach will also enhance the flexibility of higher education financing.
- Encouraging the mobilisation of endowment and Waqf funds and seeking long-term government funding commitments.** The Ministry will provide matching grants during the initial fundraising phase to encourage HLIs to build sustainable endowment and Waqf funds. In addition, the ministry will seek permanent allocations based on operating expenditure or GDP to support the financial sustainability of higher education.



## Shift 5

### Agile and resilient governance

#### Why does it matter?

Strengthening the governance of HLLs is crucial in addressing challenges arising from political changes and the COVID-19 pandemic. These events exposed vulnerabilities in current governance structures, highlighting the need for resilience, adaptability, and alignment with societal needs. Frequent leadership changes within the Ministry disrupted continuity and clarity, hindering the implementation of strategic plans. However, these changes also created opportunities for innovation, fresh perspectives, and the potential to realign priorities. A robust and flexible governance framework is essential to harness these

opportunities, ensuring HLLs maintain stability and effectively adapt to evolving demands. Having separate acts for public and private HLLs creates governance and equity disparities, as public institutions face stricter government control, while private ones prioritise autonomy and revenue. This duality leads to variation in student rights, inconsistent practices, and divergent priorities. A unified legal framework could address these gaps, promoting fairness, collaboration, and alignment with Malaysia's higher education goals.

#### What will success look like?

A harmonised ecosystem and governance recognises diversity of HLLs. It allows greater autonomy and empowerment for HLLs to foster innovation, adaptability, and agility to transform into high-performance institutions.

HLLs are led by transformational leaders who are empowered to align institutional objectives with national priorities. Increased collaborative efforts are established among HLLs, communities, industries, and international partners.

An inclusive governance framework (IGF) fosters enhanced stakeholder engagement, addressing different expectations, including student and staff well-being, while integrating diverse perspectives to develop equitable policies and drive effective solutions.

A strengthened accountability mechanism ensures transparency and trust while preserving flexibility for sustainable growth.

#### How will we achieve this?

To achieve these outcomes, the Ministry will focus on:

- **Develop a unifying One Higher Education Act (OHEA)** to integrate and harmonise existing legislation related to higher education.
- **Establishing National Education Council or *Majlis Pendidikan Negara (MPN)*** to ensure seamless continuity and cohesion between the education and higher education sectors.
- **Revise the governance and organisational structure** to support the implementation of the OHEA and the establishment of the MPN.



## Shift 6 Responsible RDICE

### Why does it matter?

Responsible Research, Development, Innovation, Commercialisation, and Economy (RDICE), is crucial for fostering impactful sustainable growth and enhancing Malaysia's global competitiveness. By prioritising national sovereignty, this approach reduces reliance on foreign resources and bolsters homegrown innovations, ultimately leading to a more resilient economy. To truly integrate planetary health and sustainability within the RDI ecosystem, Malaysia must align its economic ambitions with environmental, social, and governance objectives and advance the SDGs.

This comprehensive strategy is designed to nurture high-quality job providers and cultivate a skilled workforce, significantly elevating Malaysia's position in the Global Innovation Index (GII). By embracing Responsible RDICE, through Academia Research Fund (AReF), HLIs play an important role in generating knowledge and tackling societal challenges and delivering solutions that improve the quality of life for Malaysians. Malaysia must evolve in its approach to RDI, ensuring that these principles are embedded in its economic framework to drive transformative progress.

### What will success look like?

A well-formulated, integrated and consolidated AReF mechanism will create fertile grounds in facilitating mission-oriented RDICE and cross-sector collaboration. This is to ensure a seamless transition from ideation to innovation to meet market or communities' needs as well as nurturing and retaining an empowered, diverse and inclusive talent pool.

To anchor such an ecosystem, the "responsible" component in RDICE is to enforce ethical practices of its stakeholders, as well as to inculcate sustainable and responsible use of resources and expertise in addressing mission-oriented RDI for the prosperity of the planet and people. Such a seamless, well-integrated system will strengthen cross-border collaborations, technology transfer, resource sharing, intellectual protection, market penetration, and eventually economic growth.

