Towards good governance

UNIRAZAK trains quality graduates to help run and maintain a modern government.

Established in November 2008, Universiti Tun Abdul Razak's (UNIRAZAK) Razak School of Government (RSOG) is a relative newcomer that offers three programmes – the Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences, Bachelor of Arts (Government and Public Policy) (Hons) and Bachelor of Arts (Leadership) (Hons).

Another programme, Bachelor of Economics (Hons) has already received approval from the Malaysian Qualifications Agency and will be available soon. RSOG plans to add not just more programmes, but workshops, seminars and public discussions in the future.

RSOG dean, Assoc Prof Datuk Mohd Ibrahim Abu Bakar shared with StarSpecial his thoughts on RSOG, its programmes and what they focus on.

“The genesis for RSOG came when we realised that the education on public administration is not really established in Malaysia, as it is in Western countries. Our approach is to go beyond public administration because government is more complex than that.

“It involves many aspects, such as government policy, developing the country’s mechanics of government and political institutions, innovation and planning in the government administration. We need to develop our future government – we need to make it more efficient, more competitive, and produce cheaper products but of the highest quality,” said Prof Ibrahim.

“What sort of products does a government manufacture? A traditional government provides amenities such as basic infrastructure, roads, hospitals, police and others. A modern government goes beyond this and produces various policies and regulations that are conducive for the nation’s economic and social growth.

“It provides the correct environment that promotes and encourages the development of the nation’s strengths, and seeks to minimise the nation’s weaknesses. It helps industry thrive, helps the people to prosper, and most importantly, does so with the idea of sustainability firmly in mind – that the new policies and regulations must lead to continuous, not short-term, growth and prosperity.

“RSOG’s programmes will expose students to major subjects that are useful for life in a modern government – subjects and courses that help them produce ideas, be innovative, manage crises, communicate well, plan accordingly, and be adaptable. It will also teach critical thinking, economics, leadership and management.

“We are also very confident that we will get support from the government for our students to participate in government seminars and workshops and public administration conferences. We also plan for our students to have briefings with various government ministries and departments in which they can ask questions, obtain more knowledge on how government works and build contacts.

“UNIRAZAK’s RSOG students will be exposed to research areas in the development of government policy, be able to improve parts of the system that are obsolete, and build a government that is connected to the people and the industry. Also, to be a developed nation we must clean up any and all bad practices, corruption, lack of transparency and mismanagement.

“This is what we aspire for our students to achieve. They will start a new form of innovative leadership, with efficient systems, global systems, that are creative and productive,” he added.

“The fact is that the people need a government, and a better government. This requires professionals who understand how the system works, who can then improve it and thereby enhance the economy and society.

“Our graduates will help promote a sound, ethical government that will build and promote responsible citizenship, and a society and industry that cares about more than just money and also contributes to society and the environment – our quality of life cannot be measured merely by the amount of money that we have in our bank accounts. We must develop a holistic, sustainable model for the continued growth and prosperity of our country.”

Meanwhile, RSOG deputy dean Prof Dr Syed Omar Syed Agil said: “The initial response to our programmes has been
excellent, as we have received over 100 applications. Our team has personally called every applicant, and I've spoken to over half of them personally, so we can better explain our programmes and ensure this is really what they aspire to do.

"We are looking to produce the highest quality of graduates. Having said that, all are welcome to apply, as we deeply believe in education for all who wish to study. Your past performance is not necessarily the best indicator of your future results, so no matter what you have achieved in the past, you are free to apply to RSOG as we only set minimum requirements for entry.

"We will strive to transform you to be the best as a student and become an asset to the public sector after graduation. That is our job," added Prof Syed Omar.

RSOG graduates have many job prospects, and they are not limited to working with the government. The Bachelor of Arts (Government and Public Policy) (Hons) and Bachelor of Arts (Government and Public Policy) (Hons) are available in three and four-year programmes.

For more information, call 03-7627 7000, e-mail marketing@unirazak.edu.my or md@unirazak.edu.my or visit http://rsog.unirazak.edu.my.