



University of  
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25 YEARS IN  
MALAYSIA

## ENCORE: THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES NEWSLETTER



### Why the Work Still Matters

How many times must we say it? That the work goes on, that a guest lecture reshaped a student's thinking, that colleagues continue to participate in public debates in the most pressing issues, that a panel sent someone into the world braver than before, that another teacher continues to go the extra mile. The light, dim as it sometimes is, has not gone out. These are the small, stubborn evidence of us refusing to surrender.

The headlines outside of course tell a different story: of a higher education in crisis, of demotivated faculty and students, of budgets slashed, of futures uncertain. We read it. The weight is real. But we always find a way. Not because the system loves us because we love what we do. That is the difference.

The truth is in the care we muster each morning, often before the coffee is finished. And care is not something any institution can give. You cannot mandate it. You cannot metric it. Care is born of living, of waking up and choosing, again and again, to show up for a student who is lost, for a colleague who is tired, despite the self that is asking whether any of it matters.

At FASS, we teach because we live. Because living is the first and final curriculum. And we are, despite everything, still here. That is the whole story.

p.s. - The Common Room is heading towards a radical rebrand which will be launched next month. Stay tuned.

*Dr Fuad Rahmat*

Associate Dean  
Admissions, Recruitment & Marketing and  
Faculty Global Engagement Lead  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
University of Nottingham Malaysia

#### In this newsletter you can expect:

FASS Spotlight -  
Celebrating  
FASS Staff  
birthdays

FASS Spotlight:  
School of  
Education  
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Learning and  
Growth at 12th  
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Showcase

Research &  
Knowledge  
Exchange |  
External  
Engagement

Teaching &  
Learning |  
External  
Engagement

Student  
Achievement |  
Teaching &  
Learning



## FASS Spotlight: Celebrating FASS staff birthdays




### May celebrants, with a warm nod to earlier months

We are delighted to celebrate our FASS colleagues' birthdays this month, featuring our May celebrants alongside a few belated March wishes.

We also extend a warm nod to colleagues who celebrated their birthdays in January, February, and April.

Let's take a moment to share our best wishes and make their day extra special. Their contact details are available on the [University's website](#).

### *March and May celebrants*



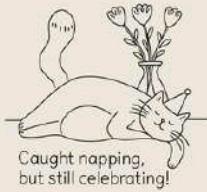
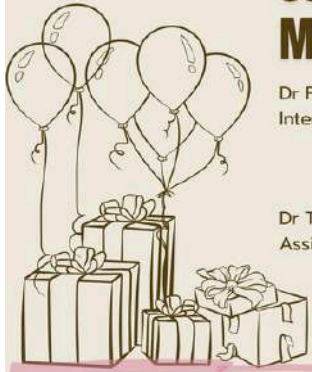
**Join us for our belated March birthday wishes!**

Dr Frederique Bouilheres,  
Interim Dean of NUBS


Dr Hamza Shahab,  
Assistant Professor NUBS

Dr Tang Kin Boon,  
Assistant Professor NUBS

Mr Zainal Abidin Zainun,  
Interim Faculty Manager  
FASS



Caught napping,  
but still celebrating!

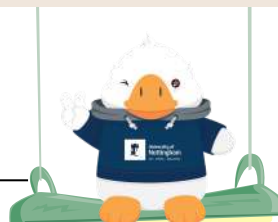
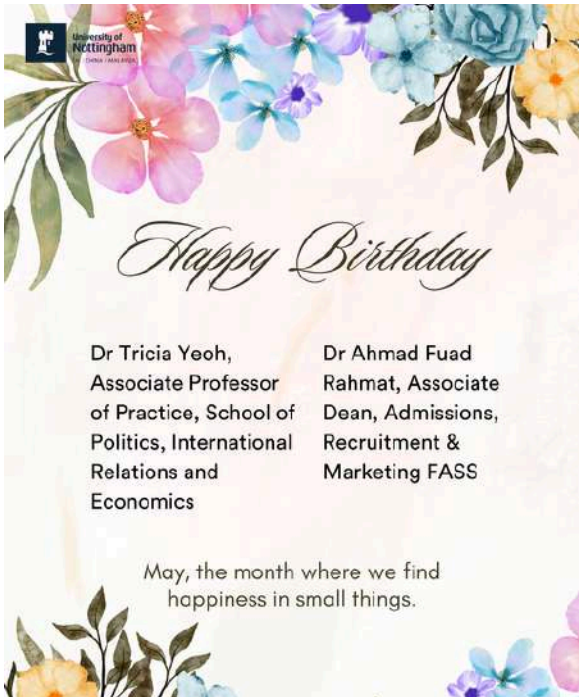


