MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

SERVICE LEARNING MALAYSIA
SULAM

SULAM SERVICE LEARNING MALAYSIA PLAYBOOK 2.0

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SERVICE LEARNING MALAYSIA-UNIVERSITY FOR SOCIETY (SULAM) PLAYBOOK 2.0

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SULAM Logo

Logo Description

The combination of the three colours, blue, red, and yellow used in the logo design represents the combination of three elements namely the Community, Students, and Lecturers.

The logo is an abstract typographic design in which the word SULAM can be clearly seen. The words SERVICE LEARNING MALAYSIA are arranged above and below the word SULAM to complement the overall logo design.

The graphic image of the three ribbon knots above the word SULAM represents the combination of thoughtfulness and serves as a symbol of cooperation and relationship built between the Community, Students, and Lecturers of Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) through SULAM programmes.

Message from the Director General

"The strength of SULAM lies in its ability to translate curriculum into meaningful action. When service-learning is thoughtfully designed and constructively aligned, it becomes a powerful platform for nurturing reflective, ethical, and future-ready graduates - aligned with the values-based and sustainability-driven aspirations of Malaysian higher education"

YBhg. Datuk Prof. Dr. Azlinda Azman
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF HIGHER EDUCATION

How to Use This Book

SULAM Playbook 2.0 supports the effective implementation of Service Learning Malaysia (SULAM) across the higher education ecosystem. Recognising that different stakeholders play distinct roles, the Playbook offers flexible guidance that can be adapted to institutional responsibilities, learning contexts, and community needs. This SULAM Playbook 2.0 complements the SULAM Playbook 1.0 (2019) and should be used alongside it.

Higher Learning Institution (HLI) leaders and top management may use this Playbook as a strategic reference for institutional planning, policy alignment, and decision-making related to SULAM. The frameworks and policy linkages outlined in the Playbook support alignment with MQF 2024, Values-Based Education, and the Malaysia Higher Education Plan 2026–2035, particularly in promoting humanity-centric graduate development, sustainability, and collaborative ecosystem building.

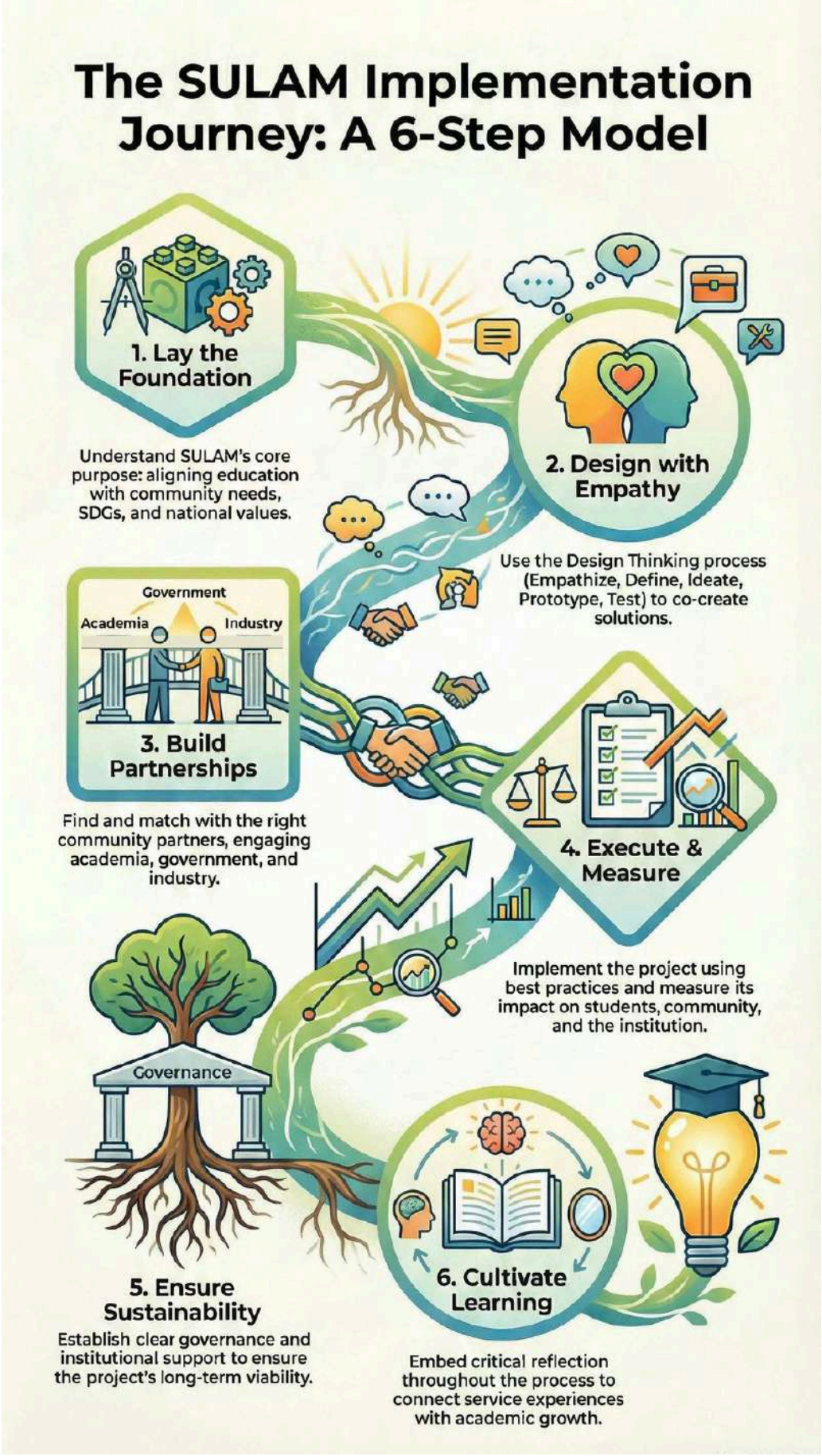
Lecturers and SULAM coordinators may use this Playbook as a practical guide for designing, implementing, and evaluating SULAM courses. The pedagogical frameworks, examples, and tools provided support the constructive alignment of learning outcomes, community engagement, critical reflection, and assessment, while allowing flexibility across disciplinary contexts.

For students, this Playbook serves as a learning companion that helps clarify the purpose and expectations of SULAM experiences in nurturing humanity-centric and future-ready graduates through ethical engagement, values internalisation, and authentic real-world learning.

