

# IIUM

## TRACER STUDY

# 2016



KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN TINGGI



**Alumni and Global Networking**  
**DIVISION**  
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

# IIUM 2016

## TRACER STUDY

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## PREFACE

Much research has been conducted to studying graduates' employability and their pattern of employment after graduation. Research of such nature is known as Tracer Study. The aim of the Tracer Study is to track graduates' performance or progress after completing their undergraduate/postgraduate studies. While data on employment among graduates is important, other higher-education related issues are as equally important. IUM Tracer Study 2016 goes beyond studying the employment related issues of IUM graduates. It studies graduates' perception on academic programme as well as graduates' suggestions to improve quality of programmes by *Kulliyah*.

A total of 4493 graduates responded to this study that comprised both of first- degree graduates and post-graduates. They comprised both undergraduates and postgraduates from all *Kulliyah*. They include;

1. Ahmad Ibrahim *Kulliyah* of Laws (AIKOL),
2. IUM Institute of Islamic Banking and Finance (IIBF),
3. International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC),
4. International Institute for Halal Research and Training (INHART)
5. *Kulliyah* of Allied Health Science (KAHS),
6. *Kulliyah* of Architecture and Environmental Design (KAED),
7. *Kulliyah* of Dentistry (KOD),
8. *Kulliyah* of Engineering (KOE),
9. *Kulliyah* of Economics and Management (KENMS),
10. *Kulliyah* of Education (KOED),
11. *Kulliyah* of Information and Communication Technology (KICT),
12. *Kulliyah* of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (KIRKHS),
13. *Kulliyah* of Language and Management (KLM)
14. *Kulliyah* of Medicine (KOM),
15. *Kulliyah* of Nursing (KON),
16. *Kulliyah* of Pharmacy (KOP), and
17. *Kulliyah* of Science (KOS).

An online survey method was adopted in this study. The instrument used was an online questionnaire prepared by the Alumni and Global Networking Division with cooperation from relevant K/C/D/Is and Information Technology Division. The questionnaire was posted online a month prior to the 32<sup>nd</sup> convocation ceremony which was held from 7<sup>th</sup> November to 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016. The respondents submitted their online questionnaire latest by 5<sup>th</sup> November 2016. The data were analysed using Atlas.ti.

## ABBREVIATION AND TERMINOLOGY

AIKOL		: Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyah of Laws
	LLB	: Bachelor of Laws
	LLB_S	: Bachelor of Laws (Shari'ah)
	MCL	: Master of Comparative Laws
	MILIR	: Master in International Law and International Relations
	P_Law	: Doctor of Philosophy (Law)
CGPA		: Cumulative Grade Point Average
Employability		: The state of being employed
Employment Pattern		: Occupation figures
Employment		: A person's work or occupation
First Degree Graduates		: Students graduated with a Bachelor's degree
HEI		: Higher Education Institution
HS		: Human Sciences Departments
IIBF		: IIUM Institute of Islamic Banking and Finance
	PIBF	: Doctor of Philosophy (Islamic Banking and Finance)
	MIBF	: Master of Science (Islamic Banking and Finance)
IIITC		: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization
	PITC	: Doctor of Philosophy (Islamic Thought and Civilizations)
	MAITC	: Master of Arts (Islamic Thought and Civilizations)
IIHRT		: International Institute for Halal Research and Training
	P_HI	: Doctor of Philosophy (Halal Industry)
	MAHIM	: Master of Arts (Halal Industry Management)
	MSHIS	: Master of Science (Halal Industry)
IIUM		: International Islamic University Malaysia
IRK		: Islamic Revealed Knowledge Department
KOED		: Kulliyah of Education
KIRKHS		: Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences
		: Bachelor of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Fiqh and Usul al-Fiqh)
		: Bachelor of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Qur'an and Sunnah Studies)
		: Bachelor of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Usul al-Din and Comparative Religion)
	COMM	: Bachelor of Human Sciences (Communication)
	DALL	: Bachelor of Human Sciences (Arabic Language and Literature)
	DELL	: Bachelor of Human Sciences (English Language and Literature)
	HIST	: Bachelor of Human Sciences (History and Civilizations)
	MHSLG	: Master of Human Sciences in English Language Studies
	MHSAL	: Master of Human Sciences in Applied Linguistics
	MHSL	: Master of Human Sciences in English Literary Studies
	MHSPY	: Master of Human Sciences in Psychology
	MHSCM	: Master of Human Sciences in Communication
	MHSPS	: Master of Human Sciences in Political Science
	MHSHC	: Master of Human Sciences in History and Civilization
	MHSSA	: Master of Human Sciences in Sociology and Anthropology

	MAIRK	: Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage
	MASL	: Master of Arts in Arabic as a Second Language
	MAALT	: Master of Arts in Arabic Literary Studies
	MAAL	: Master of Arts in Arabic Linguistics Studies
	PIRKH	: Doctor of Philosophy Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage
	P_ART	: Doctor of Philosophy (Arabic Literary Studies)
	P_ALS	: Doctor of Philosophy (Arabic Linguistic Studies)
	P_ELS	: Doctor of Philosophy (English Language Studies)
	P_ELT	: Doctor of Philosophy (English Literary Studies)
	P_PSY	: Doctor of Philosophy (Psychology)
	P_COM	: Doctor of Philosophy (Communication)
	P_PSI	: Doctor of Philosophy (Political Science)
	P_HC	: Doctor of Philosophy (History and Civilization)
	P_SA	: Doctor of Philosophy (Sociology and Anthropology)
	PSCI	: Bachelor of Human Sciences (Political Science)
	PSYC	: Bachelor of Human Sciences (Psychology)
	SOCA	: Bachelor of Human Sciences (Sociology and Anthropology)
KAED		: Kulliyah of Architecture and Environmental Design
	P_AED	: Doctor of Philosophy (Built Environment)
	MURP	: Master of Urban and Regional Planning
	MSBSE	: Master of Science in Building Services Engineering
	MSAFM	: Master of Science (Asset and Facilities Management)
	MSBE	: Master of Science (Built Environment)
	MUM	: Master of Urban Management
	MQSIP	: Master of Science in Quantity Surveying and International Procurement
	AAD	: Bachelor of Applied Arts and Design
	AAR	: Bachelor of Architecture
	ALA	: Bachelor of Landscape Architecture
	AQS	: Bachelor of Quantity Surveying
	ARCH	: Bachelor of Science (Architectural Studies)
	URP	: Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning
KAHS		: Kulliyah of Allied Health Sciences
	P_AHS	: Doctor of Philosophy in Health Sciences
	MHSC	: Master of Health Sciences
	AUD	: Bachelor of Audiology
	BIOMD	: Bachelor of Biomedical Science
	DIET	: Bachelor of Dietetics
	OPT	: Bachelor of Optometry
		: Bachelor of Physiotherapy
	RDI	: Bachelor of Radiography and Diagnostic Imaging
KENMS		: Kulliyah of Economics and Management Sciences
	P_ECO	: Doctor of Philosophy (Economics)
	P_BA	: Doctor of Philosophy (Business Administration)
	P_ACC	: Doctor of Philosophy (Accounting)
	MEC	: Master of Economics
	MSACC	: Master of Science (Accounting)