*Happy Birthday*

Dr Tricia Yeoh,  
Associate Professor  
of Practice, School of  
Politics, International  
Relations and  
Economics

Dr Ahmad Fuad  
Rahmat, Associate  
Dean, Admissions,  
Recruitment &  
Marketing FASS

May, the month where we find  
happiness in small things.



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# FASS Spotlight: School of Education Celebrates Learning and Growth at 12th Education Showcase



The **School of Education** hosted the *12th Ganakumaran Subramaniam Education Showcase* on 23 April, an annual event where students present their learning to both internal and external stakeholders. The showcase featured a keynote address by **Dr Ho Sook Wah** from Yayasan Gamuda, alongside infographic and poster presentations, displays of student-created learning materials, and a student-led fireside chat reflecting on practicum experiences.

The event reflects the School's commitment to nurturing student development, collaboration, and innovation, while providing a platform for meaningful engagement with diverse audiences. It also offers stakeholders valuable insights into the quality and impact of student learning.

By bringing together academic work and real-world perspectives, the showcase reinforces the importance of connecting theory and practice in teacher education. It also highlights opportunities for continued collaboration across Schools and departments.

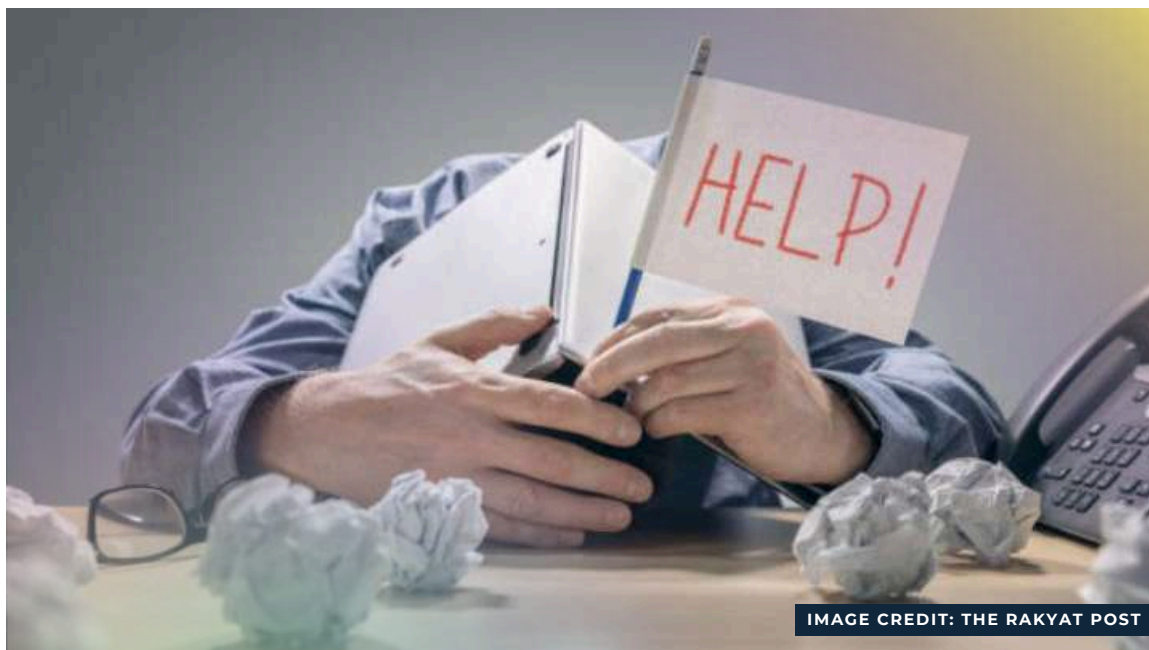
Showcase events strengthen the connection between theory and practice while enabling meaningful engagement with stakeholders.