### How will we achieve this?

To achieve these outcomes, this Shift will focus on establishing a comprehensive ecosystem aligned with mission-oriented RDICE principles, fostering ethical research practices, driving socioeconomic growth, and enhancing stakeholder connections within the quintuple helix. Key strategies include:

- **Building a robust ecosystem integrating AReF** that promotes mission-oriented RDI while advancing global competitiveness and innovation that prioritises ethical conduct in research and sustainable practices. AReF also allocates grants for community engagement, fostering collaborative ideation processes.
- **Implementing incentive and support mechanisms** that catalyse industry-energised RDICE initiatives and projects
- **Optimising the development of RDICE** talents and leaders to foster a culture of impactful innovation via commercialisation of ideas.

These actions aim to cultivate a thriving environment for research and innovation, ultimately driving national progress and global standing.



## Shift 7 Global prominence

### Why does it matter?

The rapidly evolving global higher education landscape, driven by increased talent mobility, technological advancements, and intensified competition, underscores Malaysia's ambition to transition from a regional to a global educational hub.

By positioning itself as a center for quality education and global talent development, Malaysia aims to attract diverse

students, drive innovation, and produce graduates equipped for global leadership. This transformation will enhance Malaysia's international standing, contribute to economic growth, promote educational diplomacy, and establish the country as a key player in the global higher education arena.

### What will success look like?

Malaysia will be globally recognised as a hub for higher education defined by academic excellence, inclusivity, and reliability. International student enrollment from diverse nationalities, supported by more strategic immigration policies and a world-class learning experience will empower graduates from Malaysian higher learning institutions (HLIs) to emerge as influential global leaders.

HLIs will excel in impactful research and partnerships with prestigious international institutions, strengthening their reputation for quality and innovation. Robust quality assurance practices will elevate the global standing of Malaysia's higher education system, ensuring its credibility as a trusted and culturally rich education provider. Strong alumni networks will further enhance Malaysia's influence in the global knowledge economy.

### How will we achieve this?

To achieve these outcomes, the Ministry will focus on:

- Strengthening institutional quality and global recognition** by establishing robust accountability metrics and aligning accreditation standards with global benchmarks to ensure Malaysia's higher education institutions remain credible, attain mutual recognitions and continue to be competitive internationally.
- Building strategic global partnerships for educational diplomacy** by expanding academic collaborations, leadership programmes, and prestigious scholarships to attract top international talent and foster impactful international networks.
- Creating a world-class learner experience** by developing inclusive and multicultural learning environments, streamlining administrative processes, and enhancing credit transfer opportunities to support seamless global education pathways.



## Shift 8

### Flexible education and lifelong learning

#### Why does it matter?

The dynamic nature of technological advancements and disruptive events necessitates a flexible and lifelong approach to education. Malaysia's workforce must continuously adapt to emerging challenges, acquire new skills, and reskill to remain competitive in a rapidly evolving global economy. Modern learners increasingly seek personalised learning experiences that align with their individual goals and aspirations. The demand for flexible education

is growing, with alternative credentials becoming highly valuable for both personal and professional development. Additionally, the trend of unbundling education through the offering of modular and tailored learning experiences is gaining momentum. Flexible Education and Lifelong Learning (LLL) empower learners to access education that meets their specific needs, enhancing national resilience and agility in the face of disruptions.

#### What will success look like?

Flexible education and lifelong learning will be fully integrated into Malaysia's higher education system. There will be seamless pathways connecting formal, non-formal, and informal learning, enabling individuals to access and combine various credentials to achieve their personal and professional goals. Education will be

accessible, flexible, and supported by innovative and disruptive technologies, fostering inclusivity and relevance across all sectors of society. Malaysia's institutions will be globally recognised as leaders in delivering high-quality, flexible education that meets both local and international workforce demands.

#### How will we achieve this?

To achieve these outcomes, the Ministry will focus on:

- **Streamlining unbundling processes** that minimise bureaucratic barriers while upholding rigorous quality assurance, enabling the seamless recognition of diverse learning experiences and pathways.
- **Establishing HLIs as central, sustained sources for lifelong learning** by developing and delivering innovative educational programmes, fostering continuous skill development, and promoting inclusive access to learning at all stages of life.
- **Incentivising flexible education efforts** by providing targeted support to HLIs and educators for creating high-quality, innovative learning programmes. Nurture the adoption and readiness of emerging technologies in an ethically responsible manner, ensuring alignment with evolving workforce and learner needs.