	MSFIN	: Master of Science (Finance)
	MMKTG	: Master of Science (Marketing)
	BBM	: Bachelor of Business Management
	B.ACC	: Bachelor of Accounting
	BBA	: Bachelor of Business Administration
	BECS	: Bachelor of Economics
		: Bachelor of Economics
	ISFIN	: Bachelor of Science (Islamic Finance)
		: Bachelor Business Management
KICT		: Kulliyah of Information and Communication Technology
	P_ ICT	: Doctor of Philosophy (Information Technology)
	P_ LIB	: Doctor of Philosophy (Library and Information Science)
	P_ CS	: Doctor of Philosophy (Computer Science)
	MIT	: Master of Information Technology
	MLIS	: Master of Library and Information Science
	MCS	: Master of Computer Science
	BCS	: Bachelor of Computer Science
	BIT	: Bachelor of Information Technology
KLM		: Kulliyah of Languages and Management
	MATEL	: Master of Arts (Teaching English for Specific Purposes)
	MATAL	: Master of Arts (Teaching Arabic for Specific Purposes)
		: Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in English for International Communication
		: Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Malay for International Communication
		: Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Arabic for International Communication
KOD		: Kulliyah of Dentistry
	DENT	: Bachelor of Dental Surgery
KOE		: Kulliyah of Engineering
	P_ ENG	: Doctor of Philosophy (Engineering)
	MSCIE	: Master of Science (Computer and Information Engineering)
	MSMFG	: Master of Science (Manufacturing Engineering)
	MSMCT	: Master of Science (Mechatronic Engineering)
	MSMAT	: Master of Science (Materials Engineering)
	MSCE	: Master of Science (Communication Engineering)
	MSEE	: Master of Science (Electronics Engineering)
	MSAE	: Master of Science (Automotive Engineering)
	MSBTE	: Master of Science (Biotechnology Engineering)
	MSME	: Master of Science (Mechanical Engineering)
		: Bachelor of Engineering
	AERO	: Bachelor of Engineering (Aerospace)
	BIO	: Bachelor of Engineering (Biochemical-Biotechnology)
		: Bachelor of Engineering (Civil)
		: Bachelor of Engineering (Communication)
	CIE	: Bachelor of Engineering (Electronics-Computer and Information)
	MFG	: Bachelor of Engineering (Manufacturing)

	MATER	: Bachelor of Engineering (Materials)
	AUTOM	: Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical-Automotive)
	MCT	: Bachelor of Engineering (Mechatronics)
KOED		: Kulliyah of Education
	P_EDU	: Doctor of Philosophy (Education)
	MED	: Master of Education
	GUIDP	: Bachelor of Education (Educational Management)
	GUIDE	: Bachelor of Education (Guidance and Counselling)
	ISEDP	: Bachelor of Education (Islamic Education)
	TEASL	: Bachelor of Education (Teaching Arabic as a Second Language)
	TESLP	: Bachelor of Education (Teaching English as a Second Language)
KOM		: Kulliyah of Medicine
	P_MDS	: Doctor of Philosophy (Medical Sciences)
	MMDSC	: Master of Medical Sciences
	MMA	: Master of Medicine (Anesthesiology)
	MOG	: Master of Obstetrics and Gynecology
	MORTH	: Master of Orthopedic Surgery
	MOS	: Master of Surgery (General Surgery)
	MIM	: Master of Medicine (Internal Medicine)
	MFM	: Master of Medicine (Family Medicine)
	MMR	: Master of Medicine (Radiology)
	MBBS	: Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery
KON		: Kulliyah of Nursing
	PBBHS	: Doctor of Philosophy in Biobehavioural Health Sciences
	P_IN	: Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing
	MBBHS	: Master of Biobehavioural Health Sciences
	MINS	: Master in Nursing Science
	NURS	: Bachelor of Nursing
KOP		: Kulliyah of Pharmacy
	PCPH	: Doctor of Philosophy in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmacy Practice)
	PPHC	: Doctor of Philosophy in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmaceutical Chemistry)
	PPHA	: Doctor of Philosophy in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmacology)
	PPHT	: Doctor of Philosophy in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmaceutical Technology)
	PPHY	: Doctor of Philosophy in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Physiology)
	MSPHP	: Master in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmacy Practice)
	MSPHC	: Master in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmaceutical Chemistry)
	MSPHA	: Master in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmacology)
	MSPHT	: Master in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmaceutical Technology)
	MSPHY	: Master in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Physiology)
	MSIPH	: Master of Science (Industrial Pharmacy)
	PMACY	: Bachelor of Pharmacy
KOS		: Kulliyah of Science
	BSMS	: Bachelor of Biomedical Science
	BSBT	: Bachelor of Biotechnology

	: Bachelor of Mathematical Sciences
	: Bachelor of Science (Applied Chemistry)
	: Bachelor of Science (Honours) (Marine Science and Technology)
	: Bachelor of Science (Honours) (Plant Science)
	: Bachelor of Science (Physics)
	: Bachelor of Science (Honours) (Applied Plant Science)
MSCTS	: Master of Science (Computational and Theoretical Sciences)
MSBSC	: Master of Science (Biosciences)
MSBTS	: Master of Science (Biotechnology)
P_CTS	: Doctor of Philosophy (Computational and Theoretical Sciences)
P_BSC	: Doctor of Philosophy (Biosciences)
P_BTS	: Doctor of Philosophy (Biotechnology)
<i>Kulliyah</i>	: Faculty
M	: Means
MBBS	: Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery
MOE	: Ministry of Education
MOHE	: Ministry of Higher Education
SD	: Standard Deviation
TS	: Tracer Study

