ANNUAL REPORT
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
2013-2015
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Foreword

UPM’s School of Graduate Studies (SGS) was established on the 9th of February, 1993, and has since been responsible for coordinating all matters pertaining to postgraduate studies for the university.

As UPM continues to evolve as a global institution that is serious in its efforts to cultivate knowledge and research, most of its development has centred on and revolved around the upgrading of its postgraduate programmes. The School of Graduate Studies now offers more than 265 fields of study, offering internationally recognized academic programmes at Masters and PhD levels.

UPM currently has the highest percentage of academic staff with PhDs in Malaysia. The university’s varied programmes, as well as its facilities and conducive learning environment, have attracted students from more than 80 countries to pursue their postgraduate education here.

The School of Graduate Studies makes it its mission to be the leading graduate school in Malaysia. It aims to do this by ensuring that it provides the best programmes which prepare students for the rigours of postgraduate study and the challenges of academia. We truly hope that through the assistance provided by SGS, students will find that their educational experience at UPM is very much enhanced.

School of Graduate Studies
December 2015
1.1 School of Graduate Studies Organization Structure 2015

Since 2011, the administration of the School of Graduate Studies has grown to its current size, led by one dean and four deputy deans. The following is the organization structure and portfolio of each section in 2015.
1.2 Deans of School of Graduate Studies (2008-2015)

Prof. Datuk Paduka Dr. Aini Ideris
1st May 2001 – 30th November 2008

Prof. Dr. Hasanah Mohd Ghazali
1st December 2008 – 30th November 2011

Prof. Dr. Bujang B.K. Huat
1st December 2011 – Present
1.3 Financial Report

The figures below show the total allocation received and the breakdown of expenditure from 2013 – 2015. The expenditure does not include viva voce management costs (more than RM 1 million per year) and the costs of other activities related to SGS’s Road Map (2014 - 2020) initiatives.

**Total Allocation**

![Total Allocation Graph]

**Breakdown Expenditure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P21000 (Staff Travel &amp; Living Expenses)</td>
<td>148,226.05</td>
<td>19,421.30</td>
<td>188,557.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P23000 (Postage &amp; Other Utilities)</td>
<td>165,120.36</td>
<td>77,035.10</td>
<td>94,915.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P24000 (Rentals)</td>
<td>21,600.00</td>
<td>4,800.00</td>
<td>8,959.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P25000 ( Provision of Food &amp; Refreshments)</td>
<td>12,371.70</td>
<td>6,917.55</td>
<td>15,338.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P26000 (Spare Parts &amp; Petrol)</td>
<td>17,548.74</td>
<td>12,058.95</td>
<td>9,943.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P27000 (Supplies &amp; Others)</td>
<td>327,637.60</td>
<td>232,257.60</td>
<td>231,245.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P28000 ( Maintenance &amp; Minor Repairs)</td>
<td>186,919.20</td>
<td>98,413.70</td>
<td>59,644.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.4 Workforce

In the past three years, the number of executive staff at SGS has increased from 4 in 2013 to 6 in 2015. The number of support staff, on the other hand, has decreased from 47 in 2013 to 42 in 2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Executive Staff</th>
<th>Support Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1 Student Enrolment

UPM aims to maintain its postgraduate student enrolment at 13,000 per year. This has been achieved since 2012 and is maintained up to 2015 with an overall enrolment of 13,760. There is an increase in local student enrolment from 9611 in 2013 to 9716 in 2015.
Enrolment of Local Students by Programme


Enrolment of International Students

2.2 Nationalities of UPM’s International Students

The international postgraduate student population comprises of students from over 80 countries.

