

UMS reviews spending in line with Budget cuts

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KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah is also faced with a 16pc reduction in the allocation under the 2016 Budget proposals and will review its priorities accordingly.

It said the experience of reduced grants in 2015 would help UMS face the teaching and learning process and the welfare and interests of students.

“UMS has ensured austerity measures and prudent spending, which has been applied since the start of 2012 followed by a more thorough review,” it said in a statement.

Considering the location of UMS which is far from central agencies and stakeholders such as the Ministry of Higher Education and Ministry of Finance, UMS used corporate credit cards as a method of payment and the purchase of airline tickets and hotel accommodation on-line to ensure prudent spending and value for money.

The measures initiated as a whole since

2014 had been successful in reducing travel expenses under the VOT B21000 by 18.8 percent compared to in 2014.

UMS has carried out in orderly regulation for optimum asset utilisation and centralised purchasing.

UMS also does not allow for excessive celebration activities rather focus on knowledge functions that are more appropriate and use of all internally facilities fully.

In accordance with the UMS Income Generation Policy, which was launched in 2013, all Responsibility Centre chiefs are encouraged to generate income.

These efforts are very important at the time of the current economic situation it is not possible for all activities at School level to be implemented by relying on the provisions of government operating grants alone.

The tuition fees of students at the undergraduate level will remain and UMS has taken steps to review the fees of interna-

tional students and postgraduates.

UMS also intensified its efforts to explore opportunities to increase the number of international students from countries which have direct access to the Sabah such as China, Brunei, Indonesia and Timor-Leste.

At the same time UMS also uses the facilities in the partner country group BIMP-EAGA, which require the strength of UMS as an academia body.

This step can be a two-pronged by not only contributing in academics alone but others such as interpreneural and technology transfer.

Investment activities and income generation UMS also supported by the subsidiary under which universities UMS-Invest Holdings.

The subsidiary has begun to show positive growth in the last two years of 2013 and 2014. UMS-Invest also diversified its business involvement not only in commercial education but also in other areas such

as supplies, services and works.

The establishment of the University Endowment Unit under the Office of Industrial Relations and Alumni UMS is an initiative of two major universities to ensure sustainable finances is ensured.

Although just starting but with continued efforts are important both wings will be able to help strengthen the financial strength of UMS.

UMS will explore other more efforts to ensure that it remains in a state of financial strength.

These include ensuring wealth management which is effectively applied at all levels and layers of the university community.

This is to avoid ‘poverty mentality’ that may hinder efforts to further advance UMS despite financial constraints.

The budget reduction will certainly be a big challenge for UMS but prudent spending and income generation already implemented are expected to assist the UMS to be more resilient.