# **CHAPTER 1**

---

**INTRODUCTION TO  
IIUM TRACER STUDY 2016**

## 1.1 Introduction

International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) aims to produce fully functioning *insan* who will serve as agents for change in their respective communities. The academic programmes and activities are designed to support the University's education so as to produce graduates with necessary employability capabilities such as knowledge, skills, abilities, and other desirable attributes toward employment. Since the year 2000, the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) has started a research project to study the employability of her graduates, their patterns of employment, their views on the University's programme, and other work-related issues. The study is important as it helps the University to ascertain whether the University has adequately equipped her students with the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities in meeting the demands of the job market. In addition, since 2003, the IIUM Tracer Study was conducted to assess the graduates' level of satisfaction towards the University's facilities and services. The study also assesses their perception of the University's academic programmes, and other student development initiatives. In short, IIUM Tracer Study is a research conducted by the University to assess the attainment of educational objectives of the University.

## 1.2 IIUM Tracer Study 2016

The main aim of IIUM Tracer Study 2016 is to complement the study conducted by the Ministry of Higher Education (or IIUM Tracer Study 2016: First Degree and Post Graduates). It aims to study the perception of IIUM graduates 2016 towards graduates towards advantages and disadvantages of Studying at IIUM. Besides that, it also includes the IIUM graduates' suggestions for Departments, *Kulliyah*, *Mahallah*, and University level. Based on the suggestion, it highlighted several issues that need to be improved at all management in IIUM. The IIUM TS 2016 also present graduates' suggestion to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The suggestions include for quality improvement of programmes pursued, increasing relevance of programmes to industrial needs, and producing competent and more employable graduates. The IIUM Tracer Study 2016 summaries into three chapters:

Chapter 1 : Introduction to IIUM Tracer Study 2016

Chapter 2 : Graduates' Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Studying at IIUM

Chapter 3 : Graduates' Suggestions to Improve the Quality of Teaching and Learning

## 1.3 Method

This Tracer Study report maintains particular methodological procedures in obtaining the information about the graduates (Class of 2016). Below are some elaborations about the procedures.

### 1.3.1 Participants

A total of 4493 graduates responded to this study that comprised both of first-degree graduates and postgraduates. Their responses were received within one month prior to their convocation.

### **1.3.2 Questionnaire**

The IJUM Tracer Study questionnaire was made up of two sections assessing various dimensions. Section A contains open-ended questions, measuring graduates' views on the advantages and disadvantages while studying at IJUM. Likewise, Section B allows graduates to write their suggestions to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the institution. Both section A and B uses combined questions of dichotomies and adopts open-ended questions.

### **1.4 Time-Frame**

The study was conducted between 1<sup>st</sup> October to 4<sup>th</sup> November 2016 before the 32<sup>nd</sup> convocation ceremony (5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> October 2016). The graduates were given a time period of one month to respond to the online tracer study questionnaires.

### **1.5 Data Analysis**

The data analyses were conducted using ATLAS.ti since the questions are open-ended. The responses given were short and limited, the word cruncher technique was used to capture the most frequent cited by the IJUM graduates 2016. The analysis was then deliberated by thematising the terms/words into particular context. It was done by open-coding the particular themes based on the responses given by the respondents. Most important excerpts were highlighted in the report.



# **CHAPTER 2**

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## **ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF STUDYING AT IIUM**



## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents graduates' perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of studying at IUM. The graduates were given opportunities to share and elaborate their opinions and experiences studying at IUM in open-ended sections of the survey. They were further asked to give constructive suggestions at various levels, namely Departments, *Kulliyah*, *Mahallah* and the University.

## 2.2 Advantages of Studying at IUM

The graduates were asked about the advantages gained while studying at IUM (Table 2.1). From a total of 4493 graduates who participated in the survey, 79.2% (n=3559) provided their opinions about the advantages of studying at IUM. Considering the normal reluctance towards answering open-ended questions, the proportion who participated is very encouraging and their views could provide better insights to the quantitative findings of this study.

Many respondents (34.7%, n=1237) stated that the Islamic environment and learning was the main advantage of being IUM graduates. They believed that their exposure to Islamic concepts of knowledge has given them a huge advantage as compared to the graduates from other universities. In addition, many claimed that studying at IUM provided them with the Islamic environment and culture that allow them to be closer to Islam. Some of the graduates stated:

*"It is blessed to study in Islamic environment where people around me practising baiah solehah."*; *"Islamic environment of IUM helps students to become better Muslim."*; *"Islamic environment promote the students to become better Muslims."*; *"Islamic environment that different with other universities"*.

Furthermore, the Islamic environment in IUM enables students to polish their language communication skills. They said:

*"Mix with various culture and ethnic, learn to know so many people. English as medium of instruction so give the student opportunity to be better in English in future."*; *"My English gets better in line with my networking with international students"*.

But most importantly, the Islamic environment of IUM enables the students to better practise and appreciate the Islamic way of life. A respondent said:

*"Being exposed to the Islamic environment that might not be found at another institution"*.

A small proportion of the respondents (6.6%, n=236) claimed that language exposure is one of the advantages of being IUM graduates. Some of them are of the opinion that having English language as the medium of instruction has helped students to improve their fluency and confidence in English oral and writing communication skills. The following excerpts provide a few views of the graduates with regards to English language at IUM:

*"Able to improve the communication skill in English and have wide range of networking which many students in IUM are from different countries."*; *"Able to mingle with student from various countries as it helps me to improve my English communication skill and i also*

*aware with the Muslim issues around the worlds. IIUM also provide many facilities that helps me a lot during my study period.”; “As the medium of speaking is English therefore it is very beneficial for student as in terms of job marketability we need to have the ability to speak English fluently”.*

The graduates also highlighted that IIUM is one of the few universities that not only encourage but also require students to communicate in English, especially in official correspondences, giving them advantages over students of the other universities. Many stated that:

*“Be able to be in the Islamic Environment and communicate with each other by using English as the medium.”; “English medium and the international environment help me to work with various background of people.”; “I learn Islamic studies along with my English degree. It is an advantage for me as I can gain more about Islamic knowledge from this I can also share this with my family and friends”.*