Community partners, NGOs, industry players, and government agencies may use this Playbook to better understand the principles and expectations of SULAM, while engaging as co-educators and collaborative partners in addressing societal, environmental, and sustainability-related challenges

SULAM Playbook 1.0 (2019)

SULAM Playbook 2.0 (2026)



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CHAPTER 1

SULAM for Sustainable and Values-Based Education

1.1 Introduction

In response to global and national calls for transformative education, Malaysia has undertaken a progressive shift towards integrating sustainability and values-driven education into its higher education system. Central to this initiative is the implementation of Service Learning Malaysia (SULAM), a high-impact educational practice introduced under the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015–2025 and further strengthened in the Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint 2026–2035. SULAM provides a structured, credit-bearing pedagogical approach that connects academic learning with meaningful community engagement through a service-learning framework.

This chapter outlines the strategic alignment of SULAM with global sustainability frameworks, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, and national standards, including the revised Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF 2024). Of particular importance is the integration of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Values-Based Education (VBE), both of which are embedded within the five MQF learning clusters. These frameworks ensure that Malaysian graduates are not only professionally competent but also ethically grounded, socially responsible, and sustainability-conscious.

The chapter further explores a conceptual framework that connects SULAM with ESD and VBE through SDG-driven themes and community engagement, highlighting how this alignment contributes to the development of holistic graduate attributes. Practical models, implementation strategies, and case studies from Malaysian universities are also included to illustrate the transformative potential of SULAM in embedding values and sustainability within higher education.

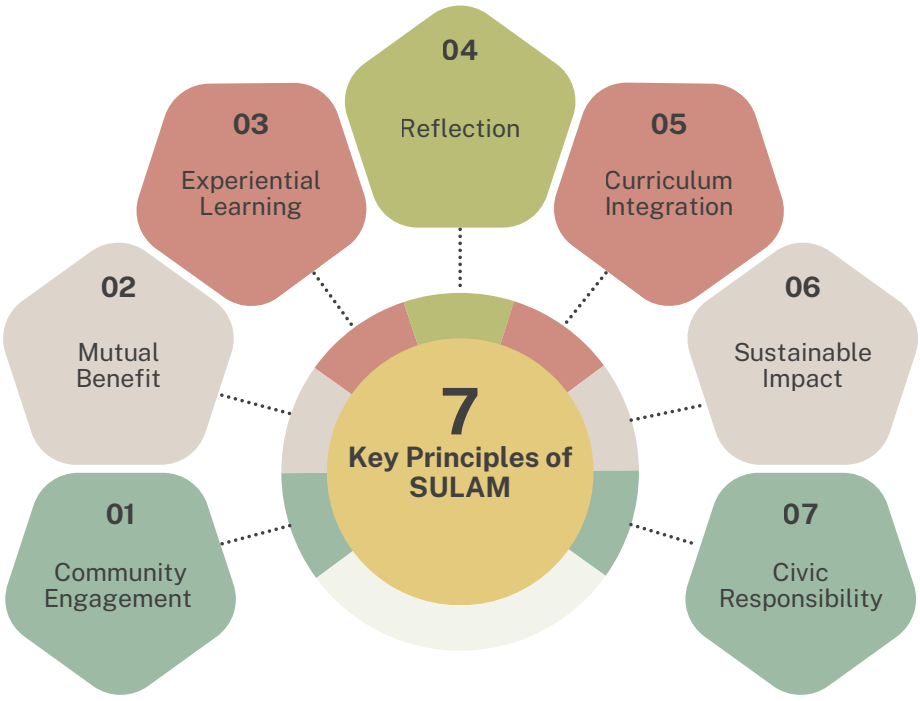
1.2 Overview of SULAM

SULAM, or Service Learning Malaysia, is an initiative by the Ministry of Higher Education introduced under Shift 1 and Shift 8 of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015–2025 (Higher Education) and further strengthened in the Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint 2026–2035. It supports the national aspiration for values-based, sustainable, and community-engaged higher education.

SULAM is a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in structured service activities that address identified community needs. Through guided reflection on these service-learning experiences, students achieve intended learning outcomes that deepen their understanding of course content, broaden their appreciation of their discipline, and cultivate a stronger sense of personal values, civic responsibility, and social accountability.

As a pedagogical approach, SULAM promotes humanistic and values-driven education aligned with the MADANI values of compassion, respect, trust, and shared prosperity. By integrating love, happiness, and mutual respect into authentic learning experiences, SULAM contributes to the holistic development of learners and strengthens the role of higher education in nation-building.

While SULAM Playbook 1.0 adopted the quadruple helix approach, SULAM Playbook 2.0 introduces the quintuple helix approach to further enhance impact, strengthen sustainability, and enrich the overall service-learning experience.



Key Principles of SULAM

Community Engagement: SULAM emphasises authentic, meaningful engagement with communities, where students identify real-life issues and co-create contextually relevant solutions.

Mutual Benefit: SULAM fosters reciprocal and equitable partnerships between HLI and communities, ensuring that students achieve learning outcomes and that communities receive tangible benefits.

Experiential Learning: Rooted in real-world experiences, SULAM provides students with opportunities to apply disciplinary knowledge to community challenges, thereby enhancing academic learning while cultivating future-ready and impact-driven competencies.

Reflection: Continuous structured reflection is central to the SULAM process, enabling students to link their service experiences to academic content, values internalisation, and personal growth.

Curriculum Integration: SULAM is fully embedded within academic courses and constructively aligned with learning outcomes. It is a credit-bearing pedagogical approach, not a co-curricular or extracurricular activity.

Sustainable Impact: SULAM projects are designed to generate long-term and sustainable impact by supporting ongoing university–community engagement and contributing to community resilience, well-being, and sustainability.

Civic Responsibility: SULAM nurtures ethically grounded, socially responsible citizens by strengthening students' awareness of societal issues, encouraging active civic participation, and promoting values aligned with the Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint (RPTM) 2026-2035 framework.

Theoretical & Pedagogical Foundation of SULAM

Constructivism

Students construct knowledge through active involvement and reflection on their service experiences.

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle

- Concrete Experience: Engagement with the community.
- Reflective Observation: Thinking critically about the experience.
- Abstract Conceptualisation: Integrating new insights with academic knowledge.
- Active Experimentation: Applying learning to new situations or problems.

Transformative Learning

Encourages shifts in perspectives by challenging students' worldviews and values through community engagement.

Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

Students tackle real-life issues identified in the community, promoting critical thinking and solution-oriented approaches.