Learn more about **School of Education** initiatives and upcoming student showcases.



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## Research & Knowledge Exchange | External Engagement



### Why the Struggle to Write Still Matters in an AI Age

In an era increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence, questions around authorship, originality, and critical thinking continue to gain prominence. **Ms Dorcas Lam**, Assistant Professor and Nottingham's Foundation Programme Director at the **Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences**, explores this timely issue in a recent op-ed published by The Rakyat Post.

The piece reflects on the risks of over-reliance on AI in academic writing, while reaffirming the importance of developing independent thought, sustaining originality, and preserving the human voice in scholarly work. It highlights how the process of writing itself remains a critical space for reflection, intellectual growth, and meaning-making.

This contribution underscores the Faculty's ongoing commitment to nurturing critical thinking and creating opportunities for meaningful dialogue, both within the classroom and in the wider public sphere.

The act of writing remains essential in developing critical thinking, originality, and authentic intellectual voice, even in an AI-driven landscape.

Read the full op-ed to explore the role of writing in an AI age:.

[🔗 \*\*Full piece on the Rakyat Post\*\*](#)

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## Research & Knowledge Exchange | External Engagement



### **Making the Invisible Visible: Language, Gender, and the Work of Change**

Have gender inequality and sexism truly been resolved, or have they become less visible as opportunities for women expand? What role does language continue to play in shaping both the problem and its solutions?

In conjunction with International Women's Day (IWD), we highlight the work of **Dr Melissa Yoong**, Associate Professor in the **School of Humanities**. Her research in language, gender, and sexuality goes beyond analysing words; it uncovers the subtle biases embedded in everyday discourse. From media representations to online debates, her work shows how seemingly ordinary language can reinforce gender norms and sustain unequal power relations.

A key challenge in this field is the illusion of progress. As Dr Yoong notes, gender equality is often perceived as "settled" due to the increased visibility of women in leadership and traditionally male-dominated spaces. Yet her research shows that underlying cultural norms, prejudices, and biases often remain unchanged. As she aptly puts it, "We cannot fix the problems we cannot see." Her work seeks to make these invisible structures visible.

Dr Yoong's academic journey is closely tied to her own experiences. During her MA studies at the University of Nottingham UK, a course on Language and Gender provided her with the frameworks to articulate long-held observations of inequality. As she reflects, "the readings provided me with the frameworks and theories to structure my thoughts and feelings and speak of these injustices." This foundation shaped her PhD research on Malaysian media representations of women and work, and continues to inform her contributions to the field.

Today, she reflects this year's IWD theme, Give to Gain, by guiding her students to question assumptions and engage critically with language. Through her teaching and mentorship, she equips them to navigate and challenge the complexities of gender discourse with clarity and purpose.

Language remains a powerful force in shaping perceptions of gender, and critical awareness is essential in addressing inequalities that persist beneath the surface.

Discover more research and conversations on language, gender, and society through **FASS Research**, and reflect on how everyday language continues to shape the world around us.

# Research & Knowledge Exchange | External Engagement



## Humanities Today Forum Draws Strong Audience at Future Students Centre (FSC)

On 18 April, the **School of Humanities** hosted the Humanities Today Forum at the Future Students Centre (FSC), bringing together academics, students, and members of the public for a discussion on recent scholarly work.

The forum featured three new publications: *Archipelagic Cinemas* (2025) by **Dr Dag Yngvesson**, *Researching Language, Gender and Sexuality at Work* (2025) by **Dr Melissa Yoong**, and *Divided Media: Politics and Mediated Movements in India* (2025) by **Dr Suruchi Mazumdar**. The session was moderated by **Mr Sharaad Kuttan** of BFM radio, fostering an engaging exchange of ideas with over 40 attendees, including faculty, undergraduate and postgraduate students, prospective students, and community guests.