Besides that, 13.0% (n=463) of the graduates consider having multicultural environment as a significant advantage of studying at IIUM. This is because they can learn different cultures from different parts of the world from each other. A few of them voiced out:

*“The opportunities to socialise with students from all around the world really did help in widening my perspectives towards multicultural environment. Also, it is relevant with my degree.”; “Multicultural place where students can learn different cultures around the world and English as the medium of communication among students and lecturers”.*

Facilities and environment were also quoted as the advantage enjoyed by IIUM students (8.7%, n=312). They were generally satisfied with the facilities and environment on IIUM campus. Some comments include:

*“Able to study in conducive and Islamic environment.”; “All of the facilities and services are near to each other which are at the center of IIUM. Thus, ease the students to utilise all of the facilities.”; “Application of Islamic values during learning, as well as an Islamic environment in the campus. Facilities are very well provided and convenient the students”.*

The graduates are also of the opinions that IIUM has provided them with balanced academic programmes (integration of worldly and Islamic knowledge) where 5.3% (n=191) of them were found to provide this reason. One of them stated:

*“IIUM has an Islamic environment study that balance between world and hereafter”.*

Although not a large proportion, there are students who indicated some other advantages of being at IIUM which include the opportunity to enhance various skills (2.2%, n=79), knowledge enhancement (8.9%, n=320) and excellent lecturers (1.5%, n=56). Table 2.1 summarises the other advantages of studying at IIUM given by the graduates.

Table 2.1 Advantages of Studying in IIUM (Class of 2016)

Advantages of Studying in IIUM	N	%	Total %
Islamic environment and learning	1237	34.7	79.2
Multicultural environment	463	13.0	
Comprehensive learning experience	397	11.0	
Knowledge enhancement	320	8.9	
Excellent facilities and environment	312	8.7	
International integration and recognition	250	7.0	
Lingual advantages	236	6.6	
Good academic programmes (balance of worldly and Islamic knowledge)	191	5.3	
Enhance various skills (i.e. communication and soft skills)	79	2.2	
Excellent lecturers	56	1.5	
Promising future jobs	18	0.5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3559</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
No comment/ others/ irrelevant comments	934	-	20.8
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4493</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 2.3 Disadvantages of Studying at IIUM

In brief, the primary dissatisfactions among the graduates of IIUM are issues related to the programmes and courses. Secondly, the graduates raised their concerns with regards to facilities. Some graduates also expressed their dissatisfaction about their study period. Only 39.4% (n=1774) of the respondents provided their opinions to the item.

The most frequent disadvantages reported were matters regarding the relevance of the programmes and courses in general (14.8%, n=263). They argued that programmes and courses offered by the university should facilitate students in meeting the industry's requirements and demands. Therefore, existing programmes and courses should be updated and revised. Some of the graduates stated:

*"I cannot access to industry real experiences i.e. Islamic finance."; "Lack of practical software used in engineering industry."; "The course of engineering is not updated to the Malaysian industry."; "IIUM doesn't practice the like industrial and practically learning such other university have. It only focusses on the theory part and some courses even do not encourage their student to do practical training".*

Some of the graduates reported the need for upgrading the facilities in IIUM (11.0%, n=196). Specifically, the graduates mentioned that the university needs to upgrade its learning facilities. They stated:

*"Learning facilities is absolute lacking."; "The facilities in the laboratory not enough for the students. We need to share the laboratory equipment for 5 peoples to doing the experiments".*

In addition, they also complained about the support facilities available on campus. Their suggestions include:

*“The sport facilities and the library still lacking of references.”; “Facilities need to improve especially on maintenance part. Rather than expanding, maintain the readily available facilities. Access to books in library is limited”.*

Related to this concern is the need for regular maintenance (0.8%, n=15) such as the learning facilities that are important for effective teaching and learning process at the university. Other facilities that they found needed maintenance include laboratories and internet (4.5%, n=81), toilet (0.1%, n=3), cafeteria (1.0%, n=19), parking spaces (6.7%, n=120) and transportation (1.1%, n=21) were also recommended for improvements. Among the relevant excerpts are:

*“Not much really. There is a lot of room for improvements for sure but most of the facilities in IIUM usually just need updating or proper maintenance. No major overhaul needed.”; “Teaching methods of certain lecturers need to be upgraded or changed according to the advanced technology progression”.*

The second disadvantage pertains to communication and human relations. Many graduates cited that they were not satisfied with service and support of the management staff (8.0%, n=143) and the administrative staff (3.0%, n=52). Some graduates were also found to be unhappy with the academic staff too (1.0%, n=19). These complaints are important because they constitute 13% (n=214) of the graduates. Some of the graduates stated:

*“Information synchronisation and updates within management department is very poor. Sometimes too many procedures that is irrelevant, which supposed to speed up some process. Pre-registration of subjects system seems never been upgraded, causing a lot of troubles compared to other universities.”; “IIUM should do an upgrade in a lot of things especially their front desk staffs as some of them are very rude.”; “Most administration staffs are not very keen to help students rather they want their work to be easy even though they have the capacity to play big part in improving their services”.*

Several other disadvantages were also stated by the graduates. They are related to students' welfare (4.7%, n=84), co-curriculum activities (1.0%, n=18), the lack of Islamic environment and practice (1.1%, n=20), and the university status (4.1%, n=73). Some of the graduates mentioned:

*“Lacks of awareness for students' welfare especially when too much bureaucracy while applying the endowment facility.”; “Some of the management issues should be improved for the sake of students welfares and wellbeing.”; “Lack of new ideas and innovation (students activities).”; “Repeated co-curriculum activities in term of themes (eg: talk).”; “Less in practical aspect for some IIUM students in term of Islamic culture, eg: attire.”; “IIUM's ranking has been going down since the past few year which might prove to be disadvantageous for the future students if it is not worked upon”.*

Table 2.2 Disadvantages of Studying in IIUM (Class of 2016)