## Shift 9 Planetary health and sustainability

### Why does it matter?

Malaysia is ranked 12th among the world's megabiodiverse countries, home to a rich variety of flora and fauna. However, its natural biodiversity, or khazanah, is under threat, with six out of nine planetary boundaries already breached. This has major adverse impacts on the health of the people, the productivity of the workforce and the economic outlook of many sectors that are depended on natural environment and resources of the nation.

Continuous deterioration of the planetary health boundaries will have destabilising impacts on the socioeconomic and the social fabric of the nation. The higher education sectors need to make major transformative changes to incorporate planetary health and sustainability in all the leaderships, capability development, education, research and the Convention's Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) programmes.

### What will success look like?

The Malaysian higher education sector will attract, develop and retain talents that have sound knowledge in planetary health, sustainability by means of SDG and ESG. This will enable the HLIs to create a conducive and supportive environment for professional development that will enable the people, the workforce, and businesses to adhere to global planet-friendly businesses and sustainable best practices. This contribution will improve the global positioning of Malaysian HLIs and will reinforce Malaysia's aspiration to become a global hub for planetary health and sustainable education and research.

Strong planetary-friendly workforce and talent will enhance the RDICE ecosystem; nurture planet-friendly industrial clusters; and enable Malaysian industries to move up the global innovation and competitiveness value chain. The reversal of planetary boundary trends, alongside progress in sustainability-focused policies and initiatives, will demonstrate the tangible impacts of this transformation to natural khazanah of the country and the health of the rakyat.

### How will we achieve this?

To achieve these outcomes, the Ministry will focus on:

- **Transforming HLI leadership for sustainability and planetary health** emphasising on cultivating sustainability-integrated leadership within HLIs to foster responsible stewardship, management and inspire a culture of planetary health and sustainability across campus communities.
- **Mainstreaming planetary health and sustainability in curriculum.** This strategy integrates sustainability and planetary health principles across all programmes, working closely with industry and community to provide experiential learning for learners in reducing breaches in planetary health boundaries. Multidisciplinary curriculum transformation is critical for nurturing planet-friendly talent; and transitioning current industrial value chain and jobs to be planet-friendly.
- **Incorporating planetary health and sustainability into the national agenda for higher education** to nurture talent of the future and research initiatives that contribute to the sustainable agenda of the nation and produce sustainability-focused learners through the Planetary Health and Sustainability Higher Education Playbook.
- **Creating planet-friendly environment and ecosystem** that promotes a sustainable campus by nurturing eco-conscious values and implementing impactful practices that promote and advance planetary health and sustainability education and knowledge among current and future generations.



## Shift 10

### Responsive and dynamic delivery

#### Why does it matter?

The Responsive and Dynamic Delivery shift is crucial for ensuring Malaysia's higher education system can swiftly adapt to global and local challenges. It addresses issues such as ministerial transitions, institutional silos, and the need for more data-driven decision-making. Additionally, it promotes equitable access to education, especially for marginalised groups like Persons with Disabilities (PWD) and indigenous communities.

By fostering collaboration, innovation, and flexibility, this shift aligns with the goals of the MHEB 2026-2035 and the evolving needs of learners, institutions, and society. The MHEB 2026-2035 will not succeed without effective implementation, as well as commitment and collaboration across the Ministry, HLIs, the academic community, and relevant stakeholders.

#### What will success look like?

Success in implementing this shift will result in a streamlined and cohesive higher education ecosystem that is agile, inclusive, and globally competitive. Governance structures such as the National Education Council or *Majlis Pendidikan Negara* (MPN) will ensure effective policy alignment and seamless implementation of initiatives across ministries and institutions. HLIs will achieve enhanced excellence through redesigned Institutional Transformation Programmes (ITP) and robust rating systems, driving socio-economic impact and global competitiveness.

Technological advancements, including the integration of AI and emerging technologies, will modernise digital infrastructure, enabling data-driven decision-making and efficient service delivery. Inclusivity will be significantly improved, with higher enrolment, retention, and completion rates among marginalised groups, supported by specialised facilities like Centres of Excellence for PWD. A unified framework, underpinned by harmonised standards and centralised processes, will foster collaboration, reduce silos, and ensure consistent quality across institutions, positioning Malaysia as a leader in innovative, inclusive, and adaptive higher education.

