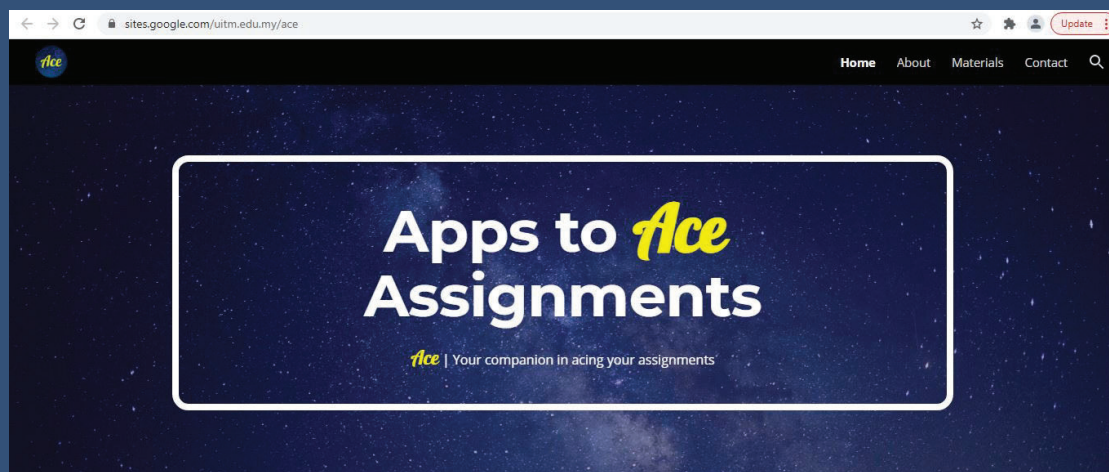# Ace APPS TO ACE ASSIGNMENTS

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When the world was first hit by the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic, the education system was thrown into a disarray. UiTM was also not spared, however, as abruptly as teaching and learning came to a halt, most universities around the world made a swift change to adopt the rather choppy and unchartered waters of fully digitalised Online Direct Learning (ODL). Were the students prepared to learn on a fully digitalised platform? It is not easy to adopt or adapt to online learning in response to a sudden pandemic such as COVID-19 without encountering many problems and challenges. Students face numerous challenges and problems due to the transfer to fully online learning (Al-Kumaim, et.al.,2021). Students were exposed to many new applications and programmes to learn in a fully digitalised platform (Jandric, 2020; Shanthi et.al., 2021). This added stress to the students as they had to familiarise themselves to the different tools used for different subjects (Shanthi, et.al., 2021). To further add to the stress of learning online was the process of completing some assignments which now had to be interactive with video and audio embedded in their presentations. There were evidence pointing out that students were falling behind in their academic performance because they lacked computer literacy skills (Jandric, 2020; Fernando et al., 2020). As an effort to help and guide students who lacked the computer literacy skill needed to complete their English coursework, a group of APB lecturers headed by Dr Alice Shanthi initiated a website called, "ACE: Apps to Ace Assignments".

