

From Lab Novice to Research Enthusiast: My Transformative Internship at UiTM

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During my final year in the BSc Biomedical Sciences program at the University of Warwick, United Kingdom, I had the opportunity to do an internship at the Group for Affinity, Safety and Efficacy Studies (OASES) research initiative group laboratory, Faculty of Pharmacy, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Puncak Alam. Under the guidance of Dr. Aisyah Hasyila Jahidin and Prof. Dr. Mizaton Hazizul Hasan, I explored the impact of TRPML1 inhibition using ML-SI1 on triple-negative breast cancer under serum-starved conditions. This internship, generously funded by the Warwick Turing Scheme and running from July 15 to September 30, 2024, provided invaluable hands-on experience that will shape my future career.

From the moment I arrived, I was welcomed as a vital member of the laboratory. Despite my initial lack of experience in *in vitro* studies and mammalian cell culture, the support and guidance from my supervisors and team members were invaluable.

I received comprehensive training in experimental design and actively participated in discussions, which helped me take ownership of my research and develop the skills necessary to conduct my own studies. This experience not only refined my experimental techniques but also enhanced my abilities in data analysis and scientific writing, essential for rigorous research.

Recognising the rarity of this opportunity, I approached every aspect of my project with curiosity and a desire to understand deeply. The research process, often marked by trial and error, presented challenges such as cell contaminations and inconclusive results. However, I learned to view these obstacles as learning opportunities, identifying their sources and understanding their impact.

Although my contribution may seem like a small step in the vast field of research, my time at UiTM showed me that incremental discoveries lead to significant breakthroughs. Engaging with experienced professionals in the field broadened my perspective on potential future directions, solidifying my decision to pursue postgraduate studies to deepen my understanding of modern translational research and its practical applications in oncology. I am profoundly grateful to my supervisors, the Pharmacology department laboratory staff, and my laboratory mates for their unwavering support during my internship. I also extend my heartfelt thanks to the Faculty of Pharmacy, UiTM, for granting me the opportunity to complete my internship there. This experience has been a pivotal moment in my academic journey, and I look forward to applying the knowledge and skills I have gained to future research endeavours.