

Inspiring critical thinking, communication and collaboration to meet students' needs

THE Davos 2022 agenda proposes four factors to future-proof education: leveraging technology, optimising interaction, creating customisable content and maximising engagement.

Future-proof education needs to be flexible and inclusive without compromising its philosophy. Education must use technology. Physical boundaries will not limit teaching and learning.

Grades are no longer pertinent, and there is a need to empower education.

All these are about the future education agenda as recommended by Andreas Schleicher, director of the Education and Skills Directory,

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Universities' success via world rankings has been exciting.

The findings of the 2021 Graduate Tracer Study System said five public universities had graduates with a 95 per cent employability rate.

Therefore, do we still need a future-proof university? There is room for improvement.

The Covid-19 pandemic forced us to reflect on our status quo, strategy and implementation.

However, when Covid-19 forced universities to change their way of doing business, why did confusion strike?

The online learning agenda is nothing new for us. It is available as shift 9 in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education).

We have blended learning initiatives, full online classrooms, learning management systems, massive open online courses and micro-credentials.

In terms of learning outcomes, Covid-19 encouraged more flexibility by using valid modalities for measuring students' performances.

The concept of an online, open-book take-home exam and portfolio evaluation is executed.

It requires students to perform deep

learning and research, analyse issues, defend their ideas, and support them with evidence.

This trains students to meet job expectations.

Today's industries need future-proof talent with skills in critical thinking, communication, collaboration, understanding the global environment's impact, adhering to standards, and solving problems.

Hence, the online learning initiative is no longer only about accomplishing key performance indexes.

Leadership in universities must inspire intellectual courage and lead the change.

The future-proof university model must be debated.

In a nutshell, Covid-19 forced us to assess higher education's readiness to cope with challenges.

So whose responsibility is it to prepare universities for challenges?

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