1.3 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 offer a ready-made global platform and roadmap to amplify SULAM's impact, visibility, and sustainability, turning it from an academic activity into a transformational movement. SULAM transforms the abstract global vision of the SDGs into tangible, local action. Through structured, curriculum-integrated service-learning projects, students address real community issues from poverty and education to health and sustainability while meeting academic goals.

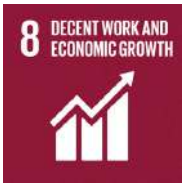
Why SULAM is Indispensable?

Aspect	SULAM's Role
Practicality	Localises SDG action into community-based projects
Education	Promotes value-driven, reflective, and relevant learning
Empowerment	Builds student and community agency
Sustainability	Encourages long-term solutions, not one-off charity
Partnership	Catalyses cross-sector collaboration for shared goals

1.4 Alignment of SULAM with Sustainable Development Goals 2030

SULAM can be aligned with real-world issues and higher education goals. The following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are directly relevant to education and community engagement through the SULAM framework:

SDGs	SULAM Core Alignment	SULAM Actions
	SULAM projects empower communities to improve livelihoods and break poverty cycles.	• Microenterprise training for B40 groups, skills workshops for rural women, and financial literacy programmes.
	SULAM projects that promote sustainable agriculture and food security.	• Community farming projects, aquaponics workshops, food bank initiatives, and healthy cooking classes for low-income families.
	Many projects focus on improving health literacy, mental wellness, and public health in underserved communities.	• Health campaigns, screenings, and nutrition workshops. • Enhancing access to health knowledge and services.
	Central to SULAM is enhancing teaching and learning through experiential, value-driven, and community-integrated education.	• Promotes lifelong learning through real-world applications. • Encourages holistic development, including civic responsibility and soft skills. • Embeds inclusive and equitable quality education through diverse community partnerships.
	SULAM promotes equal opportunities for women and girls.	• Leadership training for women, campaigns to prevent gender-based violence, and entrepreneurship support for single mothers.

SDGs	SULAM Core Alignment	SULAM Actions
	SULAM addresses water access and hygiene awareness.	• Rainwater harvesting projects, clean water filter installation, and hygiene education in rural schools.
	SULAM promotes renewable energy awareness and adoption.	• Solar panel installation projects and community workshops on energy efficiency.
	SULAM develops skills for employability and entrepreneurship.	• Vocational training, internship-community hybrid projects, and start-up mentoring for local youth.
	SULAM encourages innovation in addressing local challenges.	• Low-cost technology prototypes for farmers, community internet access points, and social innovation hackathons.
	SULAM targets marginalized and underserved populations.	• Accessibility improvement projects, inclusive education programmes for OKU (persons with disabilities), and advocacy campaigns.
	SULAM supports community resilience and inclusivity.	• Urban greening projects, heritage preservation, and community-based disaster preparedness training.
	SULAM fosters sustainable lifestyle practices.	• Waste segregation programmes, upcycling workshops, and zero-waste campus campaigns.

SDGs	SULAM Core Alignment	SULAM Actions
	SULAM projects engage communities in environmental stewardship.	• Tree planting, climate literacy programmes, mangrove restoration.
	SULAM promotes marine conservation and awareness.	• Beach clean-ups, coral reef monitoring, plastic waste reduction campaigns in coastal areas.
	Projects designed to protects terrestrial ecosystems.	• Wildlife conservation projects, reforestation, sustainable farming education.
	SULAM encourages civic engagement and ethical awareness.	• Community mediation training, anti-corruption workshops, youth civic participation forums.
	Built on a Quintuple Helix model — engaging academia, government, industry, and community.	• Promotes meaningful partnerships to co-develop and co-implement sustainable community initiatives.

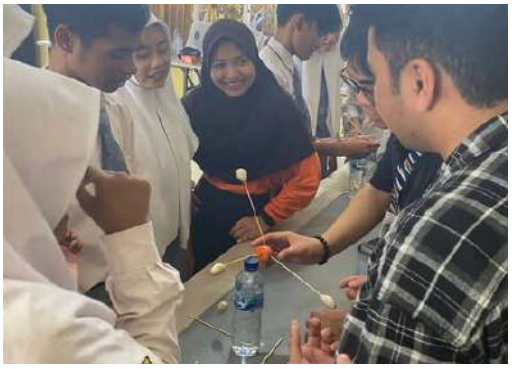
1.5 Examples of SULAM Project Aligned With SDGs 2030

SULAM INNOVATE 2023 WINNER
Projek Ternakan Ayam Kampung Kacuk di Pusat Pemulihan Orang Kurang Upaya Kg. Aur, Bachok, Kelantan

The Kampung Crossbred Chicken Project or *Projek Ayam Kampung Kacuk* at the Rehabilitation Centre for Persons with Disabilities in Kg. Aur Telong, Bachok, Kelantan is an initiative by the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, the Institute for Poverty Research & Management (InsPeK), Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, and the Kelantan State Rehabilitation Council (MPNK). This project received funding amounting to RM 99,800.00 from Permodalan Nasional Berhad. The project aims to provide persons with disabilities (OKU) with both theoretical and practical training in project management. In addition, it seeks to improve participants' socioeconomic status and strengthen their self-identity, enabling them to become more self-reliant and enhance their quality of life. As part of their SULAM project, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine students participated in advising and assisting the community throughout the implementation of the initiative.

SULAM INNOVATE 2025 WINNER
Madura Smart Salt House (MaSS) Project
Smart Salt Solutions Empowering Communities Through IoT

The Madura Smart Salt House (MaSS) Project is a cross-border service-learning initiative by Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS and Universitas Trunojoyo Madura, Indonesia, aimed at modernising traditional salt farming practices in Madura through the use of IoT technology. Engineering students developed MaSSBot, a portable device that monitors temperature, humidity, and salinity, with real-time access to cloud data. Through IoT training, STEM outreach activities, and community workshops, the project improved farmers' productivity, digital literacy, and economic well-being, while fostering students' technical competencies, social responsibility, and engagement in sustainable international collaboration. The research-driven approach of this SULAM project aligns with the aspirations of the Global SULAM initiative.



1.6 MQF 2024 and the Mandate for ESD and VBE

The Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA), as the national regulatory body, oversees the implementation and quality assurance of higher education through the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF).

In response to global and national priorities, MQF has undergone significant revisions to reflect the growing need for holistic, humanity-centric, and sustainability-driven education, in line with the aspirations of the Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint 2026–2035.

Among its key enhancements is the explicit integration of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Values-Based Education (VBE) across the five clusters of learning outcomes.

