

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT OF A DEGREE IN HALAL ADMINISTRATION: EXPERIENCE IN CURRICULUM DESIGN IN UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA PAHANG (UMP)

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Abstract

Halal (a term refers to Islamic religious permission of use of goods and services) has become a global awareness in the last decade including in the non-muslim countries. Business transaction of halal products has grown rapidly and the latest figure shows the halal business value reaches USD1.7 trillion in 2009 around the globe. As more and more industry players involve in halal business, the need for qualified people to administer the halal matters tops the priority. Halal consultancy, research and commercialization are keys to successful halal business. Apparently, there is a critical shortage of qualified people who can work in the halal industries. UMP has taken a maiden step to develop such academic qualification to fulfill these vacancies. The paper will share experience in the curriculum design for Bachelor of Science in Halal Administration in the UMP. Focus is mainly given to discussions on the subject mapping, process flow, regulations stipulated by the Malaysian Qualification Agency (MQA) and views from the university's senate. Special attention is also drawn to the market survey, the establishment of Board of Studies as well as Expert Panels for the program. Even though most of the development processes meet the standard, the most critical part lies in the contents of each subjects offered and the marketability of graduates produced.

Keywords: Curriculum design, degree in Halal, academic qualification, Halal business, administration.

1 INTRODUCTION

Based on many facts and figures in the global halal scenario since more than a decade ago, it seem that there is an alarming missing gap between the mushrooming halal industries and the need of knowledgeable human capital in the halal mainstream. Observations from the various industry players especially in Malaysia and other neighbouring Asean countries concluded that lack of people who can observe halal affair and business can have negative impact in the long term. No qualified people in this fast growing industries means that companies involved in halal cannot ensure the greener pastures in the business. Halal Industry Development Corporation

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(HDC)³, for instance, has been leading the Malaysian halal business promotion since 2006 and undertaking the overall development of the Halal industry in Malaysia. It focuses on development of Halal standards, plus capacity building for Halal products and services. HDC also promotes participation and facilitates growth of Malaysian companies in the global Halal market and sets the bar for Halal best practices in Malaysia to enrich the development of Halal standards. Another government department involved in this capacity building including halal affairs is Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM)⁴.

Since these two agencies are not an academic institution which can dedicate to develop qualified people to manage halal industries, UMP takes its maiden step to bring forward the halal affairs into the academic circle for knowledge management structure. Taken by the Department of Human Science UMP, the faculty has established special academic task force to develop a programme so called Bachelor of Science in Halal Administration. By establishing this specific degree in halal administration, the halal industries will be able to better manage their halal matters in confident. Halal and non-halal factories in the near future for example can employ these graduates to help them in establishing halal management system in house according to the halal standard. Private, government and state agencies can also benefit from the newly existed halal management expert in the market. In the latest development in Malaysia, the Halal Act⁵ will be introduced in 2011 and this means stricter regulations will be imposed and the halal companies can take this opportunity to employ experts in halal to manage their halal matter.

2. STATE OF THE GLOBAL HALAL INDUSTRY

Global halal industry has consistently been on the rise in many parts of the world at least for a decade already. The market for halal food around the globe is becoming bigger and bigger by years. There is an emerging interest among Muslim consumers everywhere to consume halal products and this becomes a good sign for global halal market. A research conducted by the World Halal Secretariat estimated that the global Halal products market is estimated at a whopping USD 2.3 trillion (not including banking), which USD1.4 trillion (67 per cent) of this market represents food and beverages. Pharmaceuticals on the other hand make up USD506 billion (22 per cent), with cosmetics and personal care amounting to USD230 billion.⁶ A worldwide published report by A.T. Kearney (2007) revealed the following: "Since Muslims are the fastest growing consumer segment in the world, any company that is not considering how to serve them is missing a significant opportunity to affect both its top and bottom line growth. Although there are political and social pitfalls to consider, the opportunity is so vast and far-reaching that they greatly outweigh the risk. With many of the world's consumer segments reaching a saturation point, the Muslim consumer is fast becoming a new outlet to build a base for future growth"⁷.

From this big growth scenario in halal business, it seems that many food and non-food including cosmetics, logistic, pharmaceutical and relevant industries will go halal in the future. This means

³ a government agency dedicated for boosting the Halal agenda in terms of standards development, branding enhancement as well as commercial and industry development.

