Agenda Item 6:

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Higher Education and Policy Impacts

Presented by

Nelia binti Mohammad Eusoff
Education Officer
Higher Education Division
Ministry of Education
1. Entry Restrictions of Foreign Nationals

Entry Travel Pass Applications To Enter Brunei Darussalam

• Beginning from 15th September 2020, Entry Travel Pass will be issued for inbound travelers of foreign nationalities arriving in Brunei Darussalam.

The Entry Travel Pass may be issued for the following individuals:

• Essential business travel (including official travel)
• Students
• Individual primarily here for the purpose of medical treatment
• Compassionate and other special circumstances, such as parents, spouse, or other immediate family members of Brunei Citizens or Residents

• Applications will be reviewed for considerations on a case-to-case basis by authorities.

• Important note for eligibility of Entry Travel Pass:
  • Travelers must have remained within the country of departure for the last 14 days prior to departure for Brunei
  • Transit while en-route to Brunei is only permitted in a country with an equivalent or lower risk category as per Ministry of Health risk assessment. The traveler may not leave the airport while in transit.
  • Upon arrival, travelers will be required to undergo self-isolation at hotel accommodation for a period of between 2 to 14 days depending on the self-isolation notice
2. Class Style at Universities

In response to Brunei government’s decision to stop mass gathering due to COVID-19 pandemic which began early in 2020, higher institutions in Brunei Darussalam has put in place the following measures:

Semester 2, Session 2019/2020 (Jan – June)

(1) Online Teaching and Learning
(2) No Physical Examinations
(3) Examination conducted online using Canvas.
(4) Learning management System since 2014
Other tools Zoom, Google Meet, EdPuzzle

The above measures were temporary depending on the Operational Readiness Level as determined by the Ministry of Health (MOH).
Following the country`s de-escalation plan effective from 27 July 2020 all HEIs are now in Operational Readiness Level 4.

➢ The Fresher’s or orientation week was held on virtual mode.
➢ Students will experience both online and physical classes
➢ Blended learning (via online and/or face-to-face teaching) are now resume as normal.
➢ Face-to-face lessons / interactions for tutorials, practical, laboratory sessions and clinical sessions on campus are conducted in assigned teaching venues / rooms limited to the maximum number of students allowed by Ministry of Health guidelines on Mass Gathering (currently max 350 people)
3. Countermeasures to Date
(at government or university level)

ALLIEVIAE FINANCIAL BURDEN

Economic stimulus measures
Monetary Measure:
• On March 19, the Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD), working closely with MOFE as well as the financial industry, announced interim measures (for six months effective April 1) to alleviate the financial burden on sectors hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.

• Telco Company donated data packages In addition to this, in ensuring disadvantaged group of students have equal e-learning access during the pandemic
THE NEW NORM

Government Level
( Local And International Levels)

• Online platforms to complete tasks, discussions and meetings (Ms teams/Google Meet / Zoom)
• And Video Conferencing

University Level

• Online classes and learning within 3 days of the first case of COVID-19 in Brunei.
• Virtual semester exchange program, taking modules fully online.
• Discovery Year students are undertake virtual internship
• Global Classrooms - co-teach selected modules, with lecturers from each university taking turns to deliver lectures on specific topics under one module.
• Convert all its syllabus to online syllabuses within a week. Currently, we have four modules that are running in online mode to cater to students in Vietnam, and other ASEAN countries as well as Japanese students who are not able travel to Da Nang.
4. New and Better Normal of International HE

- eGDP (Global Discovery Programme) is open to UBD`s partner universities as well as other international students with the first cohort running from 6th – 11th July 2020.
- Virtual Study Abroad Programme,
- Virtual Internship and
- Virtual Community Outreach Programme (COP) are slowly receiving participants as students are still prefer in person semester exchanges.