These inclusions affirm the national commitment to producing graduates who are not only competent in their respective fields but also ethically grounded, socially responsible, and sustainability-conscious, aligning with the Blueprint's aspiration to develop impact-driven and future-ready talent.

ESD within MQF 2024 promotes competencies such as systems thinking, critical reflection, and collaborative problem-solving, while VBE fosters core human values including integrity, empathy, and civic responsibility. Together, these competencies support the development of graduates capable of addressing societal and community challenges within complex and evolving ecosystems.

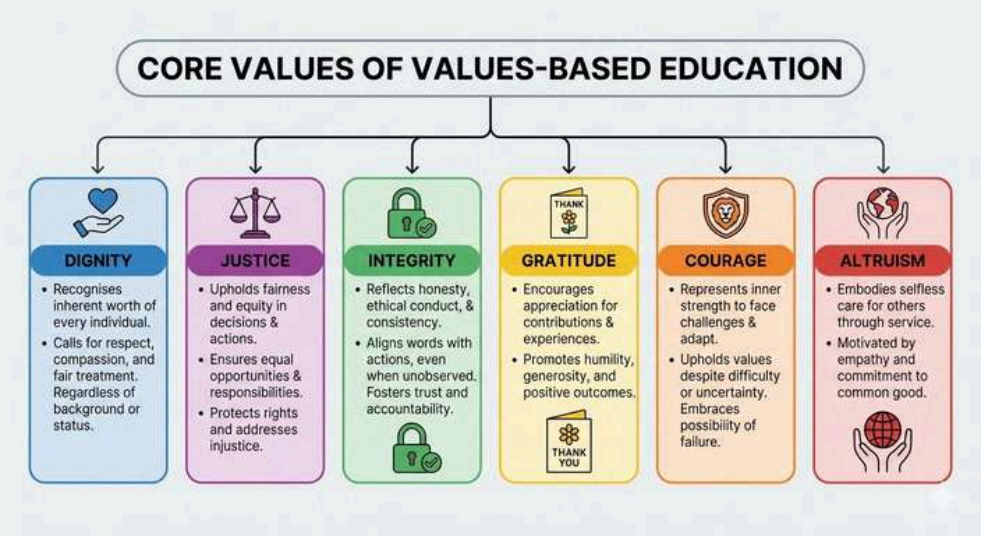
The integration of ESD and VBE directly complements SULAM's goals, which emphasise experiential learning, ethical engagement, and community-based problem-solving. Through such approaches, SULAM contributes to sustainable impact, planetary health awareness, and ecosystem-oriented collaboration, as articulated in the Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint 2026–2035.

Values-Based Education through SULAM

Values-Based Education (VBE), as articulated in the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) 2024 and the Guidelines on Values-Based Education (MQA, 2026), focuses on nurturing graduates who are not only academically competent, but also ethically grounded, socially responsible, and guided by humanistic, societal, and communal values. Embedded within SULAM as a high-impact experiential learning practice, VBE is enacted through authentic community engagement that enables students to internalise and embody core values in real-world contexts. Through structured service-learning experiences and reflective practice, SULAM supports the holistic development of students by cultivating empathy, compassion, social awareness, inclusivity, responsibility, and ethical integrity. In doing so, it contributes to the development of balanced individuals and responsible citizens aligned with the National Education Philosophy and the aspirations of Malaysian higher education

In values-based learning, communities are not merely recipients of service but co-educators who shape students' values, perspectives, and sense of responsibility through shared experiences and mutual respect.

MQF Proposed Core Values



Note: The descriptions of the core values presented in this figure are simplified summaries adapted from the Guidelines on Values-Based Education (VBE) issued by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA, 2026). Image generated by AI

Operationalising VBE Through SULAM Learning Design

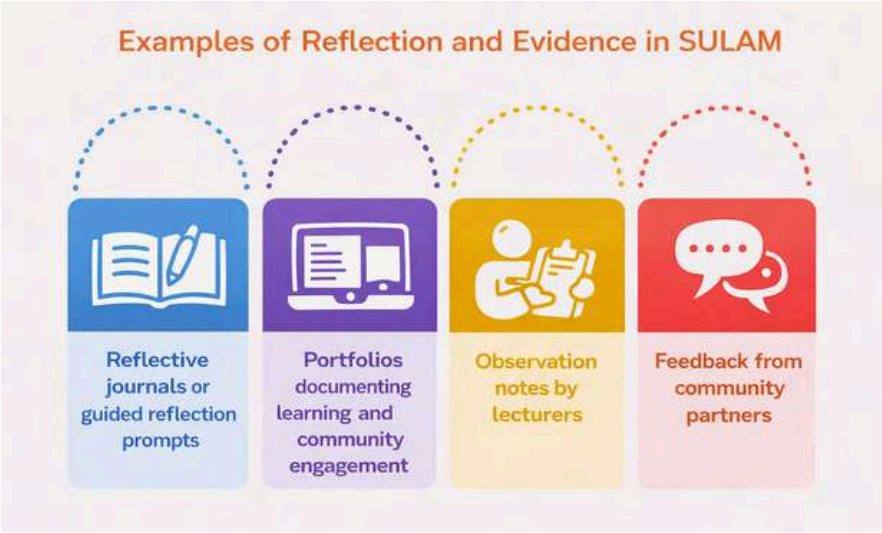
In SULAM, VBE is enacted through learning design that integrates core values into community engagement, reflection, and assessment. Values development is demonstrated through authentic student work and community feedback, in line with constructive alignment and the Guidelines on VBE.

Operationalisation of VBE Core Values in SULAM

Example of Core Value	How It Is Operationalised in SULAM	Evidence
Dignity	Respectful community engagement	Reflection, observation
Integrity	Ethical decision-making	Journals, peer feedback
Altruism	Sustained community service	Community partner feedback

Reflection and Evidence of Values-Based Learning in SULAM

Reflection and evidence are central to the internalisation of values in SULAM. Through structured reflection, students critically examine their experiences, ethical considerations, and personal growth, enabling values to be genuinely lived and internalised rather than merely discussed.



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Understanding Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) encompasses the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, and empowerment needed for learners of all ages to address interconnected global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, resource depletion, and social inequality. It also emphasises participatory teaching approaches that inspire and enable learners to transform their behaviour and actively engage in actions that promote sustainable development. This educational approach fosters essential competencies, including critical thinking, envisioning future scenarios, and collaborative decision-making (UNESCO, 2017).