⁴ Lead agency managing the affairs of Muslims in Malaysia at the federal level and the secretariat to the national council for religious affairs of Muslim

⁵ The Government is to introduce the Halal Act next year which, among others, only recognises Halal certificates and logos issued by the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM). Halal Act will be imposing severe penalties to manufacturers who fail to comply. Currently, offences related to Halal certification and logo is governed under the Trade Description Act 1972 - Trade Description (Use of Expression Halal) Order 1975 with punishment of up to RM200,000 fine or 2 years imprisonment or both.

⁶ Halal Journal, Issue July+Aug 2010, p. 27.

⁷ In Executive Review 2010 World Halal Forum, Feature article, p.13 .

more human capital will be needed to administer this business in the global stage. It is estimated that total Muslims in Europe will reach 54.7 million in 2010 and the average level of awareness in the world is in increase. For example, meat and meat-based awareness level is 94-98% while processed food is about 40-64%. Pharmaceuticals and cosmetics and personal care are starting to increase between 18-30% awareness level⁸.

3. SUBJECT MAPPING

To map a group of subject for the purpose of preparing the best graduan who is able administer the halal affair in the world has never been easy. The process started with identification of knowledge cluster in order to balance the programme curriculum structure. Subject mapping must be in accordance to the proportion stipulated by the academic university system. It must also suit the programme's learning outcomes. The Programme's Learning Outcomes (LO) for the Bachelor of Sciences in Halal Administration is as follows:

Upon completion of the programme, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding on Halal fundamental principles
- Acquire adequate understanding on the application of productivity and quality system in halal industries.
- Apply knowledge and analytical skills in solving problems regarding muslim consumerism and halal issues
- Demonstrate knowledge, ethics and professionalism in halal industries and change agents
- Develop experts and future scholars with ICT skills and applications in halal industries.

Based on this, the faculty has categorized two programme's core subjects. This does not include the UMP's core subjects and the electives⁹.

Table 1

Courses offered in the Programme

Faculty's Core Subjects	Programme's Core Subjects
Introduction to Human Capital Development, Introduction to Communication and Technology	Introduction to Science of Halal
Professional Ethics	Introduction to Shariah
Research Methodology	Islamic Principles
Statistics for Human Sciences	Islamic Mu'amalah
Creative Thinking and Problem Solving	Halal Business
Final Year Project I	Usul Fiqh
Industrial Training	Halal Resources
Industrial Training Report	Islamic Banking and Finance
	Food Safety & Hygiene
	Qawaid Fiqhiyyah (Legal Maxims)
	Global Halal
	Halal Manufacturing
	Halal Product and Services
	Halal Guidelines and Database/ Information System Design for Halal

⁸ In Executive Review 2010 World Halal Forum, Feature article, p.15 .

⁹ University's core subjects includes Technical English, Islamic and Asian Civilizations 1, Brigid Siswa, Technical Writing, Malaysian Studies, Academic Report Writing, Soft Skills 1, Foreign Language, Co-Curriculum, Ethnic relation and Technopreneurship

	Biotechnology
	Halal Institutions
	Fiqh Halal wa Haram
	Halal Assurance System
	Halal Audit System and Consultancy
	Legal Issues in Halal

In order to ensure that subjects offered to student during their learning activities match the target, they must follow the regulation stipulated by the Ministry is followed accordingly. The Table 2 below shows the Credit Hours for the Programme based on teaching semester.

Table 2¹⁰

Subject	University's Core	Faculty's Core	Programme's Core	Electives	Total Credit Hours / Semester
Sem 1	5	3	9		17
Sem 2	4	3	9		16
Sem 3	4	3	9	2	18
Sem 4	4	3	9		16
Sem 5	4	3	9	2	18
Sem 6	3	3	10	2	18
Sem 7			16		16
Sem 8			12		12
Total Credit Hours	24	18	83	6	131
Credit Hours Percentage	18.32%	13.74%	63.35%	4.6%	100%

Total credit hours suggested is 131 with the highest weightage goes to the programmes core subjects which takes 63 % or 83 credit. Duration of study is 4 years or 8 semesters which the last is dedicated to industrial training.