Disadvantages of Studying in IIUM	N	%	Total %
Improve programmes and courses	263	14.8	39.4
Improve facility -General	196	11.0	
Decrease study period	189	10.6	
Improve intercultural interaction	157	8.8	
Improve management staff	143	8.0	
Improve facility – Parking spaces	120	6.7	
Improve students' welfare (i.e. health, safety, scholarship)	84	4.7	
Improve facility – Labs/ Internet	81	4.5	
Upgrade university's image	73	4.1	
Improve academic system	59	3.3	
Implement rules and regulations	54	3.0	
Improve administration staff	52	3.0	
Reduce tuition fees	36	2.0	
Improve facility – Kulliyah	34	1.9	
Improve online system	34	1.9	
Avoid bias/ favouritism	33	1.8	
Improve facility – Mahallah	23	1.2	
Improve facility – transportation	21	1.1	
Increase Islamic environment and practice	20	1.1	
Improve grading system	20	1.1	
Improve academic staff	19	1.0	
Improve facility – cafeteria	19	1.0	
Upgrade co-curriculum activities	18	1.0	
Improve maintenance	15	0.8	
Improve facility - library	8	0.4	
Improve facility – toilet	3	0.1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1774</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
No comment/ others/ irrelevant comments	2719	-	60.6
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4493</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 2.4 IIUM Graduates' Suggestions for Departments

Table 2.3 summarises the graduates' suggestions for improvement of the facilities and services of the Departments in IIUM. The suggestions are thematised into eighteen categories. A good percentage of the respondents (48.4%, n=2174) gave their views on the item. However, there are graduates who stated "No Comment" or provided irrelevant ideas and/or did not answer the question (51.6%, n=2319).

The most popular recommendation pertains to the need to upgrade the facilities at the Department (21.2%, n=461), followed by improving management approach (11.6%, n=254). Specifically, many graduates suggested upgrading the labs and buildings (10.7%, n=234) followed by upgrading the teaching and learning systems (8.9%, n= 195), and providing sufficient teaching tools and aids (5.9%, n=129) to better accommodate the needs of students. Students commented:

*"I think IIUM should improve their facilities especially in Department by providing fund for more scientific equipment such as GC, HPLC and others so that we don't have to use other university's facility.";* *"Staffs should undergo customer service training so that they are able to endure students' behaviour.";* *"Add more labs and more components into labs to do more experiments.";* *"provide more learning system which involve practical and relevant to the industry demands.";* *"get enough tools in lab for students especially for FYP and students doing research.";* *"Improve the tools and facilities in lab so that students can proceed the experiment smoothly".*

Additionally, 10.5% (n=230) of the graduates gave suggestions related to staff's attitudes or communication with students. According to them, the communication between staff and the students need to be improved. Among various comments include:

*"Better communication channel to disseminate the important information to the students.";* *"Enhance two ways communications between staffs in Departments and students; especially new students.";* *"For my department which is English, for the sake of international communication, activities that involve industrial representatives should be done more often as it is one way to expose students to the existing industries.";* *"I may suggest that IIUM improve in communication and relationship between staff and students".*

The graduates who participated in this survey also emphasised the importance of proper communication or interaction channels (4.6%, n=102). Furthermore, the Departments are also recommended to revise their academic courses and programmes (2.9%, n=64). The students suggested:

*"Provide more information on upcoming programmes at the department notice board.";* *"Announcement of information should be informed by using both online and information board.";* *"As a suggestion, perhaps, IIUM Kuantan could develop a website that could deliver information effectively.";* *"Revise back he module for every subjects. It should be more advance so that students can compete with other students from another university. The University also need to add more lecturers."*

Table 2.3 IIUM Graduates' Suggestion for Department (Class of 2016)

Suggestions for Department	N	%	Total %
Upgrade and maintain facility	461	21.2	48.4
Improve management approach	254	11.6	
Upgrade lab/ building	234	10.7	
Improve staff attitudes in communicating with students	230	10.5	
Upgrade teaching and learning systems	195	8.9	
Update teaching tools / aids	129	5.9	
Arrange communication/ interaction channel	102	4.6	
Provide students' survey and feedback	96	4.4	
Upgrade online services for pre-registration	83	3.8	
Academic courses/ programme	64	2.9	
Supply more parking spaces	59	2.7	
Upgrade wireless coverage	59	2.7	
Increase numbers of and budgets for students' society and welfare	47	2.1	
Distribute more budget	37	1.7	
Provide training for academic and administrative staff	37	1.7	
Add more staff	34	1.5	
Add more lecturer	28	1.2	
Upgrade toilet cleanliness	25	1.1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2174</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
No comment/ others/ irrelevant comments	2319	-	51.6
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4493</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 2.5 IIUM Graduates' Suggestions for *Kulliyah*

Highlighted in Table 2.4 are the graduates' suggestions for improvement with regards to the facilities and services at the *Kulliyah* level. A total of 2167 graduates attempted this item (48.2%).

The responses were categorised into twenty categories. The most recurring recommendations given by IIUM graduates are issues associated with "upgrading/ maintaining facility" (21.2%, n=460). They mentioned:

*"The classroom should be renovated. The chair and the facility do not suit well to IIUM.";*  
*"Replace the old chairs and tables, repair the air condition in classes.";* *"Upgrading the facilities to give more comfort to students.";* *"Proper maintenance should be regularly done as nice buildings and facilities is not going to stay if it is not properly maintained".*

On human relational skills, as many as 168 (7.7%) of the graduates gave their suggestions regarding improving the management. They complained that:

*“The management should give more attention to provide facilities which is highly demanded by IIUM community.”; “Kulliyah’s management should always keep updated with the issues related.”; “More responsive management in regards to the facilities and services”.*

Apart from their dissatisfaction towards some personnel at IIUM, they also suggested the *Kulliyah* to improve the existing laboratories and/or buildings. About 9.7% (n=211) graduates suggested the *Kulliyah* to increase the number of equipment to cater the needs of the students including the needs of the disabled. Some students stated that:

*“Certain equipment should be updated for the comfort of lecturer to teach and student to learn.”; “Repair all the broken equipment. Labs should be open even on weekends for FYP students to finish their project.”; “Use better quality equipment and give more opportunity and freedom to students to develop their own projects to integrate their knowledge”.*