Algeria  Brunei  Canada  Egypt  Pakistan  Sierra Leone
Japan  France  Ghana  Iran  Colombia  Thailand
Nigeria  Myanmar  Korea  Malawi  Morocco  Nepal
Oman  Philippines  Turkey  United States  Vietnam
Yemen  Zimbabwe  Bahrain  Cameroon  Ethiopia
Fiji Island  Germany  India  Laos  Jordan  Kenya
Maldives  Namibia  Palestine  Mongolia  Singapore
Tanzania  Uganda  Venezuela  Uzbekistan  Syria
Botswana  China  Gambia  Indonesia  Libya
Mauritius  Saudi Arabia  Sudan  Bangladesh
Cambodia  Iraq  Mauritania  Cote D’Ivoire  Somalia
Sri Lanka  Sweden  Kazakhstan  South Africa
Liberia  Tunisia  Turkmenistan  United Arab Emirates
Russia  Mexico  Guinea  Eritrea
Up to UPM’s 39th convocation ceremony in October 2015, the School of Graduate Studies has recorded a significant increase in the number of students graduating with Masters and PhDs, from 2,094 in the year 2013 to 2,107 in 2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD Graduates</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters Graduates</td>
<td>1654</td>
<td>1598</td>
<td>1638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2094</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>2107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Graph showing the number of student graduates in the last three years]
No. of Local and International Students Graduating With PhD and Masters (by Research), 2013 – 2015

A student is awarded a distinction when the thesis has achieved work of an exceptional standard, and when all or most of the research findings have either been published or accepted for publication in citation-indexed journals, and requires minimal improvement in spelling, grammar and syntax. The following figure shows the number of students who graduated with distinction for the years 2013-2015.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pass with Distinction (2013-2015)**

**Pass with Distinction based on the Program (2013-2015)**

- PhD
  - 2013: 9
  - 2014: 8
  - 2015: 10
- Masters
  - 2013: 4
  - 2014: 2
  - 2015: 3
Graduate on Time (GOT) for PhD

Beginning 2012, MyRAII set the requirement that 25% of PhD graduates must graduate on time (GOT). This means completing their studies in 7 semesters. The figure below shows a significant increase in the percentage of GOT from 2013 to 2015.

![GOT 7 Semesters for PhD Programme (2013-2015)](image-url)
In 2015, eighty-seven percent (87%) of UPM’s local PhD students were recorded to have received financial assistance for their studies. The figure below illustrates the number of scholarship/sponsorship recipients from UPM and external agencies:

No. of Scholarship/Sponsorship Recipients from UPM and External Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Scholarship/Sponsorship</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Graduate Research Fellowship (GRF)</td>
<td>1321</td>
<td>1305</td>
<td>1202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 International Graduate Research Fellowship (iGRF)</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA)</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Special Graduate Research Allowance (SGRA)</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>729</td>
<td>735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 My Brain15 (My Master)</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>2563</td>
<td>2748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 My Brain15 (My PhD)</td>
<td>1048</td>
<td>1428</td>
<td>1621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 All Overseas Sponsorships*</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>732</td>
<td>868</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
No. of Scholarship/Sponsorship Recipients from UPM and External Agencies

[Bar chart showing the number of recipients for different categories from 2013 to 2015.]
5.1 Putra Sarjana

The Putra Sarjana learning support programme is designed to help postgraduate students at Universiti Putra Malaysia develop a range of necessary skills that they can apply in their research activities and subsequent careers, academic or otherwise. The programme comprises of seminars/workshops with experienced academics or practitioners, covering topics deemed relevant to the students’ development as researchers and scholars. It also encompasses training of skills in the cognitive, affective, psychomotor and social domains.

At the end of the programme, students are expected to have acquired the necessary knowhow and skills to be well-rounded individuals and trained academics, able to cope with high standards of communication, language competence, leadership, creative and critical thinking, as well as developing sound moral integrity and professional ethics. At the same time, students will be able to form strong networks of like-minded scholars through the social opportunities provided by such events.

