

Athletes have better chance to enter UMS

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KOTA KINABALU: Applicants hoping to enter Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) will have better entry chances if they have a good sporting background.

UMS deputy vice chancellor Associate Professor Dr Kassim Md Mansur said those with good sporting background and achievements would be given priority over other applicants in terms of entry to the university.

Dr Kassim said the initiative to give this special priority to athletes is in line with the Ministry of Higher Education's objective to have 30 per cent of all Malaysian athletes produced by the public higher learning institution.

"The ministry wants to recognise the importance that sporting achievements can bring to the country.

"As such, it is granting scholarships to successful candidates who are proven to have good sporting achievements, aside from giving priority to these groups for university entry," he said at the UMS Chancellor building here

yesterday.

Also present was UMS Sports Unit director Mohd Asyraaf Fong Abdullah.

Some of the other benefits that sporting achievers will enjoy is a special privilege for placement at appropriate learning institutions that can provide alternative qualification to help fulfil university entry requirements.

"Some applicants if they are good in sports but do not have adequate qualifications for university entry, will be given placement at community colleges, polytechnics or other appropriate learning institutions.

"If they are really good (at sports), they may even receive full scholarships," said Kassim.

To date, four students have received scholarships.

Dr Kassim said UMS students who excel in sports could enjoy lucrative incentives for achievements at various national and international university championships.

"One can enjoy a very comfortable life as a sportsman/woman for UMS. We have given lucrative

incentives to some of our top achievers and we do that to recognise their contribution to sports.

"The ministry and the government recognise that sports is very important in nation-building; therefore those who contribute to this effort will be rewarded accordingly," said Dr Kassim.

For certain championships, Dr Kassim said (depending on the standard of the competition) a UMS student could receive between RM2,000 to RM5,000 per gold medal achieved.

Asyraaf, meanwhile, said UMS would soon be visiting schools in various districts in the State to try and spread the awareness.

"We want to let schools know that these options will be available for students with good sporting background and achievements.

"We want the teachers to encourage them (students) to pursue their sporting dreams. We want teachers, students and parents to know that excellence in sports can be rewarded with full scholarships," said Asyraaf.