



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Press Statement / Letter to the Editor

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Authorities should ensure private institutions comply with accreditation terms and conditions

The Consumer's Association of Penang (CAP) was surprised to see Lim Kok Wing University's advertorial for their May 2021 intake in an online news portal just a few days after it was brought to light that the MQA accreditation for 8 of their programmes had been revoked. The advertorial stated that the university had 1000 scholarship to give to qualified students. Is this supposed to entice prospective students and make them forget about the revoked MQA accreditation issue?

At the beginning of the month two student representatives came forward to express their concerns about their future careers as the programmes they, and many others, had joined no longer had MQA accreditation. Furthermore, the foreign student representative also expressed that students under these programmes were having trouble renewing their student visas.

The university immediately came forward to say that they had been given a 30-day time period following a recent audit to rectify the problems and resubmit the 8 programmes for MQA accreditation; and they had already done so.

However, this announcement by the university is not particularly reassuring. The foreign student representative had mentioned during the press conference that the accreditation for the programme he joined was revoked in 2019. The fact that the university is only addressing this problem now makes their conduct questionable. If the university's claims about resubmission are true, we still need to ask ourselves why it took them this long to do something about it.

Why was the MQA accreditation for the 8 programmes at LimKokWing University revoked? It was mentioned in an article that perhaps the university did not adhere to the required syllabus or they hired unqualified lecturers to teach the subject. These are very serious allegations which require the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) to clarify and make known to the public to enable students to check if they are signing up for an accredited course.

How many other private universities in Malaysia are facing similar accreditation problems? They could be misleading their students with unaccredited programmes or carrying on like nothing is wrong when accreditation has been revoked.

The authorities should immediately investigate this matter to ensure that there is no repeat of this same incident at other private institutions of higher education. If accreditation for a programme is revoked the authorities should hold the university to task and pressure them to rectify the problems immediately so that students pursuing these programmes are not affected. The authorities must keep in mind that it is the student's future career and livelihood that are at stake in these situations.

The authorities must, before approving the establishment of private universities, impose stringent conditions on the quality of courses offered, competence of the lecturers, and ensure the fees charged are reasonable. The functioning of these universities must be closely monitored to ensure compliance with the conditions.

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