**Table 2.4 IIUM Graduates’ Suggestions for *Kulliyah* (Class of 2016)**

Suggestions for <i>Kulliyah</i>	N	%	Total %
Upgrade and maintain facility	460	21.2	48.2
Update teaching tools/ aids	431	19.8	
Upgrade lab/ building	211	9.7	
Improve management	168	7.7	
Provide services	132	6.0	
Upgrade cafeteria	105	4.8	
Enhance student's society/ student's welfare	90	4.1	
Improve teaching and learning system	85	3.9	
Upgrade wireless coverage	76	3.5	
Provide more parking spaces	71	3.2	
Improve staff attitude and communication with students	66	3.0	
Upgrade academic module/ programme	65	2.9	
Provide students' survey and feedback	60	2.7	
Increase budget	52	2.3	
Upgrade online services/ pre-registration	37	1.7	
Improve toilet cleanliness	31	1.4	
Security	12	0.5	
Islamic values	6	0.2	
Add more lecturers	5	0.2	
Provide latest information	4	0.1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2167</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
No comment/ others/ irrelevant	2326	-	51.8
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4493</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>



## 2.6 IIUM Graduates' Suggestions for *Mahallah*

Table 2.5 presents the recommendations given by IIUM graduates related to *Mahallah*'s facilities and services. The result of the survey indicates improvement of *Mahallah*'s facilities is deemed necessary, particularly in upgrading the cafeteria and food (17.8%, n=419). Other facilities include upgrading and having intensive maintenance (10.2%, n=241), wireless coverage (12.3%, n=290), parking spaces (7.4%, n=174), laundry services (3.8%, n=89), and toilet cleanliness (2.6%, n=61). As suggested by students:

*"Room conditions, fans lights and doors should be maintained every semester."; "The wifi should be well maintained because a lot of assignments need to be done and we need internet. Sometimes, the internet connection failed. The food also was bad and not much options in Mahallah Umi Kalsom."; "Laundry in each mahallah building. Centralized laundry is a bit far to carry the laundry is a painful. Also poorly maintain washing machines as they always broke down and not functioning. "*

Additionally, some complaints also include staffs' attitude (5.5%, n=131) and management (10.7%, n=251). As stated by some graduates:

*"Prompt reaction and resolution to the problems need to be done because if the problems take a long time to be solved, most students will tend to have impression that the staff is not working hard enough to solve it."; "The staff at Mahallah Office can be more kind and helpful."; "the staff should be more friendly and more efficient in doing their works."; "Desk staff at Mahallah should always be reminded to be polite and manifest Islamic personality when dealing with students and others".*

Although not a big proportion (1.0%, n=25), some students suggested the *Mahallah* to give them option to cook by providing at least one kitchen in each block. Suggestions with regards to this issue are:

*"It should provide available kitchen for students to cook with highly security control."; "Allow international students to cook, because the cafeteria always close in holiday. Even sometimes it closed in long weekend."; "Add-on the refrigerator, microwave and other pantry facilities. Allow for cooking".*

There are some suggestions regarding the need to look into the welfare of the married students, to provide the hostels for those affected (0.2%, n=6), and to revise the facilities for the disabled around the campus. Suggestions include:

*"To build family unit room for those students who already married."; "Improve the parking lot system, strictly for final year student disable student only."; "provide more OKU friendly route in every each mahallah".*

Table 2.5 IIUM Graduates' Suggestions for *Mahallah* (Class of 2016)

Suggestion for Mahallah	N	%	Total %
Upgrade cafeteria/food outlet	419	17.8	52.1
Upgrade wireless coverage	290	12.3	
Improve management	251	10.7	
Upgrade and maintain facility	241	10.2	
Provide more parking spaces	174	7.4	
Provide more facilities and services	168	7.1	
Improve staff attitude	131	5.5	
Upgrade room / building	127	5.4	
Improve safety and security	101	4.3	
Upgrade laundry services	89	3.8	
Provide students' survey and feedback	88	3.7	
Improve toilet cleanliness	61	2.6	
Upgrade means of communication and information	47	2.0	
Improve students' welfare	30	1.3	
Increase budget	29	1.2	
Allow cooking (provide kitchen)	25	1.0	
Upgrade sport facility	24	1.0	
Provide ATM machines	22	0.9	
Add more Islamic values	7	0.3	
Provide storage rooms	6	0.2	
Provide hostels for married students' welfare	6	0.2	
Provide more transportation	5	0.2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2341</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
No comment/Others/Irrelevant	2152	-	47.9
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4493</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 2.7 IIUM Graduates' Suggestions for University

Table 2.6 summaries IIUM graduates' suggestions for University. About 2212 (49.3%) of the respondents provided elaboration on suggestions for improvement. Recommendations given at the university level (Table 6.6) primarily concerns the need to improve administration and management services (15.6%, n=346). The graduates complained:

*“(IIUM should) have a better management, let the people with the right qualification lead the system.”; “University’s management should always keep update with the issues related.”; “Top level management spend time with students to understand better about each other.”; “have an innovative idea on how to plan and manage the student’s administration more efficiently. Employ good and courteous staff who are willing to help the students with their issues earnestly”.*

Moreover, another main concern among the students is to provide more parking spaces around the campus due to the increasing number of vehicles (15.5%, n=344). According to them:

*“Please do make some proper parking area. It is hard for me as a student to park my vehicle in IIUM.”; “Please improve the capacity for student’s parking lot.”; “The University needs to address the parking problem.”; “Parking spaces need to be upgraded and roads need to make it wider. And above all that, everything was satisfyingly good”.*

Students’ welfare (9.5%, n=212) was an important issue at the university level too. Students’ inquiries and complaints are to be addressed accordingly and processed immediately. As stated by the graduates:

*“Must include all the students’ opinion in doing any fundamental decisions especially when involving students’ academics, activities and welfare.”; “Spend more money in students’ facilities and welfare.”; “University should concern more on important matters such as the welfare of the students.”; “Being more aware of the students’ welfare and keep updating the education model for students”.*

**Table 2.6 IIUM Graduates’ Suggestions for University (Class of 2016)**

Suggestion for University	N	%	Total %
Improve administration and management services	346	15.6	49.3
Provide more parking spaces	344	15.5	
Provide students' welfare (i.e. health, safety, scholarship)	212	9.5	
Upgrade wireless coverage/ online system	142	6.4	
Upgrade lab/ building	95	4.2	
Improve staff attitude and communication with students	88	3.9	
Provide frequent transportation	80	3.6	
Upgrade sport facility (i.e. extend opening hours)	72	3.2	
Add more activities/ services/ programme	59	2.6	
Improve academic/ education system	59	2.6	
Provide students' survey and feedback	56	2.5	
Build roofed pathway	55	2.4	
Provide ATM machines	55	2.4	
Provide more budget/ funding to students	54	2.4	
Upgrade IIUM portal	50	2.2	
Add more on Islamic values	28	1.2	
Upgrade cafeteria/ food outlet	27	1.2	
Hire professional staff/ lecturer	26	1.1	
Green landscape	18	0.8	
Improve toilet cleanliness	15	0.6	

Suggestion for University	N	%	Total %
Reduce tuition fees	11	0.4	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2212</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
No comment/others/irrelevant	2281	-	50.7
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4493</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 2.8 Summary of the Advantages and Disadvantages of Studying at IIUM

Overall, the graduates of 2016 cited that IIUM is a well-established University that offers a unique learning environment. Many of them believed they benefited from the IIUM experience in terms of the use of English as the medium of instruction; the exposure to Islamic environment, culture and values; the diversified intercultural experience; and the campus facilities.