4. MARKETABILITY STUDIES

Market survey will be an indicator to show that any programme offered will be viable in the market when the students graduated. It is a very hard job to make a reliable survey due to well-known reason amongst Malaysian companies i.e not interested. Standard questionnaires from Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia for programme development have been used. The questionnaire consists of 20 questions and the result is shown as follows:

¹⁰ Note for Table 2:

1 credit = 40 hours learning time

Student's Learning Time / day : Normal allocation between 6-9 hours

(131 credit hours x 40) / 8 semesters / 14 weeks / 6 days = **7.8 hours / day**

Table 3
Market Survey Report

Item	Response	
	Yes	No
Q1: Type of industry / organization	Local:	100%
	Foreign	0%
Q2: Programme fulfills basic theory in the relevant field	93%	7%
Q3: Programme is relevant in the current time	93%	7%
Q4: Subjek supports the strength of the programme	91%	9%
Q5: Programme covers all relevant subjects	77%	23%
Q6: There are irrelevant subjects in the programme	18%	82%
Q7: Programme covers basic theory	100%	0%
Q8: Programme fulfills current concept	96%	4%
Q9: Programme accords legal requirement (legal)	89%	11%
Q10: Programme covers ICT use	100%	0%
Q11: Programme fulfills quantitative approach	100%	0%
Q12: Programme is relevant to market's demand	96%	4%
Q13: Duration of study suggested is suitable	98%	2%
Q14: Duration of industrial training for one semester is adequate	96%	4%
Q15: Number of position provided for graduate of this programme	1-2 position = 75%	
	3-4 position = 9%	
	5-6 position = 2%	
	Others = 14%	
Q16: Wage suitable for the graduate of this programme	<RM1000 = 16%	
	RM1001-1500 = 14%	
	RM1501-2000 = 34%	
	RM2001-2500 = 34%	
	>RM2500 = 2%	
Q17: Programme is suitable to be enhanced to next degree	82%	18%
Q18: Does your organization fund students of this programme	14%	86%
Q19: Do you encourage your staff to embark in this programme	71%	29%
Q20: This programme is able to produce graduate that can match the market demand	91%	9%

From the survey, it can be highlighted that response from the industries involved in the survey is quite positive and have shown good interest especially in employability scheme. Most companies respond positively to programme's theoretical framework, ICT application, relevancy to market's demands, duration of study as well as duration of industrial training. More than 90 per cent of companies agree that this programme has the strength to produce graduate that can work on the market.

5. PROCESS FLOW

For UMP, being a relatively new university, process to develop any program can become a tedious job. Based on previous successfully offered program, an executive summary of such program is sufficient to be brought to the Academic Senate's Committee of UMP¹¹. In the sitting, the senate members will be discussing the proposal elements namely title of program,

¹¹ (Jawatankuasa Tetap Senat Universiti - JKTS)

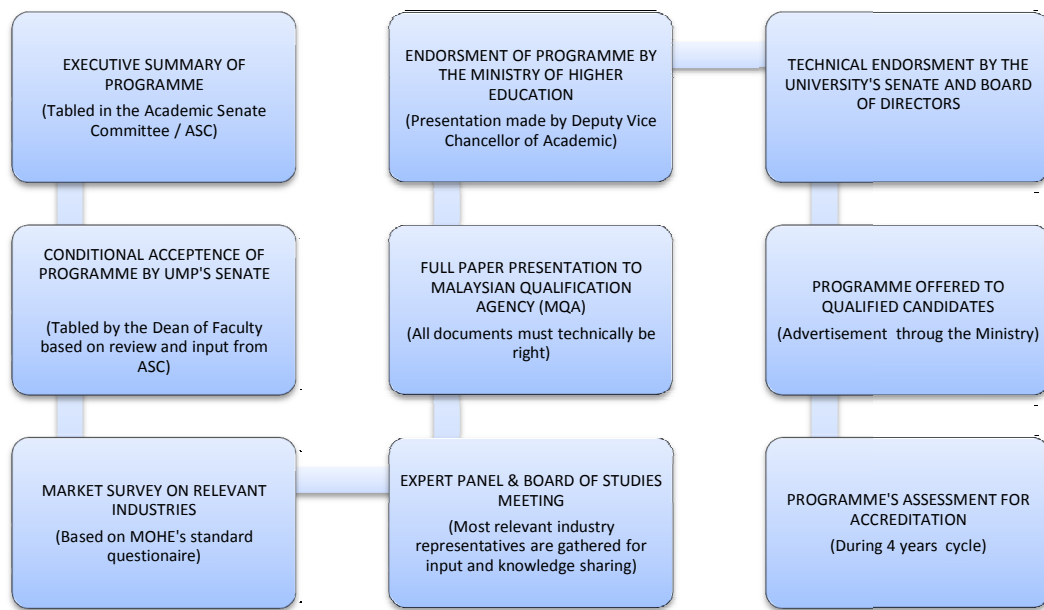
objectives, duration, and so on in brief. If the proposal is accepted, the next step is to prepare the detail information of the program including the budget, intakes, staffing and lecturer's current loading.

