

HELPING UNI STUDENTS MANAGE MENTAL HEALTH

Green Ribbon Group, Heriot-Watt University ink MoU to promote mental health

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UNIVERSITY students are among the most vulnerable to mental health issues, especially in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, a study by the Heriot-Watt University Malaysia (HWUM) revealed.

The study showed that Covid-19 and its disruptions to

daily life had put a strain on students' mental health.

It found a need for a strong support system, especially peer support, because of the stigma surrounding mental health issues.

It was also learnt that there was lack of awareness on mental health and how to help those with such problems.

A programme launched by HWUM and Green Ribbon Group yesterday aimed to spread awareness about mental health among

university students and how to help them cope.

The two organisations signed a memorandum of understanding yesterday to promote "Positive Mental Health Among Youth".

The programme is aimed at empowering youth and promoting positive mental health through a 1½-day training programme called The Green Ribbon Effective Agent Training (GREAT) Project, which will start in October.

Speaking after the signing, HWUM provost and chief executive officer Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi said the collaboration would see 30 trained mental health ambassadors help those



HWUM provost Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi with GRG president Tengku Puteri Raja Tengku Puteri Iman Afzan Al-Sultan Abdullah yesterday. PIC BY MOHD FADLI HAMZAH

with mental health issues.

He said HWUM and GRG launched the initiative after a roundtable in March with students and staff of the university.

"The unprecedented nature of the pandemic had led to sudden shifts in everyday activities. Many students and staff reported an increase in anxiety and a sense of entrapment.

"To ensure that students can progress in their studies despite the challenging situation, the university implemented its Responsive Blended Learning.

"The lack of physical interac-

tion made the creation of a sense of community challenging, where participants discovered their sense of purpose and developed a sense of belonging.

"A report based on these findings will be published by GRG in 2023," he said.

The MoU was signed by Al-Atabi and GRG founder and president Tengku Puteri Raja Tengku Puteri Iman Afzan Al-Sultan Abdullah. Present were HWUM chief operating officer and registrar Janice Yew and GRG co-founder and vice president Puteri Nor Ariane Yasmin.