#### How will we achieve this?

To achieve these outcomes, the Ministry will focus on:

- Enhancing governance and institutional excellence through the establishment of the MPN**, chaired by the Prime Minister, which will provide strategic oversight and align policies across ministries. Delivery units at HLIs will ensure the effective implementation of MHEB 2026-2035 initiatives, while redesigned ITP will be geared towards advancing national objectives, fostering excellence, and strengthening the global competitiveness of Malaysia's higher education sector.
- Leveraging technology, including AI and data-driven decision-making**, alongside upgraded digital infrastructure and a centralised data warehouse, will modernise the education system, enhance accessibility, streamline services, and support evidence-based policies to address evolving challenges.
- Promoting inclusivity and accessibility** through the establishment of Centres of Excellence for PWD, equitable admission pathways, tailored support, and stronger DEI policies will create an inclusive, adaptable higher education system that empowers marginalised groups, enhances retention, and enables all learners to thrive and contribute to society.

# INITIATIVE IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

The 10-year transformation of Malaysia's higher education system under the MHEB 2026–2035 is strategically structured and sequenced across three waves to ensure effective implementation, sustained progress, and to prevent system overload and execution fatigue. The Ministry has deliberately phased the strategies and initiatives of the 10 Shifts across these waves, ensuring that each builds upon the previous one in alignment with the system's evolving capacity, capabilities, and the readiness of higher learning institutions (HLIs).

These waves have been aligned with that of the MHEB:

- 2026-2028: Ignite
- 2029–2031: Propel
- 2032–2035: Elevate

**Wave 1 (2026-2028): Ignite** focuses on building foundational frameworks and piloting key initiatives. It emphasises embedding ethical and values-internalised learning, enhancing mental health and diversity frameworks, and fostering governance through initiatives like the One Higher Education Act (OHEA). TVET programmes will establish foundational governance, industry-aligned certification systems, and flexible learning pathways. Financial sustainability will be strengthened through innovative funding models, zakat, and Waqf to support education financing. Responsible RDICE initiatives will consolidate funding mechanisms and prioritise ethical research, while global prominence efforts will lay the groundwork for international collaborations and benchmarking. Flexible education and sustainability-focused curricula will ensure inclusivity and prepare institutions for further transformation.

**Wave 2 (2029–2031): Propel** accelerates structural reforms to drive innovation and global competitiveness. Governance will be strengthened through full implementation of the OHEA and enhanced talent frameworks for leadership. Industry and community engagement will expand, fostering partnerships to align education with market needs. Flexible and inclusive education will be scaled through modular courses, micro-credentials, and AI-driven learning tools. Sustainability initiatives will integrate eco-friendly practices across all educational, research, and campus activities. Malaysia's global prominence will grow through transnational education programmes, streamlined international student services, and impactful research collaborations in climate change and sustainability.

**Wave 3 (2032–2035): Elevate** consolidates reforms to position Malaysia as a global leader in higher education. Institutions will achieve international recognition for research excellence and sustainability leadership. Financial sustainability will be institutionalised through robust funding models and endowments. Lifelong learning pathways will be fully established, providing flexible education for diverse demographics, including marginalised communities. Data-driven decision-making and inclusivity will be prioritised to improve accessibility and completion rates for under-represented groups, such as Persons with Disabilities (PWD) and Orang Asli. By the end of the transformation, Malaysia's higher education system will be globally competitive, inclusive, financially sustainable, and aligned with the needs of a rapidly evolving world, producing adaptive, ethical graduates ready to address future challenges.

# WAVE 1 2026-2028

## IGNITE

### SHIFT 1 – Humanity-centric, entrepreneurial and adaptive learners

- Embed ethics and values in education: Enhance ethical modules and promote responsible technology use among learners.
- Strengthen experiential and entrepreneurial learning: Expand work-based projects, revise Integrated Cumulative Grade Point Average (iCGPA), and adopt Entrepreneurship Integrated Education (EIE) framework.
- Promote inclusivity and mental well-being: Establish Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and National Higher Education Mental Health frameworks, and enhance personalised support systems.
- Ensure accessible and sustainable infrastructure: Audit campus readiness to support inclusive, innovative, and sustainable learning environments.

