



# A platform to boost teaching skills

**U**NIVERSITI Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) has continued to take part in activities that improve its standing as an academic centre.

Since its launch in 1992, the university has grown by leaps and bounds and was recognised for its excellence in administrative works when it was awarded MS ISO 9001:2000 certification two years ago.

Since last year, the university has voluntarily subjected itself to the quality assurance process conducted by the Education Ministry, a procedure introduced by the ministry's academic quality assurance unit.

According to deputy vice chancellor (academic) Professor Abdul Rashid Abdullah, Unimas introduced the quality assurance process in its Social Science faculty.

Similar quality assurance processes will be extended to its Information Technology and Business and Economics faculties soon.

Its participation in the quality assurance assess-



**ALL WORKING TOGETHER:** Unimas officials and Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud.

ment was also to examine the university's weaknesses and strengths, with the outcome to be used as a yardstick to improve where necessary.

"This quality assurance procedure ensures that all universities stick to a minimum standard in terms of facilities, content of the courses and method of as-

sessing," he said.

He added the procedure would keep them at Unimas on their toes in maintaining the standard benchmark.

For Unimas, the procedure will also ensure it provides a high-quality curriculum and viable delivery system including staff's teaching methodology and the technology used in

delivering the information to students.

"If we give the best and the students respond, they would grasp what we are trying to impart to them easily," he said.

Besides the quality assurance assessment, Unimas also pays close attention to staff performance, especially in classroom approaches.



its staff to undergo the training and it can accommodate 40 lecturers in one programme. Unimas also encourages lecturers to attend individual workshops on specific methodology.

He also hoped the teaching skills of lecturers could be developed as a criteria in promoting them as professors and not just relying on research alone.

Up to now academics were obsessed with research as it is the criteria for promotion.

"Now we want to develop a criteria on which teaching can be evaluated as the promotion basis: promoting someone based on his teaching excellence."

In line with the government's call for usage of English language in education, Unimas had also used the language in its teaching.

It has introduced the full use of English in the faculties of Engineering and Medicine. The usage of English in other faculties are being introduced in stages.

For details, log on to: [www.unimas.my](http://www.unimas.my)

It conducts post-graduate diploma courses for its lecturers to enhance their teaching skills and usage of English. The programmes were introduced last year.

The teaching skills programme requires lecturers to undergo a 40-unit course conducted by Unimas at its campus in Kota Samarahan. Two courses a year are conducted in this programme.

"We hope this will be a platform for our lecturers to enhance their teaching skill continuously as teaching methodology also changes with time," he said.

The university encourages