The percentage of student attendance of the Putra Sarjana Seminars or Workshops shows a healthy increase from 63 percent in 2013 to 71 percent in 2015 as illustrated below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage of Students who Attended at least one Seminar / Workshop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentage of students who attended at least one seminar/workshop
5.2 Number of Financial Aid Recipients to Attend International Seminars or Overseas Research Attachments from 2013 to 2015

(a) International Seminars/Conferences

From 2013 to 2015, a total of 226 PhD students (local and international) have been given financial aid by the University to participate in international seminars/conferences. The numbers of recipients for each year is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since July 2015, the University has approved a new rate for the amount of financial aid given, from a maximum amount of RM1,500, to a rate based on the location of the seminar, as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Maximum Rate (RM)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asia (except Singapore and Brunei)</td>
<td>1000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia (including Singapore and Brunei)</td>
<td>1500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other countries</td>
<td>2000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(b) Research Attachment

On top of the financial aid to attend international seminars, the University also provides financial aid for local students (Masters and PhD) to participate in research attachments at any university outside of Malaysia. Between 2013 and 2015, a total number of 88 students (32 Masters and 56 PhD) have received funding for research attachment, as detailed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since July 2015, the financial aid rate for research attachments has also been revised and the amount given is based on the location of the host University, as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Maximum Rate (RM)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asia (except Singapore and Brunei)</td>
<td>3,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia (including Singapore and Brunei)</td>
<td>4,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other countries</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.1 MOU/MOA

Between 2013 and 2015, SGS has played an active role and has contributed significantly towards the University’s internationalization strategy. SGS has been able to build ties with many universities from all over the world through MOUs/MOAs, and has collaborated with them in various forms of activities such as student/staff exchange, research collaboration, dual/joint degrees, joint academic activities, joint training, etc. In total, eight (8) MOUs and 11 MOAs have been signed by UPM under SGS from 2013 to 2015. The MOUs/MOAs are with the following universities:

(a) List of MoUs led by SGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bil.</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Date Signed</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Khurasan Institute of Higher Education</td>
<td>19/5/2013</td>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>MoU entails: collaboration between the two universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bakhtar University</td>
<td>14/5/2013</td>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>MoU entails: collaboration between the two universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Northwest University, Kano</td>
<td>16/5/2013</td>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>MoU entails: collaboration between the two universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>North Dakota State University</td>
<td>16/7/2013</td>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>MoU entails: collaboration between the two universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>University College of Applied Sciences</td>
<td>1/12/2013</td>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>MoU entails: collaboration between the two universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The University of Otago, Dunedin</td>
<td>13/12/2013</td>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>MoU entails: collaboration between the two universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Universitas Mataram, Indonesia</td>
<td>19/8/2015</td>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>MoU entails: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ahmad Zaharin Aris, the Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Environmental Studies has been invited as a guest speaker in the Second Workshop of Writing International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bil.</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Date Signed</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ajou University</td>
<td>16/1/2013</td>
<td>MoA</td>
<td>Dual Master of Science in Computer Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2    | Kyushu Institute of Technology    | 1/4/2013    | MoA  | Dual PhD Degree in disciplines related to Life Sciences and Systems Engineering - There are 6 students currently enrolled in the programme namely:  
<p>|      |                                   |             |      | • Vizy Nazira Riazuddin (GS37711)                                                                                                      |
|      |                                   |             |      | • Noor Azira Abdul Mutalib G(S39923)                                                                                                   |
|      |                                   |             |      | • Ng Chi Huey (GS42988)                                                                                                                  |
|      |                                   |             |      | • Yuya Hashiguchi (GS43260)                                                                                                             |
|      |                                   |             |      | • Dhurga Devi A/P Rajaratanam (GS38734)                                                                                                 |
|      |                                   |             |      | • Siti Suliza Salamat (GS39534)                                                                                                         |
| 3    | M. Auezov South Kazakhstan State University | 1/4/2013 | MoA  | Dual PhD and Dual Master of Science in Computer Science and Mathematics                                                                |
| 4    | University of Newcastle           | 10/6/2013   | MoA  | Joint PhD Degree                                                                                                                        |
| 5    | University of Glasgow, Scotland   | 13/6/2014   | MoA  | Double Postgraduate Master’s Degree                                                                                                     |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 6 | The University of Nottingham | 11/7/2013 | MoA      | Dual PhD Degree  
• The programme has one student, namely Ms. Tay Sook Hui (GS 36597). She is doing her PhD in Molecular Medicine. |
| 7 | University of Southern Queensland | 1/4/2014 | MoA      | Dual PhD Degree |
| 8 | Naresuan University | 24/7/2014 | MoA      | Dual PhD and Dual Master of Science in disciplines related to Food Science and Food Technology.  
• The programme has one student, namely Ms. Papichaya Incharoen (GS44874). She is doing her PhD in Food Science. |
| 9 | Universite Montpellier 2 | 4/12/2014 | MoA      | Dual PhD (Cotutelle)  
• The programme has one student, Dr Wendy Yeo Wai Yeng. She has completed her study and was awarded her PhD in 2015. |
| 10 | Maejo University | 4/2/2015 | MoA      | Dual PhD in Food Engineering, Food Science and Technology and Agriculture. |
| 11 | University of Alberta, Canada | 23/7/2015 | MoA      | Dual PhD in disciplines related to Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Biological Sciences, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, Psychology, and Computing Sciences. |
7.1 Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)