### SHIFT 2 – Purpose-driven high-performance talent

- Align HLIs with One Higher Education Act (OHEA) mission: Launch campaigns, cascade purpose, and foster stakeholder engagement from leadership levels.
- Strengthen talent and performance frameworks: Establish Values-internalised and Purpose-Driven High-Performance Talent Framework (Orange Playbook updates), establish databases, and create holistic performance indicators.
- Embed ethics and integrity in governance: Develop ethics frameworks, training, and establish integrity-focused committees at various levels.
- Promote inclusive leadership: Address barriers for women, and educate on unconscious bias in processes and interactions.

### SHIFT 3 – Advanced technical and vocational education and training (TVET) competency

- Establish robust governance and legislative frameworks: Develop TVET Act, National Skills Certification Framework (NSCF), and industry-aligned standards.
- Foster strong industry partnerships: Co-create programmes, strengthen collaborations, and align certifications with industry needs.
- Enhance flexible learning pathways: Develop Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) frameworks and systems for seamless learner mobility.
- Leverage technology for data management: Build automated systems and blockchain frameworks for tracking TVET progression and employability.

### SHIFT 4 – Financial sustainability

- Review development financing and infrastructure upgrading to strengthen the financial sustainability of universities.
- Optimise financial sustainability through targets and endowments: Expand Waqf, zakat, and unbundling of programmes income strategies.
- Align funding with cost and efficiency frameworks: Launch cost-efficiency playbook and simulate funding formula.
- Enhance National Higher Education Fund Corporation or *Perbadanan Tabung Pendidikan Tinggi Nasional* (PTPTN)'s structure for improved accessibility: Focus on repayment rates, savings, and need-based loan distribution.

### SHIFT 5 – Agile and resilient governance

- Strengthen legal and governance frameworks: Revise key Acts, establish Ombudsman, and draft OHEA and TVET frameworks.
- Enhance leadership and governance capabilities: Appoint skilled Board of Directors (BOD), strengthen Higher Education Leadership Academy or *Akademi Kepimpinan Pendidikan Tinggi (AKEPT)* and develop future HLIs leaders.
- Implement effective performance tracking systems: Establish dashboards for real-time insights and data-driven decision-making.
- Foster inclusive and technology-driven governance: Develop IGF and required infrastructure for broader stakeholder engagement.

### SHIFT 6 – Responsible research, development, innovation, commercialisation and economy (RDICE)

- Consolidate funding and prioritise innovation: Streamline resource allocation, develop innovation hubs, and align priorities with socio-economic needs.
- Foster international and industry collaboration: Establish global consortia, launch incentive programmes, and ensure sustainable RDICE funding.
- Cultivate entrepreneurial research talent: Implement training and mentorship for unipreneurial and omnipreneurial mindsets in researchers.
- Strengthen ethical research practices: Refine guidelines, provide Malaysian Code of Responsible Conduct in Research (MCRCR)-based training, and establish monitoring systems for ethical concerns.

### SHIFT 7 – Global prominence

- Strengthen quality and accountability frameworks: Develop the Integrated Quality and Accountability Metrics (IQAM), engage stakeholders, and align evaluation metrics with global standards.
- Expand international partnerships and recognition: Establish collaborations with top universities and accreditation bodies, and pilot credit transfers.
- Promote global inclusivity and multiculturalism: Develop inclusive learning frameworks and streamline visa processes for international students.
- Enhance global mobility and leadership: Launch flagship scholarships, leadership programmes, and transnational education in target regions.

### SHIFT 8 – Flexible education and lifelong learning

- Enhance flexible and innovative education: Develop a playbook, integrate micro-credentials, and adopt the 4-Quadrant Model.
- Ensure quality and standards: Establish Public-Private university consortiums and implement mutual recognition policies with APEL pathways.
- Foster regional and cultural relevance: Build partnerships for learning materials tailored to regional and cultural contexts.
- Advance educator capabilities in technology: Upskill educators in AI, Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR), and incentivise unbundled educational resource development.

### SHIFT 9 – Planetary health and sustainability

- Embed sustainability in leadership and governance: Develop training modules, competency criteria, and policies for sustainability in HLIs.
- Advance sustainability-focused education: Evaluate curricula, launch interdisciplinary courses, and foster industry-community collaboration.
- Promote sustainability and planetary health Research and Development (R&D): Allocate special grants and launch an HLI planetary health and sustainability playbook.
- Transition towards sustainable campuses: Conduct environmental audits and develop planet-friendly, sustainable campus roadmaps.

