



A new take on biotechnology

THE Malaysian biotechnology industry is currently suffering a serious skills shortage. According to UCSI University's Dean of the Faculty of Applied Sciences, Associate Professor Dr Hon Wei Min, this is among the main reasons why those in the biotechnology industry need to continue their studies to strengthen the nation's human capital asset.

"Those who are currently employed in the industry will not be able to advance much in their careers if they are only degree holders. They need to invest their time in research and pursue postgraduate studies to boost their careers," she says.

"Biotechnology graduates in Malaysia usually pursue careers that are related to the sales and marketing side of the field. This includes industries related to the retailing of drugs and pharmaceutical instruments, while others choose to enter the academic sector, devoting their time to research and development," adds Dr Hon.

Having this in mind, UCSI University introduced a new, one-of-a-kind

postgraduate degree — MSc Biotechnology with Business Management. This programme is coursework-based and guarantees completion within one and a half years for full-time students, and two years for part-timers.

In addition, UCSI University also offers MSc Biotechnology which is designed to provide graduates with in-depth understanding of the concept and techniques of the specialised areas of biotechnology to meet the growing demands of the industry. This programme also trains students in laboratory management and technical skills.

The faculty also offers MSc Applied Sciences for individuals who are more interested in research and research-based work. The programme has two compulsory courses — Research Methodology for Scientists and Academic Communications. Students in this postgraduate programme would also be encouraged to present their research papers at seminars and conferences, as well as publish them in scientific journals.

BiotechCorp, an agency

under the purview of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) announced that they expect to see 112 more biotechnology companies with BioNexus status by the end of the year. Companies with BioNexus status are equivalent to a Multimedia Super Corridor status. With biofuels and materials in the biotech industry expected to grow at a rate of around 15 per cent, there would be an estimated 8,500 knowledge workers required by the year 2013.

Thus, there would be an estimated shortage of 5,000 knowledge workers in the industry by that time. UCSI University's biotechnology postgraduate programmes aims to augment the nation's capital asset for the biotechnology industry, and drive the country forward in its quest to be a developed country equipped with skilled and knowledgeable biotech workforce.

To find out more about our biotechnology postgraduate programmes visit UCSI University's open days from the 26 to 28 Feb 2010 (10am – 5pm) or visit www.ucsi.edu.my for further information.