The CSI survey is conducted every year by the University to measure the level of satisfaction among UPM’s customers. One of the main areas measured is postgraduate services, and the minimum percentage targeted is 70%. From 2013 to 2015, the CSI percentages achieved by SGS are 75.3% (2013), 75.9% (2014) and 76.0% (2015), showing an increase every year. This indicates that SGS has achieved its target of 70% CSI, and that the improvements made by SGS to its services have resulted in better customer satisfaction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Customer Satisfaction Index (%)</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>75.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>76.0%*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The achievement for 2015 is subject to final data released by the Vice Chancellor’s Office.
In 2015, the University approved new key items in the CSI survey for SGS. The new key items require specific feedback on SGS services. This is to ensure that the data received from the survey reflects directly the quality of services provided by SGS. The new key items approved are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key items</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The quality level of services received at the SGS Counter | a) Hospitality  
b) Information accuracy  
c) Efficiency |
| Quality of information provided by SGS          | a) Web page  
b) Registration  
c) Thesis  
d) Academic information  
e) Scholarships / financial assistance / incentives  
f) Training programme – Putra Sarjana |
| Overall quality of services provided by SGS     | a) Admission  
b) Registration  
c) Academic record  
d) Thesis  
e) Scholarship / funding support  
f) Welfare  
g) Training - Putra Sarjana |
7.2 Graduate Employability

The Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education has set quality objectives for public universities to have 75% of their graduates employed in sectors relevant to the graduates’ qualification or skills within six months upon graduation.

A total of 92.9% of PhD graduates were employed within 6 months after graduation in 2013. This increased to 93.5% in 2014. The rest are continuing their studies, participating in skill enhancement programmes or participating in other relevant programmes.
NEW INITIATIVES IN 2013 - 2015

The School of Graduate Studies introduced various new initiatives in 2013-2015. Among them are:

8.1 Road Map

The SGS roadmap is designed to support UPM’s strategic plan for 2014-2020 in areas which are of concern and relevant to SGS. Ultimately, the School of Graduate Studies plans to drive and establish excellence as a culture in the areas of postgraduate supervision, teaching and research practices at UPM. This corresponds with one of UPM’s strategic plans, Putra Global 200 (PG200). PG200 refers to UPM’s goal of attaining a position within the world’s top 200 universities in the QS World University Ranking. Specifically, the four criteria that are spotlighted to help UPM achieve this goal are: research quality, teaching quality, graduate employability, and internationalisation.

8.2 Enhancement of Putra Sarjana

Putra Sarjana has expanded its role to include the area of community service. In 2014, Putra Sarjana organized three community service activities, namely Tree Planting, Tree Labelling, and Visit to Orphanage in Seremban, Negeri Sembilan. SGS, in collaboration with graduate students from UPM International Students Association (UPMISA), organized a special tree-planting programme to provide exposure to the importance of conserving the environment. The programme included the opening of a mango grove at UPM. Also present at the event were the Ambassador of Fiji, Mr. Meli Bainimarama, the Ambassador of Sudan, Mr. Khalid Abdel Gadir Shukri, and a representative from Nigerian Embassy, Mr. Makwe S. Victor.