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ACE is specially put together by a group of educators who saw the struggles students went through when completing English course assignments during Open Distance Learning (ODL). Though most students are familiar with PowerPoint presentations which are the norm during face-to-face classes, they face many challenges while completing assignments online. They face difficulties in producing presentations embedded with videos and audios. For example, students need to learn video editing and prepare interactive slides as part of their presentations, and this is where many students struggled.
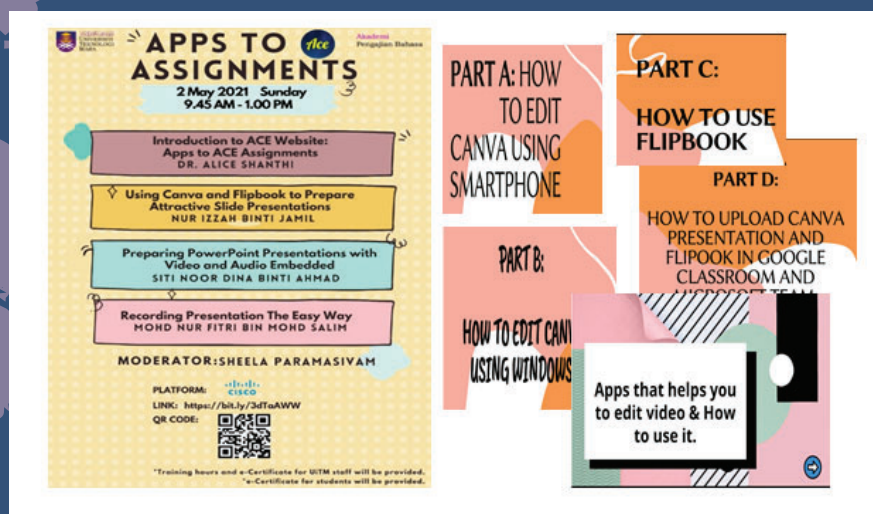
ACE is a compilation of tools that assist students in their learning journey without having technology get in their way. This website contains a variety of different learning materials such as visuals, videos, and a step-by-step guide in helping students to produce quality and interactive presentations using apps such as Canva, Flipbook, Filmora, INshot editing videos as well as PowerPoint. The website is also equipped with notes and videos which make it easier for students to learn, understand and apply the skills needed to produce a good presentation.
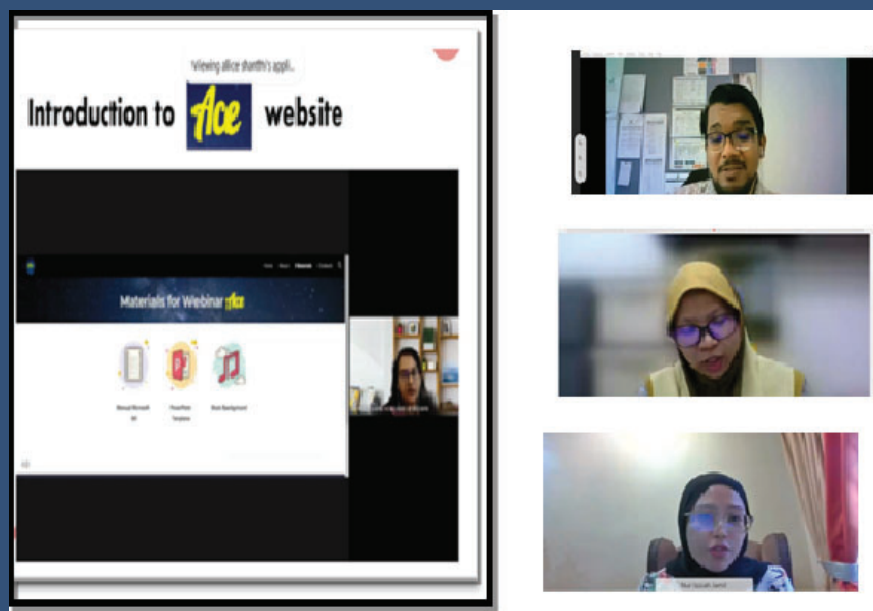

Main features of ACE website

ACE helps to facilitate and guide students to complete their English assignments such as role-plays, forums, group discussions, and oral presentations by using free and readily available online tools and upload their presentation onto the online learning platforms such as Google Classroom, UFuture (institutional Learning Management System) or Microsoft teams. Since ACE can be downloaded into laptops, smartphones and tablets, it makes a student's life easier as it can be accessed using a web browser anywhere, anytime.

ACE website was unveiled to students in Seremban 3 campus on 2nd May, 2021 via Webex and Live Facebook streaming from 9.30am to 1.00pm. The briefing was facilitated by APB lecturers namely Dr. Alice Shanthi (Seremban campus), Mr Mohd Nur Fitri Mohd Salim (Seremban campus), Nur Izzah Binti Jamil (Rembau campus) and Siti Noor Dina Ahmad (Kuala Pilah campus). A total of 222 students and 19 lecturers participated in and benefited from the program. A soft launching of the website was also carried out at the end of the briefing.

Poster for ACE workshop and some content of ACE website

Presenters for the ACE workshop

It is the hope and aspiration of the developers of ACE that the website will improve students' academic progress by keeping them motivated to continue learning in the new norm of ODL. ACE has the potential to keep students focused on their learning, without worrying or allowing their lack of computer literacy skills to hold them back from excelling in their studies.

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