### SHIFT 10 – Responsive and dynamic delivery

- Strengthen governance and coordination; enhance Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) Delivery Units and its coordination with HLI Delivery Units.
- Implement robust monitoring and reporting mechanisms: Develop a national dashboard, publish annual reports, and codify updated playbooks.
- Enhance data-driven decision-making: Review digital facilities, create a data warehouse, and optimise institutional rating systems.
- Promote inclusivity and accessibility: Assess HLI readiness for Persons With Disabilities (PWD) and address barriers for marginalised communities' education success.

# WAVE 2

## 2029-2031

# PROPEL

### SHIFT 1 – Humanity-centric, entrepreneurial and adaptive learners

- Embed values and experiential learning: Institutionalise values-internalised education, interdisciplinary programmes, and revised iCGPA frameworks in HLIs.
- Foster innovation and entrepreneurship: Enhance ecosystems, secure funding, and promote real-world technological fluency.
- Strengthen inclusivity and mental well-being: Institutionalise DEI initiatives and adopt AI-driven mental health support tools.
- Upgrade infrastructure and support systems: Modernise learning facilities and expand inclusive, student-focused support mechanisms.

### SHIFT 2 – Purpose-driven high -performance talent

- Strengthen mission alignment and talent development: Launch cross-HLIs Vice-Chancellor (VC) cascade, Talent Opinion Survey, and high-performance talent frameworks.
- Promote well-being and work-life balance: Implement HLI health assessments, flexible schedules, and wellness campaigns across institutions.
- Enhance inclusivity and ethics: Improve inclusivity policies, increase women leadership roles, and launch ethics training initiatives.
- Foster talent mobility and performance tracking: Publish talent profiles, promote resource mobility, and implement holistic talent performance indicators.

### SHIFT 3 – Advanced technical and vocational education and training (TVET) competency

- Strengthen governance and operational integration: Develop guidelines, monitoring mechanisms, and ensure smooth system and institutional reforms.
- Enhance TVET relevance and visibility: Convert 30% of programmes to Code of Practice for TVET Programme Accreditation (COPTPA), deepen industry engagement, and advisory boards.
- Expand flexible and accessible learning pathways: Integrate micro-credentials, standardise certifications, and launch a centralised portal for learners.
- Adopt innovative credentialing systems: Institutionalise blockchain tracking for TVET certifications and align systems with labour market needs.

### SHIFT 4 – Financial sustainability

- Strengthen financing and investment strategies: Propose development financing and infrastructure upgrading to strengthen the financial sustainability of universities without placing an additional financial burden on the Ministry.
- Implement a rational financing framework: Design and monitor the new funding formula.
- Enhance financial sustainability initiatives: Improve repayment rates and track increased savings through National Education Savings Scheme or Skim Simpanan Pendidikan Nasional (SSPN) effectiveness assessments.
- Facilitate capacity building and iterative refinements: Conduct training, monitor implementation, and refine processes based on impact assessments.

### SHIFT 5 – Agile and resilient governance

- Establish robust legislative and governance frameworks: Draft and implement OHEA, TVET Act, and National Education Council or *Majlis Pendidikan Negara* (MPN) to ensure seamless continuity and cohesion between the Education and Higher Education sectors.
- Strengthen leadership and inclusivity: Appoint transformational leaders, evaluate talent pools, and implement Inclusivity in IGF.
- Implement and evaluate funding and structural reforms: Approve and monitor funding formula and MOHE structural changes.
- Enhance accountability and stakeholder engagement: Monitor Ombudsman impact, Board Effectiveness Assessment (BEA) implementation, and launch a stakeholder engagement platform.

### SHIFT 6 – Responsible research, development, innovation, commercialisation and economy (RDICE)

- Evaluate and optimise funding mechanisms: Assess resource allocation, innovation hub impact, and refine the funding model accordingly.
- Strengthen global research collaborations: Expand partnerships, secure funding, and promote Malaysia's research capabilities internationally.
- Enhance academia-industry engagement: Expand industry incentives, foster collaboration, and showcase successful projects to attract investment.
- Refine talent and ethical frameworks: Adjust talent programmes, update ethical guidelines, and enhance compliance and enforcement systems.