The Vice Chancellor of UPM (centre) with UPM students planting mango trees.
The open area adjacent to the UPM main entrance or Anjung Putra where a total of 22 clones of mango trees were planted is now known as 'UPM International Mango Grove'. Among those 22 species of local mangoes are Alimali, Apple, Bahagia Bombay Green, Chok Anan, Emelie, Epal Merah, Harumanis, Kalamel, Kuini, Lebai Dollah, Madu, Malgoa, Manalagi, Mangga Telur, Merbok, Nam Dok Mai, Taiwan, Udang, YTM Bulat and YTM Pajang. This area will indirectly help to improve UPM's image as a university which cares for the environment, and by involving international students in such activities, as a university which values the presence of international students. This will hopefully help to increase international student enrolment at UPM. To augment its status as the “Green Campus”, UPM also takes a step forward by initiating a tree labelling programme. The initiative was the combined collaborative efforts of the School of Graduate Studies (SGS), the Faculty of Forestry, the Faculty of Design and Architecture, the University Agriculture Park, the Institute of Tropical Forestry and Forest Products (INTROP), the Students Representative Council (MPP), the UPM International Students' Association (UPMISA) and the Peer Support Group (PSG).

The programme is an offshoot of the Putra Sarjana Programme, and is called the Putra Conservatory Trail. The programme aims to encourage students and visitors to appreciate the many different varieties of trees on the UPM campus, and to learn the names of these trees, which were labelled according to their species, scientific names and local names. The Tree Labelling programme saw the identification and labelling of 60 species of flora, 27 species of herbs and landscape shrubs, 9 species of fruit trees, and 24 species of forest trees. 361 trees were labelled in total, according to four categories: dicotyledon, monocotyledon, ferns and gymnosperm. In keeping with environmentally friendly practice, the labels used were made of bio-composite material which is a combination of natural Kenaf fibre and plastic, and which is a hallmark of UPM research, used for the first time in Malaysia.

8.3 Certificate Courses

Putra Sarjana had conducted 4 certificate courses in 2014 and 2015 namely Academic Career Preparatory Certificate I and II, Write Right© Academic Writing Certificate and Professional Skills Certificate. Students who completed all of the courses in any of the certificate packages obtained certificates of achievement. The Academic Career Preparatory I was designed to provide students wishing to pursue a career in academia with an introduction to the realities of the job, and a number of responsibilities that come along with it, including teaching and supervision. Academic Career Preparatory II, on the
other hand, focused on the writing, publishing and network responsibilities of an academic. Both certificate courses were held in 2014 and the speaker was Dr. Vijay Kumar Mallan from The University of Otago, New Zealand for Academic Career Preparatory I and Dr. Margaret Kiley from Australia National University (ANU) for Academic Career Preparatory II. In 2015, SGS conducted the following: Professional Skills Certificate and Write Right® Academic Writing Certificate. Professional skills certificate was designed to develop the skills necessary to become an academic; students would also need to acquire a set of soft skills that would be applicable in any professional context. This certificate course was conducted by Dr. Vijay Kumar Mallan from The University of Otago, New Zealand. The Write Right® Academic Writing Certificate, on the other hand, was intended to teach students how to write a research paper or thesis effectively, by paying special attention to grammar, style and content within an academic context. The speakers for this certificate course were academics and experts from the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communications, UPM.

Dr. Vijay Kumar from The University of Otago speaking to UPM students.

8.4 The Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) National and International

The Three Minute Thesis (3MT®), first developed by the University of Queensland and now carried out in universities around Australia and New Zealand, is a competition wherein postgraduate students present their research projects to a non-specialist audience in just three minutes. In Malaysia, UPM, apart from the University of Malaya, is one of the first to introduce 3MT as part of its effort to encourage a vibrant community of research students. 3MT®
challenges PhD students to showcase their research and explain its wider implications in less than three minutes to a non-specialist audience.

