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UiTM LASS NAMED WORLD'S TOP 6TH

SHE may be slight in stature but there's nothing small about her achievements.

An Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) programme student at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam, Nurul Nabilah Abdul Jalil clinched sixth place in the world and the national top spot in the June 2016 ACCA Paper P2 (Corporate Reporting) exam which has a 46 per cent passing rate across the globe.

She also won the UiTM Vice Chancellor Award for coming out top of her class in the Certified Accounting Technicians (CAT) programme in 2014.

Having passed all her papers without a re-sit so far, Nurul Nabilah is looking forward to completing the programme in December when she sits her final papers — P4 (Advanced Financial) and P6 (Advanced Taxation).

The ACCA enables members to attain a premier professional qualification in accountancy and provides graduates with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to be financial professionals. Graduates with an ACCA qualification are likely to gain employment with relative ease, be it locally or internationally. The qualification also paves the way for work in many sectors — financial or corporate.

Nurul Nabilah came to know about ACCA from her sister who also took up accountancy studies. Nurul Nabilah enrolled in the CAT programme after Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia, choosing the course over an offer to study medicine.

CAT is a technical/diploma-level qualification which provides a comprehensive introduction to accountancy. It is designed for students who wish to pursue a career in finance or to gain an accelerated route to the ACCA qualification.

"With my CAT qualification, I need only sit 11 ACCA papers instead of 14. ACCA students can take up to three papers each semester. Students have five to six semesters to complete the programme. Each semester is six months: January to June and July to December," said the 21-year-old Yayasan Peneraju Pendidikan Bumiputera scholar.

She added that ACCA is a tough programme with detailed subjects. "Exam questions are all about applying the knowledge we gain in class. That's where the difficulty lies... we have to apply the knowledge rather than memorise what we learn in class."

Several of her classmates dropped out of the programme during the earlier semesters when they were learning the fundamentals.

"The further you go, the tougher the questions. Attendance and focus in class are important. Don't just be physically present with your mind elsewhere. Ask questions in class. I used to be shy but I realised it would be a waste not to take advantage of engaging the lecturer in a dis-



Nurul Nabilah Abdul Jalil (right) with Normahiran Yatim.

BERSAMBUNG
DI SEBELAH

cussion and tapping into his or her expertise and knowledge," added Nurul Nabilah.

She revises her notes within 24 hours after class to keep things fresh in her mind. "I also read the textbook and make notes. Of course, there's practice, practice, practice. I attempt past year exam questions and I read articles at the ACCA website.

"Classes take up three to six hours per day after which I study three to five hours. I prefer to study alone or in small groups so that I won't be distracted."

Nurul Nabilah is active in the Association of Professional Accounting Students at the Faculty of Accountancy and is an ambassador of audit firm PriceWaterhouse Coopers (PwC) on campus. She helps to co-organise talks, activities and seminars in collaboration with PwC.

UiTM Head of Learning Centre ACCA/MICPA (Malaysian Institute of Certified Public Accountants) Normahiran Yatim said that based on the Malaysian Qualifications Agency standards, every ACCA paper requires an allocation of 300 hours per semester. "In class, we have up to 98 hours face-to-face sessions with students. The remaining 200 hours are on the students — if they put in the effort, *insyaallah*, they will pass. One must be very disciplined. Proficiency in English is a plus as it will be easier for students to put their thoughts on paper," she added.

UiTM started offering ACCA programmes in 1967 while the CAT course was only offered in 2002. To date, 872 ACCA and 1,466 CAT students have graduated.

Since 1967, the faculty has made an effort to increase the number of graduates with professional accounting qualifications such as ACCA and Chartered Institute of Management Accountants. The efforts include creating awareness, finding sponsors for students and enhancement of teaching and learning. "The most recent effort was to establish the faculty-driven tuition provider the Centre of Professional Accountancy UiTM (IPAC Education) last year to spearhead the government's aspiration to increase the number of professionally qualified Bumiputera accountants in the country to 15 per cent of the target of 60,000 by the year 2020," she said.

In June 2010, ACCA recognised UiTM's Accountancy Faculty as a Platinum-approved learning provider. This recognition makes UiTM the first university in Malaysia to be certified capable of producing accountants of international standard. Platinum status is the highest award given by ACCA to a learning provider based on criteria such as the provision of facilities and infrastructure, teaching and learning techniques and achieving continuous excellent examination results. The main criterion is based on the achievement of excellence in the examination results where 75 per cent of courses offered have surpassed the world passing rates in each exam sittings i.e. June and December.

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