The event highlights the School's commitment to sharing research with wider audiences and creating accessible platforms for dialogue on contemporary issues. It also reflects the role of public forums in connecting academic work with broader communities.

Public engagement platforms enable research to reach wider audiences and foster meaningful dialogue beyond the classroom.

Stay updated on upcoming **School of Humanities** events and research forums across the Faculty.



### **Performing Arts Students Visit KLPAC for Workshop and Theatre Experience**

Students from the International Communications Studies and Performing Arts programme, guided by **Ms Melizarani T. Selva**, Assistant Professor in the **School of Humanities** visited the Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre (KLPAC) in March for a field-based learning experience that combined practical training with live performance.

During the visit, Kelvin Wong, director of local theatre company Theatresauce, led an introductory acting workshop, offering students insight into how actors prepare for a scene and construct meaning without dialogue. Through a series of theatre exercises, students explored the use of body movement, spatial awareness, and emotional expression to convey complex narratives.

The visit concluded with a staging of *No Particular Order*, performed by Theatresauce and marking the Malaysian premiere of the play written by Singaporean playwright Joel Tan. The production explored themes of authority, resilience, and everyday choices under constraint, prompting students to reflect on how performance engages with social and political contexts. For many, this was their first experience attending a live theatre performance.

The experience also introduced students to performance as a form of critical inquiry, highlighting how artistic practice engages with broader social and political questions. This field trip reflects the programme's commitment to experiential learning, with Ms Selva's leadership supporting students in connecting classroom learning with industry practice.

Experiential learning through industry engagement enables students to connect theory with practice and deepen their understanding of performance and communication.

Explore more Performing Arts learning opportunities through upcoming programme activities and engagements.



### Separating Facts from Assumptions in English Language Instruction

How should English be taught and used in the classroom, particularly in subjects such as mathematics and science? In a recent commentary published in The Edge Malaysia, **Dr Tiong Ngee Derk**, Assistant Professor from the **School of Education**, examines this question through a teaching and learning lens, challenging widely held assumptions about English-medium instruction

The article highlights the importance of cognitive access in learning, particularly at foundational levels. Students develop core understanding in mathematics and science most effectively when taught in a language they understand well, allowing them to engage fully with concepts, reasoning and problem-solving. While increased exposure to English can support language development, the piece emphasises that this should not come at the expense of subject comprehension.

By reframing the discussion, the commentary draws attention to what matters most in teaching practice: the quality of instruction, clarity of explanation and alignment with learners' linguistic realities. Rather than relying on assumptions about language as a medium, it calls for a more considered approach that strengthens English teaching directly, while ensuring that subject learning remains effective and inclusive.

This perspective reflects ongoing work within the Faculty to support evidence-informed teaching and meaningful engagement with real-world education challenges, bridging classroom practice with wider public discourse.

Effective teaching and learning depend on aligning language use with how students learn best, supported by strong pedagogy rather than assumptions about medium of instruction.

Read the full commentary to explore its implications for teaching and learning:

[🔗 https://theedgemalaysia.com/node/797140](https://theedgemalaysia.com/node/797140)



### **Inter-University Executive Programme with Lingnan University, Hong Kong**

The **School of Education** in collaboration with the **Partnerships Hub**, hosted the Inter-University Executive Programme from 12–18 April, welcoming 19 students from Lingnan University, Hong Kong, accompanied by their course coordinator, **Dr Colin Zhai**. The participants, from the Master of Arts in International Higher Education and Management (IHEM) programme, visited to gain insights into quality assurance, curriculum design, and governance practices in international higher education, with UNM and Malaysia serving as a contextual case study.

The programme featured contributions from speakers across Schools and Departments across the University, alongside engagement with UNM students, reflecting the School's commitment to global engagement and collaborative learning. Participants described the experience as engaging, informative, and eye-opening.

This initiative marks a step towards strengthening institutional ties between Lingnan University and UNM, supporting ongoing knowledge exchange and growing interest in postgraduate study pathways. It also highlights the role of international programmes in fostering dialogue and shared understanding across higher education systems.

International programmes create meaningful opportunities for shared learning, institutional collaboration, and deeper understanding of global higher education practices.