On the other hand, improvements are still deemed necessary to make IIUM an excellent higher learning centre for the Muslim *Ummah*. Primary suggestions are related to the need for upgrading and frequent maintaining the existing facilities and services on campus at all levels. There were also frequent concerns on the work ethics and professionalism of staff their communication with the students. This issue needs serious attention.



# CHAPTER 3

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## IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents graduates' suggestion of improving the quality of teaching and learning. The graduates were given opportunities to share their opinions and experiences studying at IIUM in open-ended sections of the survey.

### 3.2 Exposure Provided by Programme Enrolled to the Current General Knowledge and Development around the World

Table 3.1 shows the extent of agreement among the graduates on the concern that the programmes they enrolled have adequately exposed them to the current general knowledge and development around the world.

Generally, majority of the graduates agreed that they have been given adequate exposure. Particularly, in terms of exposure to the current issues and relevant industries for their respective programmes (44.3%, n=719). They stated:

*"All subjects that University (and) Kulliyah have exposed (students) to current general knowledge such as IRK subjects and core subject which is Introduction to Translation."; "All the core and elective courses equipped me with general knowledge and development around the world especially the advancement or currently happen in the medical related fields such as non-medicine."; "All the subjects are very useful to face the current situation , especially Public International Law because it can enhance the knowledge about development around the world".*

Although significantly lower in number, 13.1% (n=213) of the graduates acknowledged that the University gave them exposure on technical and practical trainings while 11.2% (n=182) of them acknowledged exposure given on various skills and knowledge advancement. However, the disagreed graduates preferred to have more emphasis on the real applications of a knowledge taught throughout the learning process. They suggested that:

*"The students need to get more practical session to build their skills and make them competent with other universities students."; "Most of the subjects taken in Communication are theory based. Need a lot of practical practice so that can develop skills as a future communication practitioner."; "The courses prepare mainly for theories, however in real world, what is important in my opinion is to have a solid practical experience."; "We are more exposed to theory knowledge instead of practical knowledge. This could be a disadvantage to us when we face the real life".*

Meanwhile, only 158 graduates (9.7%) were of the opinion that good emphasis was given on Islamic perspective in teachings. In terms of exposure made on career and future advancements (7.3%, n=120); on learning and teaching systems (7.2%, n=117) as well as on student activities and programmes (7.0%, n=114), much smaller proportions of the graduates did acknowledge such types of exposure.

Table 3.1 IIUM Programme Exposed Students to the Current Knowledge and Development (Class of 2016)

Programme exposed students to the current knowledge and development	N	%	Total %
Exposure to current issues/ industries	719	44.3	36.2
Exposure to on technical and practical trainings	213	13.1	
Exposure to various skills and knowledge advancement	182	11.2	
Exposure to Islamic perspective	158	9.7	
Exposure to career and future advancement	120	7.3	
Exposure to learning / teaching system	117	7.2	
Exposure to student activities and programmes	114	7.0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1623</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Other/ Irrelevant Comments/ No Comment	2870	-	63.8
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4493</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 3.3 Suggestions for Quality Improvement of Programmes Pursued

Various suggestions were given by the graduates with respect to improvement in the quality of programmes being offered by IIUM. Table 3.2 provides the summary of the suggestions. In general, many graduates (26.9%, n=628) recommended for the existing subjects or courses to be revised, including by adding new or updating existing courses as to avoid duplication in content and better accommodate expectations of the industries. The suggestions given are quoted below:

*“Review and revise study plan as and when necessary.”; “1 year and 4 months for MBA sounds so like a fast track. To maintain the quality of MBA itself, I think need to revise the syllabus and more comprehensive.”; “Please revise the curriculum and the exam oriented system to an alternative system which would nurture students’ skills and talents to help them in the career fields”.*

Moreover, many graduates (23.0%, n=538) also agreed that in order to better meet the needs of the industries, it is necessary for the existing practical training modules to be enhanced and extended to all students regardless of their programmes. Again, emphasis on the practical uses of a knowledge taught is proposed by the graduates. Among the responses received are:

*“More laboratory hands-on practical like the biotechnology programme in overseas universities, up to date machine and laboratory.”; “More on practical knowledge since it provides more experience for students.”; “A more practical approach would be rewarding to students to prepare for the current practice outside university”.*

The third popular recommendation by the graduates (10.5%, n=245) is in favour of the need to enrich teaching methodology including more flexible learning approach and more diverse assessment tools as the strategy to improve the quality. Excerpts of the suggestions include:



*“To bring more international lecturers, improve the teaching methods, and listen to the students-they have an opinion too.”; “Change the teaching practicum from the final semester to earlier semester so that after finishing the teaching practice students can discuss and evaluate their performance during the teaching practice with lecturers and find out how to improve themselves.”; “Churn out good graduates with quality teaching by assessing the students correctly not by the quota set”.*

Some of the graduates (8.6%, n=202) suggested the university to create job opportunities that are relevant to the programmes being offered. The graduates further suggested that IIUM should focus more on facilities (6.2%, n=145), particularly on its maintenance and upgrading, as part of its quality improvement agendas. Other suggestions include more emphasis should be given on imparting technical skills to students.