In case of the Bachelor of Science in Halal Administration, the first step was successfully defended and the program was recommended to be tabled at the University's Senate Meeting. Further, the process goes to the curriculum designing which take 6-9 month of preparation, discussion, consultation, moderation and review. When all these are properly prepared, the next process is to meet the industry or expert panel in this degree field i.e halal. Meeting with the expert panel becomes like a pilot survey before the actual survey is implemented. Positive response or otherwise for the programme presented means that more adjustment, review, restructure, change or whatsoever must be done accordingly.

Next crucial process to the programme development should be the actual market survey. The result will be used to strengthen the quality of programme and it is an important part of document to be presented to the MQA. Once the programme overcome all technical examination in the MQA, the document is ready to be submitted to the MOHE Malaysia. This is the final stage of programme development which will be studies thoroughly by the ministry.

When MOHE has approved the programme, the document will be technically endorsed by the Senate of university and Board of University Directors. The programme is implementable when it becomes part of university programmes.

Figure 1
Process Flow (according to UMP's practice)



6. EXPERT PANEL (EP) AND BOARD OF STUDIES (BOS)

According to the Malaysia Qualification Agency (MQA), all programme must provide the expert panels from the relevant industries and also from the academic circle. Industry/expert panels are representatives that can give inputs of current situation in the market while the academic representatives are those who can look into academic structure of the programme. In case of the Bachelor of Science in Halal Administration, the faculty has successfully identified several individual from industry player that heavily involved in halal. Board of Studies (BOS) is another list of panel that is required by the MQA. Number of panel in the BOS can be lesser than those in the Expert Panel.

The process starts from identification of expert, agreement, invitation to expert panel meeting and finally endorsement by university authority. Experts called for the meeting and discussion will be officially appointed by the UMP and be fully paid expenses and consultation and the rate is determined by the university. Teething problem can sometimes happen when it comes to date of meeting and attendance. Depending on necessity, such meeting can drag to few days and few meetings in order to get good review and input from many parties. Below are list of industry panelist whose commitment towards the programme has been invaluable.

Table 4

Expert Industry Panel

<i>Othman Md Yusoff</i>	<i>Chairman of Nestle Halal Committee Regulatory Affairs</i>
<i>Mohd Azwar Mahmud</i>	<i>Director Tanjung Manis Food & Industrial Park Sdn Bhd</i>
<i>Darhim Bin Dali Hashim</i>	<i>Chief Executive officer of International Halal Integrity Alliance Ltd (IHI alliance)</i>
<i>Dato' Dr. Mohd Hashim Tajudin</i>	<i>Group managing Director of Chemical Company Of Malaysia Berhad (CCM).</i>
<i>Rohaizad Hassan</i>	<i>Manager Halal Knowledge Centre HDC Halal Industry Development Corporation Sdn Bhd</i>
<i>Tn Hj. Abdul Rafek Saleh</i>	<i>Halal Audit And Compliance, Malaysia Airlines</i>
<i>Mohd Amri Abdullah</i>	<i>Halal Affairs JAKIM Malaysia</i>
<i>Assoc Prof Dr Norzaidi Mohd Daud</i>	<i>Head of ICT Support Division UTM</i>
<i>Irfan Sungkar</i>	<i>Global Food Research And Advisory Sdn. Bhd</i>
<i>Tan Sri Dato' Muhammad Ali bin Hashim</i>	<i>Chairman of KFC Holding (Malaysia) Bhd (KFCH) President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Johor Corporation (Jcorp)</i>

7. CONCLUSION

Designing a specific curriculum for halal administration has been a great new challenge to the academic circle especially in Malaysia. In the first place, there is no significant attempt to design such curriculum as halal is academically perceived as lack of body of knowledge. Halal is a peripheral matter to be consider a main focus. This is the input that has been circulated around the academicians when a proposal of having a specific degree of this kind to be suggested. In fact, halal can be considered as complete body of knowledge as it is a specific system of faculty within the teaching of Islam.

Second challenge in this programme development is to convince the MOHE that there will be market for the graduates who take this course. Even though the market survey shows good response to employability in halal sector, public tend to see it differently by observation that halal graduate has no specific job in the market.

The need for halal experts, consultants, executives, managers, lecturers is very much inter-related with the halal regulation regionally and globally. Halal consumers will also play critical roles in advancing halal to the next height. Many halal business in the pipelines and graduate of halal in the making are the answer to growth global halal industry worldwide.

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