Understanding ESD

- ESD equips learners with the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes needed to make responsible decisions and take actions that promote environmental integrity, economic viability, and social justice.

- ESD promotes action-oriented, participatory, and transformative learning approaches.

Box 2. Target 4.7 of the SDGs

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Source: United Nations, 2015

- ESD equips learners with the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes needed to make responsible decisions and take actions that promote environmental integrity, economic viability, and social justice.

- ESD promotes action-oriented, participatory, and transformative learning approaches.

ESD Competencies (UNESCO, 2017)

Competency	Brief Description
Systems Thinking	Understand relationships, complexity, and long-term impacts
Critical Thinking	Question assumptions and evaluate arguments
Strategic	Plan and implement sustainability actions
Normative	Reflect on values, principles, and ethics in decision-making
Anticipatory	Assess future scenarios and act with foresight
Collaboration	Work with diverse stakeholders; develop empathy and cooperation
Self-awareness	Reflect on personal values, behaviours, and motivation
Integrated Problem-Solving	Combine various skills and knowledge to address complex sustainability issues

Assessing ESD Competencies Through SULAM Projects

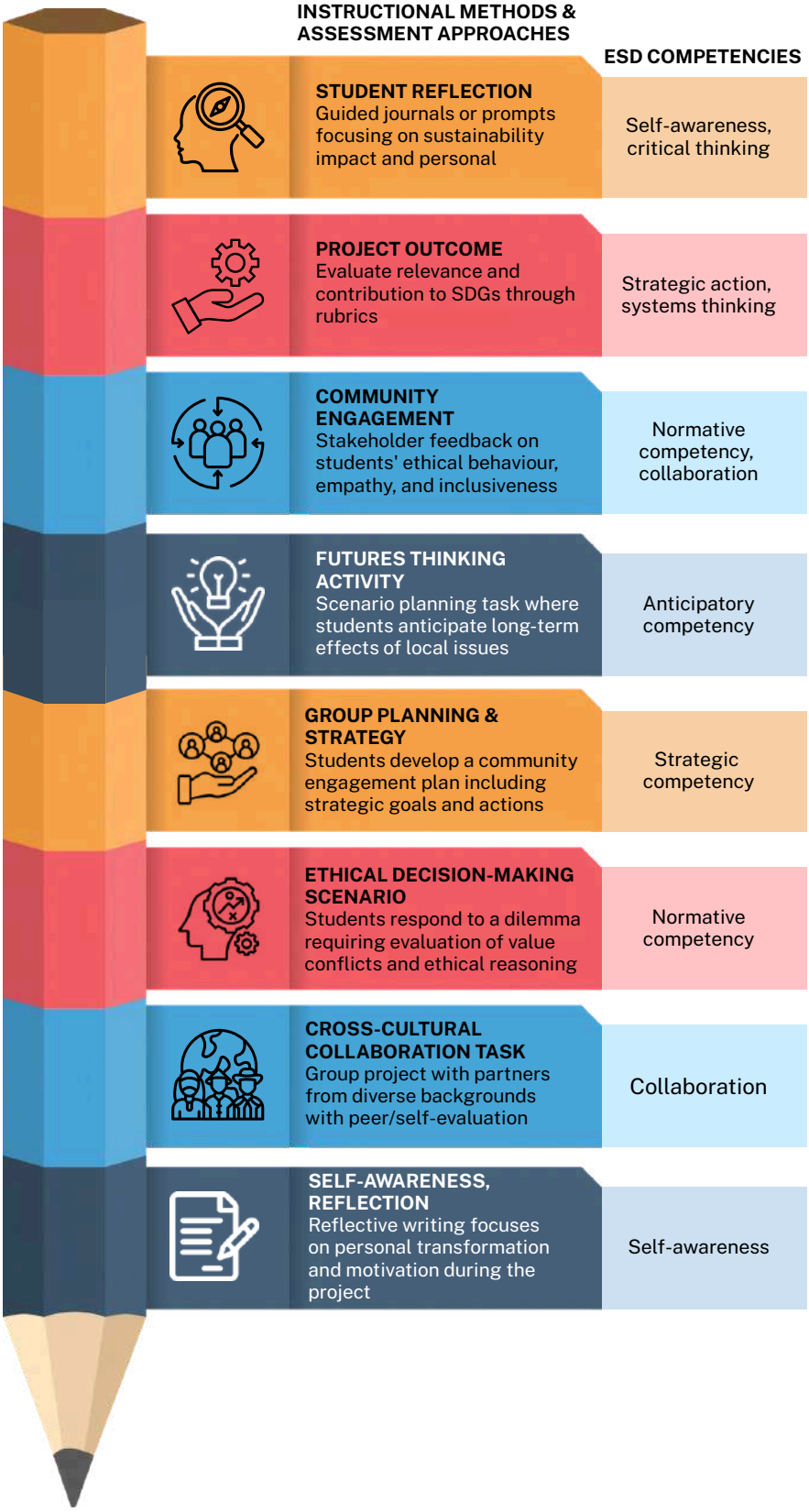
ESD equips learners with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to take informed action towards sustainability. Through SULAM, ESD is embedded within academic courses and aligned with national and global sustainability priorities, including the SDGs and MQF 2024. SULAM provides an experiential and pedagogically sound platform for students to demonstrate ESD competencies through authentic community engagement, thereby supporting the development of knowledgeable, responsible, and action-oriented graduates who are capable of addressing complex societal and environmental challenges.