Learn more about international engagement initiatives and future collaborative programmes through the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Read our social media post here on [LinkedIn](#).



### **NUBS Malaysia Doctoral Candidate Receives Prestigious DAAD Bi- National Scholarship**

**Nottingham University Business School (NUBS) Malaysia** celebrates a significant milestone with **Mr Amirun Haqqim bin Eldeen Husaini** becoming the first doctoral candidate from the School to receive the DAAD Bi-National Doctoral Scholarship, one of Germany's most competitive academic awards.

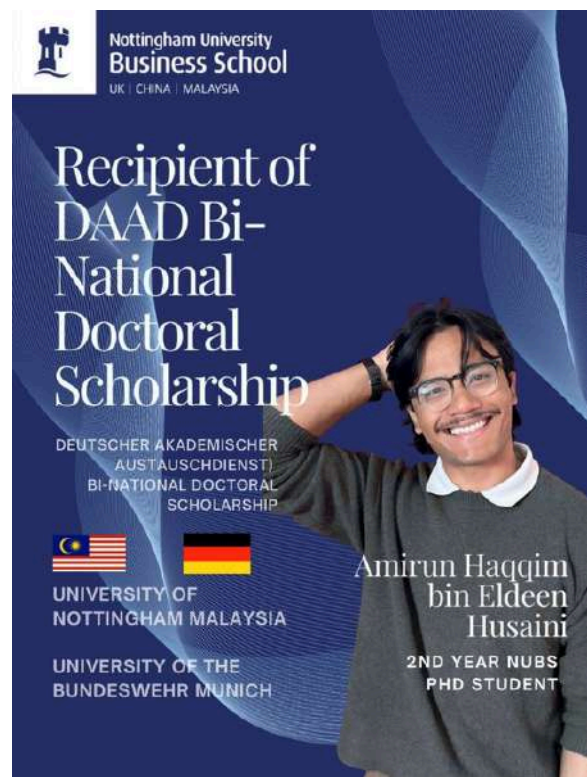
Already a recipient of the University of Nottingham Malaysia PhD Scholarship, Haqqim's work has now been recognised at both institutional and international levels. His research, situated at the intersection of computational social science and political psychology, examines how polarising narratives emerge and spread within digital environments.

As part of the scholarship, he will undertake a funded research stay at the Bundeswehr University Munich, collaborating with Professor Stefan Pickl and Professor Max Moll from the COMTESSA research group, while continuing his doctoral studies under the supervision of **Professor Yvonne Hsin-Vonn Seow** at NUBS Malaysia.

This achievement reflects the strength of doctoral research within NUBS Malaysia and highlights the growing international reach of its research community.

International recognition of doctoral research highlights the impact and global relevance of work emerging from the Business School in UNM.

Learn more about postgraduate research opportunities and achievements at **Nottingham University Business School** Malaysia and across the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.





## NUBS Malaysia Students Receive BDO Book Prize Award 2026

Nottingham University Business School (NUBS) Malaysia congratulates the recipients of the BDO Book Prize Award 2026, recognising outstanding academic performance and dedication.

The award was presented to **Ms Che Nur Zakirah Che Mat Sidek** (BSc Finance, Accounting and Management, Year 3) for the Audit and Assurance 1 module, and **Ms Jamie Pek Wen Xuen** (BSc Finance, Accounting and Management, Year 2) for Business Law module. Their achievements reflect sustained commitment, perseverance, and a strong work ethic.

The School also extends its appreciation to **Ms Thong Siew Fong**, Executive Director of Talent Recruitment at BDO, for joining the celebration, and to BDO Malaysia for their continued support in recognising student excellence. The award highlights not only academic accomplishment, but also the development of skills and knowledge relevant to future professional practice in the accounting field.

Recognising academic excellence supports student development and prepares graduates for future professional impact.

Learn more about student achievements and academic opportunities at **Nottingham University Business School** Malaysia.

*Thank you for reading!*

<p>FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES NEWSLETTER TEAM</p>	<p><a href="https://www.nottingham.edu.my/social-sciences">NOTTINGHAM.EDU.MY/SOCIAL-SCIENCES</a></p>
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