### SHIFT 7 – Global prominence

- Implement and monitor quality metrics: Fully implement IQAM, conduct audits, and secure international accreditation recognitions for HLIs.
- Enhance global partnerships and programmes: Expand dual-degree initiatives, faculty exchanges, and transnational education collaborations.
- Foster inclusivity and global engagement: Increase cultural exchange participation, scholarship diversity, and student satisfaction in inclusive environments.
- Boost research and employability outcomes: Showcase high-impact research and grow graduate employment in multinational corporations.

### SHIFT 8 – Flexible education and lifelong learning

- Enhance global alignment and benchmarking: Expand mutual recognition and pilot APEL for skills-based accreditation in institutions.
- Strengthen HLI-industry collaboration: Incentivise co-created programmes to meet regional and global workforce demands.
- Advance educational technology adoption: Implement Edtech innovation incentives to empower impactful content creation by educators.
- Scale emerging technology training: Develop and expand training modules to integrate emerging technologies in education delivery.

### SHIFT 9 – Planetary health and sustainability

- Build leadership for sustainability: Train leaders in decision-making and evaluate outcomes based on societal and environmental impact.
- Institutionalise sustainability principles: Embed planetary health values into policies, programmes, courses, and pedagogical approaches.
- Strengthen research and innovation networks: Develop interdisciplinary hubs and increase R&D grants for sustainability-focused initiatives.
- Advance sustainable campus initiatives: Implement planet-friendly roadmaps and measure performance against Sustainable Developmental Goals (SDG), Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG), and planetary health metrics.

### SHIFT 10 – Responsive and dynamic delivery

- Strengthen governance and oversight: Solve interministerial issues, review delivery units, and conduct annual and midterm MHEB implementation evaluations.
- Enhance institutional transformation: Launch redesigned ITPs, new playbooks, and monitor achievement of rating systems and outcomes.
- Leverage emerging technologies: Improve digital services, use AI and data warehouses, and upgrade student admission platforms.
- Promote inclusivity and accessibility: Enhance facilities for PWD, establish Centres of Excellence, and support marginalised communities.

# WAVE 3

## 2032-2035

# ELEVATE

### SHIFT 1 – Humanity-centric, entrepreneurial and adaptive learners

- Foster impactful collaborations: Build inter-institutional partnerships and scale globally with flagship projects aligned to SDGs.
- Advance innovative and sustainable learning: Launch revised iCGPA frameworks and promote excellence in entrepreneurial and sustainable initiatives.
- Strengthen inclusive infrastructure and support: Enhance learning facilities, mental health frameworks, and benchmark DEI best practices.
- Address future challenges proactively: Provide solutions for disruptive technologies and align with global workforce trends.

### SHIFT 2 – Purpose-driven high-performance talent

- Measure talent competency and performance: Assess benchmarks, performance indicators, and training effectiveness through impact studies.
- Ensure staff well-being: Conduct annual assessments of mental, physical, economic, and emotional health indicators.
- Strengthen trust and integrity: Monitor Talent Opinion Survey Index to gauge trust and diversity among staff.
- Enhance framework effectiveness: Evaluate and refine campaign strategies and framework impact for continuous improvement.

### SHIFT 3 – Advanced technical and vocational education and training (TVET) competency

- Strengthen governance and global positioning: Consolidate frameworks, institutionalise Chamber of Commerce (CoC) and Craftsmanship Chamber (CC), and market Malaysia as a TVET hub.

- Enhance programme delivery and partnerships: Expand advanced TVET programmes, build international collaborations, and achieve global accreditations.
- Institutionalise policies and systems for sustainability: Align with the National Skills Certification Framework and integrate flexible, holistic learning systems.
- Leverage technology for innovation: Institutionalise automated data systems and AI platforms for governance and workforce development.

### SHIFT 4 – Financial sustainability

- Strengthen governance and policy compliance: Assess proposed development financing and infrastructure upgrading for HLLs.
- Evaluate and optimise income streams: Assess endowment, Waqf, programme unbundling revenues, and tuition fee rationalisation impacts.
- Enhance funding sustainability: Improve the funding formula and reinforce PTPTN repayment initiatives.
- Promote education savings growth: Introduce and refine initiatives to ensure continuous SSPN growth and sustainability.