Practical Alignment

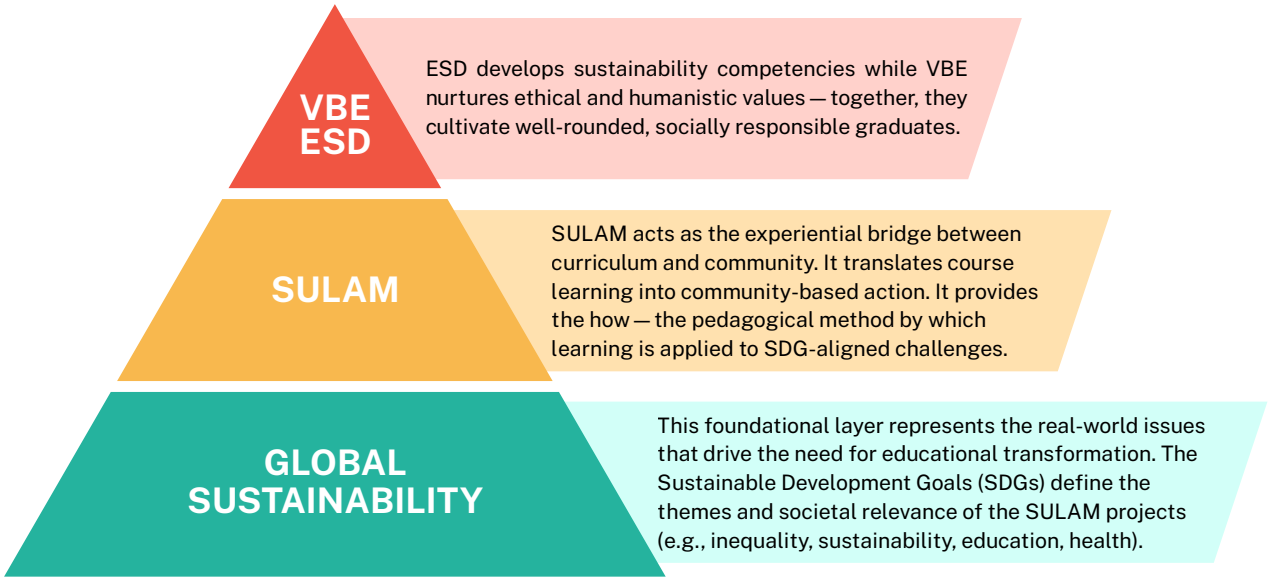
ESD Competency	How SULAM Enables It
Systems Thinking	Students analyse interrelated community and environmental challenges
Critical Thinking	Students evaluate real-world issues and reflect critically on possible solutions
Collaboration	Projects require teamwork and cooperation with diverse stakeholders
Strategic Action	SULAM tasks involve planning and executing sustainable interventions
Self-awareness	Reflection components deepen understanding of values and motivation
Anticipatory Thinking	Students consider the long-term impacts of community behavioir and change
Normative Competency	Students reflect on values such as equity, justice, and ethical responsibility
Integrated Problem Solving	Projects integrates academic knowledge and values to address complex challenges

How to Assess ESD in SULAM Projects?

The graphic below outlines the suggested instructional methods, assessment approaches, and the ESD competencies they aim to measure.



1.7 Framework for Integrating SULAM, SDGs, ESD, and VBE



1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has positioned SULAM as a high-impact pedagogical approach for embedding ESD and VBE within Malaysia's higher education system. Aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and MQF 2024, SULAM supports students' academic development while fostering ethical awareness, civic responsibility, and sustainability-oriented thinking. Through ESD, students develop key competencies such as systems thinking, critical reflection, and collaborative problem-solving, while VBE nurtures empathy, integrity, and ethical leadership, all of which are essential for responsible citizenship.

Collectively, the integration of SULAM, the SDGs, ESD, and VBE presents a coherent and future-oriented framework that positions higher education as a transformative force for community engagement, societal well-being, and global sustainability, in line with the aspirations of the Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint 2026–2035.

CHAPTER 2

Designing SULAM Initiative

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the intentional design of SULAM initiatives, emphasising how SULAM can be systematically planned and implemented across different levels of practice. It is organised into three main sections, each addressing different levels and modes of SULAM implementation.

The first section addresses SULAM at the course level by introducing the **design thinking** approach as a human-centred framework to guide the systematic development of SULAM projects that respond to authentic community needs.

The second section shifts to the programme level, discussing how course-based SULAM initiatives can be aligned with **CARE** within the broader EXCEL Framework to ensure coherence across programme learning outcomes, graduate attributes, and institutional aspirations.

The final section introduces **e-SULAM** as a flexible mode of implementation that can be conducted either fully online or through blended on-site and online engagement. It also highlights the benefits of e-SULAM, examples of technology integration, and best practices for sustaining meaningful community engagement and learning impact.

2.2 Design Thinking (DT) Approach

There are various models and frameworks that educators can use to plan and implement SULAM, including the ADDIE framework and Kaye's (2013) Five Stages of Service Learning, both of which support the alignment of academic learning outcomes with community needs. Among these, Design Thinking (DT) offers a particularly effective approach to SULAM as it emphasises empathy and human-centred problem-solving, which are key principles of meaningful service-learning.

DT is closely aligned with the values and objectives of SULAM because it begins with the perspectives and lived experiences of communities, encouraging students to build authentic relationships and co-develop solutions to real-world challenges. For this reason, DT is introduced in this chapter as a guiding framework for the effective design and implementation of SULAM initiatives.

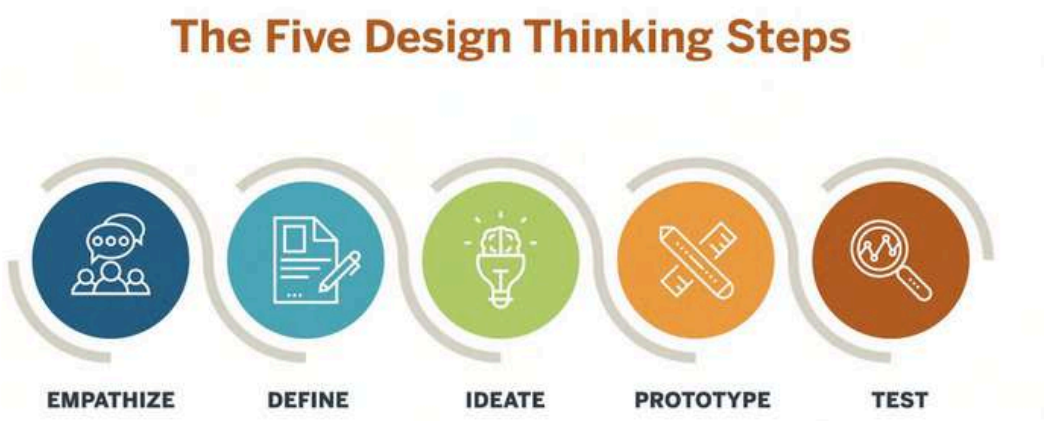
DT in SULAM

DT and SULAM are closely aligned in their emphasis on addressing real-world challenges through experiential and community-engaged learning. DT provides a structured, human-centred approach that supports students in understanding complex community contexts, identifying authentic needs, and co-creating contextually appropriate solutions. This aligns with SULAM's focus on meaningful engagement, reciprocity, and learning through service.

Within SULAM, DT functions as a guiding framework that structures the service-learning journey from problem identification to solution development and refinement. By foregrounding empathy, perspective-taking, and iterative problem-solving, DT enables students to move beyond surface-level service activities towards deeper engagement with societal and community challenges.