This competition provides graduate students opportunities to refine their presentation and communication skills useful for their future career paths and employment. At the national level, the first Malaysia 3MT® Competition was held on May 27th 2014 at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur. UPM’s contestant, Dr. Siti Aimi Sarah Zainal Abidin won the first prize for the science and technology category with her research titled “Halal CSI: Detecting Pork in Meat Products”. In the same year, UPM also participated for the first time in the Trans-Tasman 3 Minute Thesis (3MT®) Competition in Perth, Australia, and Dr. Siti Aimi Sarah Zainal Abidin made UPM history when she became a finalist in that competition. She was one of the only ten speakers chosen to compete in the final heat of the competition. She was also the only non-Australian contestant among the finalists. In 2015, Norsyuhada Alias from UPM won 2nd Prize for the science and technology category at the national level. She also represented UPM at the Trans-Tasman 3 Minute Thesis (3MT®) Competition in Brisbane, Australia.

Dr. Siti Aimi Sarah Zainal Abidin won the first prize for the science and technology category at the first Malaysia 3MT® Competition
The first Malaysia Bicara Tuntas Competition, was held on December 7th 2015 at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi Selangor. The competition aimed to promote creativity and innovative ideas among students from various fields. In the competition, students presented their research in Bahasa Melayu or English, accompanied by a 3-minute video presentation. UPM’s contestant, Tan Niu Jin won the first prize with her research entitled “Saving our Tiny Angels”. Another UPM contestant, Dr. Aimi Sarah Zainal Abidin, won third prize with her research entitled “Meat CSI: Detecting culprit species in meat products”.

Tan Nui Jin (right) and Dr. Siti Aimi Sarah Zainal Abidin with their respective winning plaques from the Bicara Tuntas Competition 2015.

8.5 UPM Research Supervisor Support and Development (UPMRSSD)

In recognition of the range of supervisory staff, including those new to research supervision, the University has made a strong commitment to support all staff in the important role of supervising candidates. The School of Graduate Studies has introduced the UPM Research Supervisor Support and Development Programme in 2014 with the aim of providing an extensive programme of workshops and seminars to assist supervisors in their practice. This programme is conducted by skilled and experienced UPM staff, and assisted by a number of invited presenters from Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States such as Prof. Gina Wisker, Dr. Gill Robinson, Dr. Margaret Kiley, Dr. Claire Aitchison and Dr. Vijay Kumar Mallan. In 2014, 236 academic staff
joined UPMRSSD while in 2015 the number increased to 522 academic staff. The target is that by 2020, 1400 academic staff would have participated in UPMRSSD.

Dr. Margaret Kiley speaking to UPM academics

8.6 The Pertanika Journal of Scholarly Research Reviews (PJSRR)

The Pertanika Journal of Scholarly Research Reviews (PJSRR) is the first postgraduate journal of Universiti Putra Malaysia to feature review articles. In compiling these review articles, students will be better able to acquire the knowledge and the skills necessary for both the completion of their postgraduate theses, and their future careers as researchers and educators.

PJSRR was conceived in response to the School of Graduate Studies’ efforts to provide postgraduate students with a space to publish their research and hone their research skills. In line with UPM being granted Research University status, publishing is now a prerequisite for the successful completion of students’ Masters and PhD degrees. As such, it is vital that postgraduate students better understand the processes involved in writing and publishing research articles. The review articles published in PJSRR will enable students to achieve this, as it will alert them to the latest developments in their respective fields.

In all, thirty six manuscripts were submitted to the Editor of PJSRR. This figure represents the total number of manuscripts received up to December 2015. Ten out of the thirty six manuscripts which were received and approved have already been uploaded to the PJSRR website.
The plan for 2016 is to publish three more issues, namely volume 2(1), volume 2(2) and volume 2(3). Each issue will publish ten manuscripts. Article submissions are open to postgraduate students from UPM and other universities.