### SHIFT 5 – Agile and resilient governance

- Implement and monitor governance reforms: Execute OHEA, MPN, TVET Act, and assess impacts on MOHE and Act 605.
- Strengthen leadership and talent management: Evaluate transformational leadership appointments, talent pools, and the impact of leadership programmes.
- Evaluate funding and governance frameworks: Monitor the new funding formula, Ombudsman feedback, and IGF best practices.
- Leverage technology for engagement: Assess and refine infrastructure and infostructure to enhance broad stakeholder engagement.

## SHIFT 6 – Responsible research, development, innovation, commercialisation and economy (RDICE)

- Evaluate ecosystem effectiveness: Conduct a large-scale impact assessment to address socio-economic and planetary health challenges.
- Analyse global collaborations: Assess international partnerships' contributions to research, advancements, and future collaboration opportunities.
- Measure industry partnership returns: Evaluate economic benefits, job creation, and growth from industry-led research initiatives.
- Assess talent and ethical impacts: Track talent programme outcomes and analyse ethical frameworks promoting responsible research practices.

## SHIFT 7 – Global prominence

- Achieve global recognition: Align IQAM with global standards and increase top-ranked institutions in education.
- Expand international collaborations: Institutionalise partnerships, transnational programmes, and global graduate leadership initiatives.
- Lead impactful global research: Position Malaysian institutions as leaders in addressing global challenges and visibility platforms.
- Foster global inclusivity: Enhance multicultural campuses, international enrolments, and seamless global learner mobility systems.

## SHIFT 8 – Flexible education and lifelong learning

- Establish seamless credential recognition: Fully implement mutual recognition systems and standardise modular credentials across institutions.
- Enhance global positioning: Scale international partnerships and position HLIs as regional and global leaders.
- Integrate advanced technologies: Foster workforce-ready ecosystems and prepare for future EdTech X innovations.
- Recognise lifelong learning contributions: Institutionalise recognition of lifelong learning resources as valuable scholarly achievements.

## SHIFT 9 – Planetary health and sustainability

- Position Malaysia as a regional hub: Develop leadership frameworks, global benchmarking, and training for planetary health.
- Future-proof education and research: Integrate global dynamics into curriculum, R&D grants, and experiential learning programmes.
- Promote sustainable practices in HLIs: Institutionalise planet-friendly campuses, monitoring systems, and sustainability performance rankings.
- Encourage excellence in sustainability: Create incentives and recognise achievements in sustainability and planetary health initiatives.

## SHIFT 10 – Responsive and dynamic delivery

- Strengthen governance and oversight: The MOHE Delivery Unit tracks the progress of MHEB implementation through annual reviews.
- Enhance frameworks and systems: Refine quality assurance, institutional ratings, and harmonise HE regulations and policies.
- Leverage digital and technological advancements: Upgrade digital facilities, emerging technologies, and data systems for improved service delivery.
- Prioritise inclusivity and excellence: Expand PWD Centres of Excellence and improve accessibility across all HLIs.

# CONCLUSION

The MHEB 2026–2035 envisions a transformative shift in Malaysia’s higher education system to address the evolving demands of a dynamic global landscape. Rooted in inclusivity and sustainability, the blueprint focuses on empowering learners, enhancing institutional excellence, and fostering innovation across both private and public higher learning institutions. It prioritises equitable access to high-quality education aligned with international standards while integrating lifelong learning and flexible pathways to meet diverse learner needs.

The blueprint, as a living document, adapts to emerging trends and challenges to maintain its relevance and effectiveness. It emphasises partnerships with industries and communities, leveraging collaboration to ensure relevance and global competitiveness. It aims to empower learners, enhance institutional excellence, promote lifelong and life-wide learning, nurture purpose-driven talent, foster mission-oriented and impact-driven research, and ensure equitable access to quality education. This holistic approach positions Malaysia’s higher education system as a key driver of national progress and global competitiveness.

Key strategies include advancing technological adoption, embedding planetary health and sustainability in curricula, and nurturing values-internalised, future-ready talents. In short, Malaysian higher education is moving towards the development of HLIs that go beyond the traditional roles of teaching, research, and knowledge dissemination to actively engage in a multidisciplinary approach to societal transformation and innovation. These HLIs aim to address global and local challenges, foster mission-oriented innovation and entrepreneurship, encourage formation of start-ups and create a social, economic, and environmental impact on a larger scale. With a collective commitment and a whole-of-nation approach from all stakeholders, the MHEB aims to transform the higher education ecosystem into a globally recognised hub for excellence.







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