When integrated into SULAM course design, DT enhances the clarity, coherence, and impact of learning activities and assessments. It supports the alignment of academic learning outcomes with community-based projects, critical reflection, and evidence of learning, while providing a systematic pathway for students to apply disciplinary knowledge in authentic contexts. In this way, DT strengthens SULAM implementation by promoting human-centred, values-driven, and sustainability-oriented problem-solving

The 5 Stages of DT



Source: https://techbootcamps.utexas.edu/blog/design-thinking-process/

Stage 1: Emphatise

Purpose: To understand the issues, problems, concerns, and needs of the customer or target audience.

Strategies:

- Site visit
- Observation
- Survey
- Interview

Stage 1: Empathise - Students visited site and collected data

- This phase helps students-designers discover authentic user perspectives and develop empathy towards the community's concerns, experiences, and needs.

- Example: UPM Veterinary Project on Antibiotic Awareness.

Through farm visits, veterinary students interacted directly with farmers to gain first-hand insights into livestock wellbeing, farm management practices, and levels of awareness regarding animal vaccination and health practices.

UPM Doctor of Veterinary Medicine students consulting farmers and performing clinical screening on livestocks at the farm as apart of SULAM project

Stage 2: Define

Purpose: To clarify and frame the core problems identified during the Empathize phase into clear, actionable, and human-centred problem statements. This phase focuses on converging diverse insights into a more focused understanding of the community's needs.

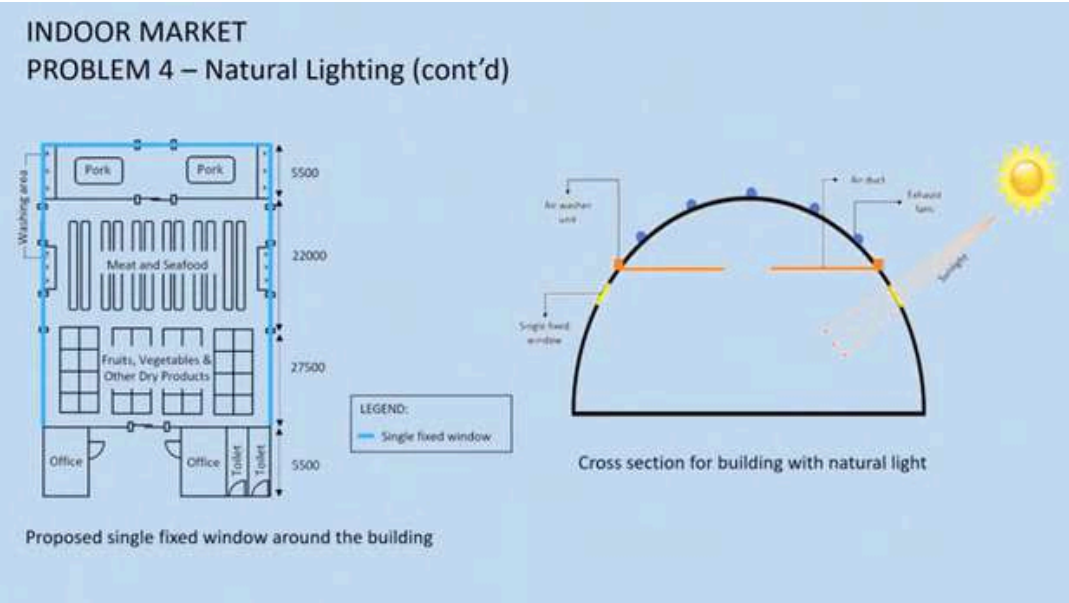
Strategies:

- Brainstorming affinity diagramming
- Stakeholder analysis

Example:

- Universiti Malaya's Faculty of Built Environment (Fakulti Alam Bina) conducted a SULAM project at Pasar Pudu, Kuala Lumpur. During the Empathize phase (Phase 1), students collected data through site visits, interviews, and photographs, which revealed several environmental and structural issues, including slippery floors, inadequate waste disposal, poor natural lighting, and damaged market signage.

- Based on the data analysis, students formulated specific problem statements, such as improving natural lighting and redesigning waste management zones, which later guided the ideation and prototyping stages.



Stage 2: Define - Drawing of the proposed renovated Pasar Pudu. The drawing synthesises findings from the Empathize phase into a structured problem definition, highlighting issues related to natural lighting, spatial layout, and functional zoning

Stage 3: Ideate

Purpose: To generate a broad range of creative ideas and potential solutions based on the clearly defined problem statements identified during the Define stage. Unlike the Define stage, which focuses on narrowing the problem, the Ideate stage emphasises exploring multiple possibilities and innovative approaches.

Strategies:

- Brainwriting
- Sketching
- Collaborative discussions

Example:

UiTM's TeleGigi project demonstrated the ideation process by generating various creative solutions to improve access to dental consultations during the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the proposed solutions involved encouraging parents to communicate with dentists through Telegram

Stage 3: Ideate. Through the TeleGigi SULAM project, UiTM students explored and proposed multiple solution ideas to address challenges in dental consultation access during COVID-19

Stage 4: Prototype

Purpose: To create low-fidelity models or representations of selected solutions for feedback and iteration. This phase allows students to experiment with tangible formats such as sketches, paper mock-ups, or digital prototypes to bring their ideas to life in a concrete way. Prototyping encourages trial-and-error learning, helps surface design flaws early, and provides a basis for dialogue with stakeholders.

Possible output: Mockups, digital simulations, paper models.

Stage 5: Test

Purpose: To engage users in testing prototypes and gathering real-world feedback for improvement. This phase enables students to observe how users interact with the prototypes, identify areas for enhancement, and make informed refinements and iterations.

Strategies:

- Piloting
- Feedback loops
- Focus groups

Note:
While the DT process traditionally concludes with the Test phase, SULAM often requires students to take one step further, by implementing the final solution as a tangible act of service to the community.

However, in practice, the Test phase in SULAM can also serve as the Implementation phase, since students typically use their prototypes in real-world settings during the project rollout.

Example of Five-Stage DT Implementation

Politeknik Banting students are involved in a project to promote heritage appreciation and cultural tourism at Istana Bandar, a historical site in Banting, Selangor.

The project followed the DT process, beginning with interviews involving the village head, officers from the Perbadanan Adat Melayu dan Warisan Negeri Selangor (PADAT), and local residents to understand current levels of heritage awareness and tourism-related challenges.