8.7 Graduate on Time (GOT)

GOT is defined as the completion of a Master’s degree within 2 years and a PhD degree within 4 years under the requirements by the Ministry of Higher Education (KPT). However, the requirements set by MyRAII stipulate that a minimum of 25% of graduates must have completed their studies in 7 semesters. Beginning 2014, students who achieve GOT are given a certificate of achievement by SGS.

8.8 PhD Industry

Industrial PhD offers an alternative route to industry practitioners who wish to pursue a doctorate degree while generating innovation and improving competitiveness via industry-based research. This programme is an incentive from the Malaysian Government to encourage knowledge sharing among industry practitioners and academics in order to produce highly knowledgeable professionals. Students enrolled under this programme are eligible for financial assistance provided by the Ministry of Higher Education via the MyBrain15 Scholarship (maximum of RM50K for 4 years). The financial assistance is in the form of payment of tuition fees, thesis allowance, journal allowance, thesis examination fee, convocation fee, and supervision expenses.

8.9 Collaboration with the University of Otago, New Zealand

The School of Graduate Studies Universiti Putra Malaysia strives to provide research-based graduate attribute training to its postgraduate students. To achieve this objective, the Graduate School has teamed up with the Higher Education Development Centre of the University of Otago, New Zealand. Under an MoU between these two universities, academic staff developers from the University of Otago, who research into aspects of doctoral support are invited regularly to share experiences with staff and students of UPM. The courses include Preparing for Academic Career, Giving Feedback in Supervision, and Preparing Supervisors for Viva. In collaboration with international universities, for instance New Zealand’s University of Otago, the postgraduate programme
includes Certificate Courses such as the Academic Career Preparatory and the Professional Skills Certificate Courses where students are granted certificates of achievement upon completion of all courses in any of the certificate packages. From 2014 to 2015, more than 150 students have completed these certificate courses. The Putra Sarjana programme aims to continue to provide these enriching certificate courses every year to postgraduate students.

8.10 Postgraduate Research Network (RESNET)

Postgraduate Research Network is a research group consisting of academics and postgraduate students who do research in the area of postgraduate education. The group has an online forum which enables members to post relevant information about seminars, conferences and presentation on their research. This online forum (RESNET) is facilitated by SGS’s visiting professor, Dr Margaret Kiley, from the Australian National University. RESNET is the result of SGS’s initiative to enhance research work and heighten awareness of postgraduate education in UPM. The members also collaborate on research projects across departments and faculties.

8.11 UPM International Collaboration Programme

The UPM International Collaborative Programme (UPM-ICP) commenced in 2009 when UPM signed an agreement with the University of Sheffield to offer a Jointly Awarded Research Degree programme. Currently, there are 4 types of collaborative programmes offered by UPM, namely the Jointly Awarded Research Degree (JARD), the Dual Degree, the Joint Supervision (Cotutelle), and the Bachelor Master (Fast Track). Within 3 years (2013-2015) the number of UPM-ICP programmes has increased from only two in 2012 to 18 programmes altogether, through collaboration with 15 universities from 8 different countries.

The programmes are:
- UPM-University of Sheffield Jointly Awarded PhD Degree
- UPM- Université Pierre et Marie Curie Dual PhD Degree
- UPM-Ajou University Dual Master of Science
- UPM-Kyushu Institute of Technology Dual PhD Degree
- UPM-University of Newcastle, Australia, Jointly Awarded PhD Degree
- UPM-University of Nottingham (Malaysia Campus) Dual PhD Degree
- UPM-University of Southern Queensland Dual PhD Degree
- UPM-Université Montpellier 2 Dual PhD Degree
- UPM-University of Glasgow Dual Master of Science
- UPM-Naresuan University Dual Master and PhD Degree
- UPM-Kasetsart University Dual Master and PhD Degree
- UPM-Maejo University Dual PhD Degree
- UPM-University of Alberta Dual PhD Degree
- UPM- M.Auezov South Kazakhstan State University Dual Master and Dual PhD Degree
- UPM-Suleyman Demirel University Bachelor Master (Fast Track)