**Table 3.2 IIUM Graduates' Suggestions on Quality Improvement of IIUM Programmes (Class of 2016)**

Suggestion for improvement Quality	N	%	Total %
Revise existing courses	628	26.9	52.0
Emphasise on practical training	538	23.0	
Enrich teaching methodology	245	10.5	
Provide relevant job opportunities	202	8.6	
Maintain / upgrade facilities	145	6.2	
Emphasise on technical skills	134	5.7	
Encourage research and conference participations	89	3.8	
Expose to current issues/ industries	82	3.5	
Provide personnel skills for management / administrative staff/ academic staff	66	2.8	
Focus on soft skills and competency development	56	2.4	
Emphasise on Islamic perspective	39	1.6	
Provide greater supports/ incentives for student activities	36	1.5	
Provide more budget/ funding for student activities	25	1.0	
Shorten study duration	22	0.9	
Extend internship duration	13	0.6	
Hire experienced lecturers	12	0.5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2332</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Others/ Irrelevant comment/ No comment	2161	-	48.0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4493</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 3.4 Suggestions for Increasing Relevance of Programmes to Industrial Needs

Table 3.3 shows the responses given by the IIUM graduates with regards to meeting the needs of the industry. The most popular recommendation given by them (27.3%, n=597) is for the university to reassess the importance of practical training and focus more on the practical applications of a knowledge taught in classes. The suggestions include:

*“A discussion needs to be held between the lecturers and practitioners so that the students (who were) produced meet the needs and requirement of the practical world.”; “As Islamic Finance student, Investment and Finance are relevance as well as Accounting. Practical parts in Investment subjects need to clear enough so that student can easily apply to real practice.”; “Expose the students with reality. Usually students are good in theory but when it comes to practicality, they are a bit lost”.*

Besides focusing on applicability of knowledge, the graduates (15.5%, n=340) believe that university should have more initiatives to enrich soft skills and enhance competency of the students. This is consistent with another group of graduates (11.3%, n=247) whose opinion is for the university to give greater focus on developing technical skills of the students. Excerpts of the suggestions include:

*“Emphasise the usage of English in conversation.”; “New aspect should be focused on communication skills among all of the students in every department/course and enhance English language.”; “Include skills for the job market, latest software knowledge and more facilities to help hands on learning instead of outsourcing whenever necessary. In class learning, should give a new level of exposure learning experience”.*

There are also recommendations given to expand course content to make existing courses more relevant (10.3%, n=227), to develop new courses (7.8%, n=171) and to increase exposure to current issues (7.0%, n=154). Among the views given are:

*“Department should consider adding new course such as journalism.”; “Focusing more on the new aircrafts technology. Study parts from a new specific aircraft rather than one used in the old books. updating the curriculum based on current technology will be a big jump in the students’ knowledge.”; “Class or subject that solely emphasising preparing report on current issues in Fiqh/ Usul Fiqh industries, so those students will have preparations on what to do and what their role on society more”.*

Table 3.3 IIUM Graduates' Suggestions on Programme Relevancy towards Industrial Link (Class of 2016)

Suggested Programme towards Industrial Link	N	%	Total %
Develop practical content in the courses and programmes	597	27.3	48.7
Provide soft skills and competency proficiencies	340	15.5	
Emphasise on technical skills	247	11.3	
Revise existing courses	227	10.3	
Introduce new courses	171	7.8	
Expose to current issues	154	7.0	
Improve teaching methodology	104	4.7	
Accentuate Islamic values and ethics	96	4.3	
Encourage research/ conference/ seminars participations by students	91	4.1	
Secure more industrial collaborations	67	3.0	
Extend duration of internship	43	1.9	
Provide more supports for students activities	21	0.9	
Maintain/ upgrade on campus facilities	21	0.9	
Provide greater budget/ funding for students activities	5	0.2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2184</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Others/ Irrelevant comment/ No comment	2309	-	51.3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4493</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 3.5 Suggestions for Producing Competent and More Employable Graduates

Table 3.4 gives IIUM graduates' suggestions as means to produce competent and more employable graduates in the future. About 35.5% (n=845) of the graduates highlighted on the importance of cultivating soft skills and enriching competency of students to have highly competent and employable graduates. The graduates stated:

*“Possess good communication skills and know how to be more critical in thinking and organising.”; “Actively participates in programs and activities rather than too focus on study. It helps to create networking, enhance soft skills, exposed to something out of your comfort zone.”; “Add soft skills, encourage students to engage actively with outside world and educate students on the importance of ‘adab’ “.*

It was also suggested by the graduates (29.7%, n=712), that in all programme structures, greater emphasis is made on practical as well as technical trainings instead of merely classroom lectures. The suggestions include:

*“Expose students with many technical skills and non-academic activities which can develop and increase the confident level of the students to face the real world after graduation.”; “A balance of academic and practical training will produce graduates who understands the field and is able to apply whatever they have learnt to the field”.*

In addition, employability of the graduates is also deemed to improve when the academic system of IUM is further improved (15.8%, n=379) and students are frequently exposed to career workshops and seminars (8.2%, n=198). They suggested that:

*“Improving educational system and grading. Preparing students from the beginning and preparing them with real world situation.”; “Ensure there are a lot of compulsory talks, seminars which ensure participation of students in the highest number.”; “To have workshop and talk about employability. The lecturers need to give tips and spirit to students to do the best to get hired after graduating and to expose students about the industry”.*

**Table 3.4 IUM Graduates' Suggestions for Producing Competent and More Employable Graduates (Class of 2016)**

Suggested for Competent and Employable Graduates	N	%	Total %
Provide soft skills and competency proficiencies	845	35.5	53.3
Arrange for more practical/ technical training	712	29.7	
Improve academic system	379	15.8	
Increase career workshop and seminar	198	8.2	
Extend internship programme	102	4.2	
Provide good/ positive attitude	90	3.7	
Embed the integration and intercultural elements	64	2.6	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2390</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Others/ Irrelevant comment/ No comment	2103	-	46.7
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4493</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### **3.6 Summary on Improving the Quality of Teaching and Learning**

For various questions prompted, it is rather obvious the recurrent graduates' responses are related to the need to make greater emphasis on practical training as a part of a programme structure and to incorporate more real-life applications in teachings. This could possibly mean for the university to consider practical training to be another graduating requirement for all students. By imposing the new requirement, not only (a) it increases student exposure to prevailing knowledge, issues and development; (b) it improves the quality of IUM academic programmes; (c) it better accommodates the needs of the industries; and (d) it enhances graduates' competency and employability but it also supports students' need for soft skills development, direct inputs from the practitioners as well as learning via relevant industrial collaborations.

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