In the **Empathy stage**, students identified core issues such as a lack of visitors, insufficient information dissemination, and limited public knowledge about the site's significance.

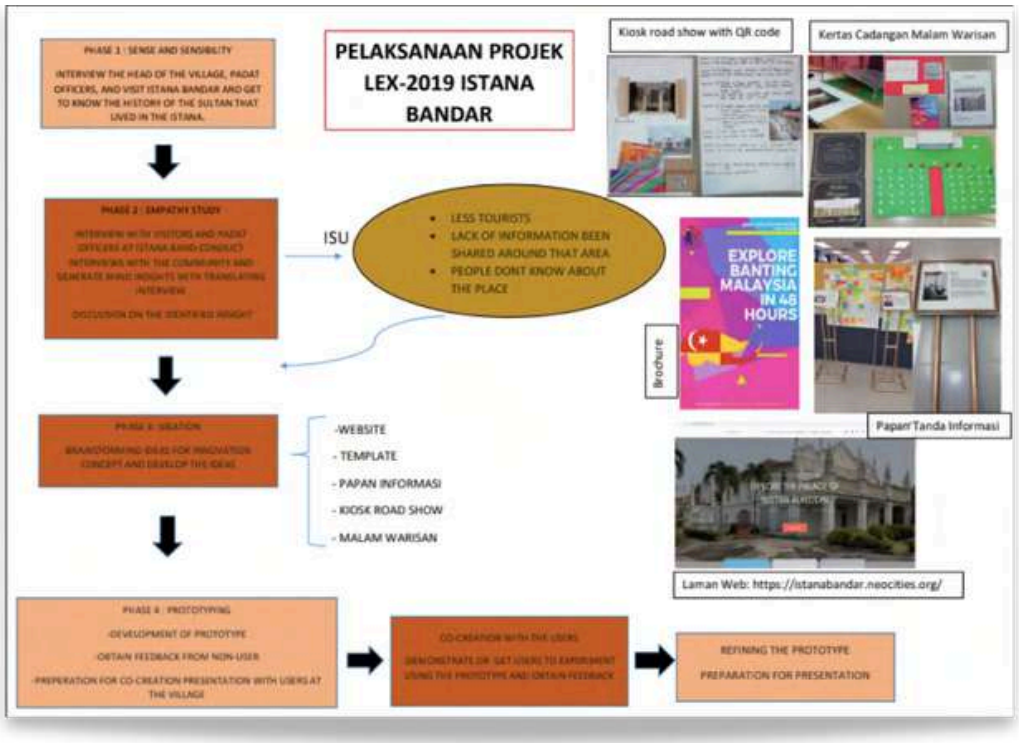
During the **Ideation stage**, students brainstormed a variety of solutions including developing brochures, a website, interactive signboards, and hosting a cultural night event (Malam Warisan).

These ideas were translated into development of **prototypes** such as printed materials, a kiosk roadshow with QR codes, and an informational website.

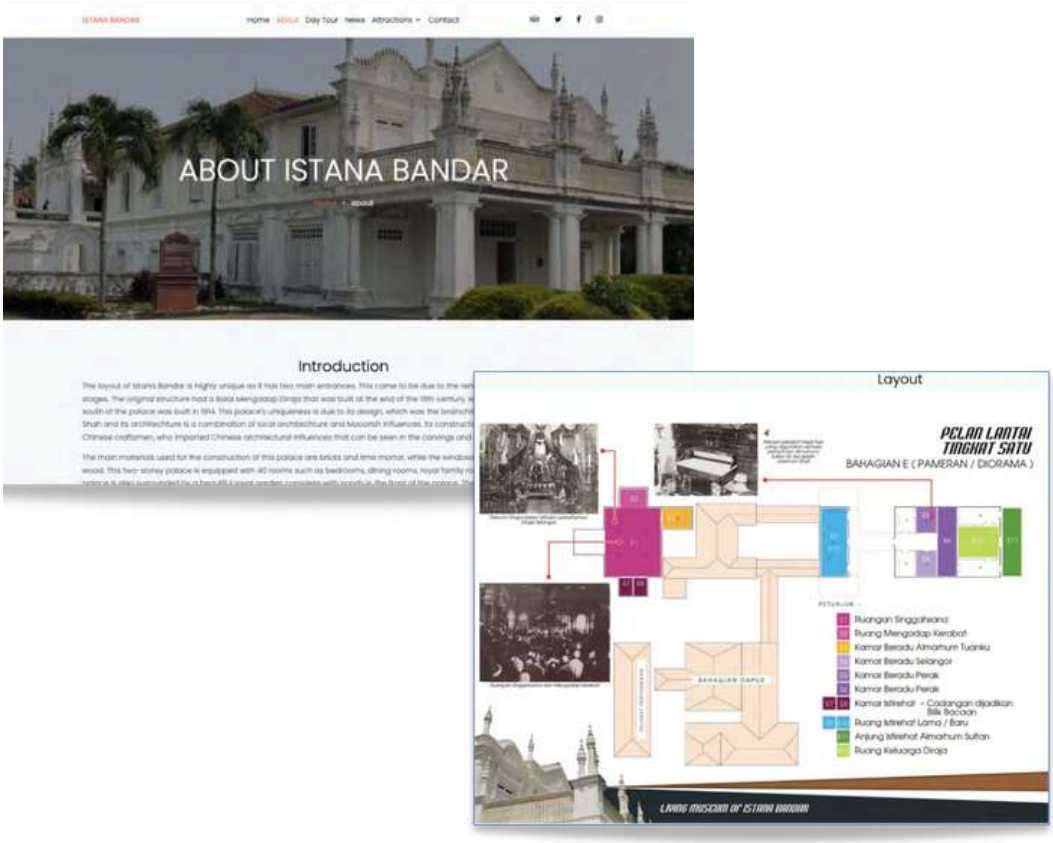
One of the highlighted products was a vibrant brochure titled "48 Jam Kembara di Banting, Selangor" or "Explore Banting Malaysia in 48 Hours." This brochure featured curated travel itineraries, recommended local attractions (such as the famous Cendol Seger), and historical narratives about Istana Bandar.

Visually appealing and informative, it was designed to engage both tourists and locals by promoting cultural appreciation and encouraging exploration of Banting's heritage sites. The use of multilingual content and integration of QR codes for expanded digital information reflected thoughtful design grounded in user accessibility and needs.

The prototypes were then **presented to stakeholders** for feedback. This feedback helped students refine the visual design, messaging, and usability of their outputs.

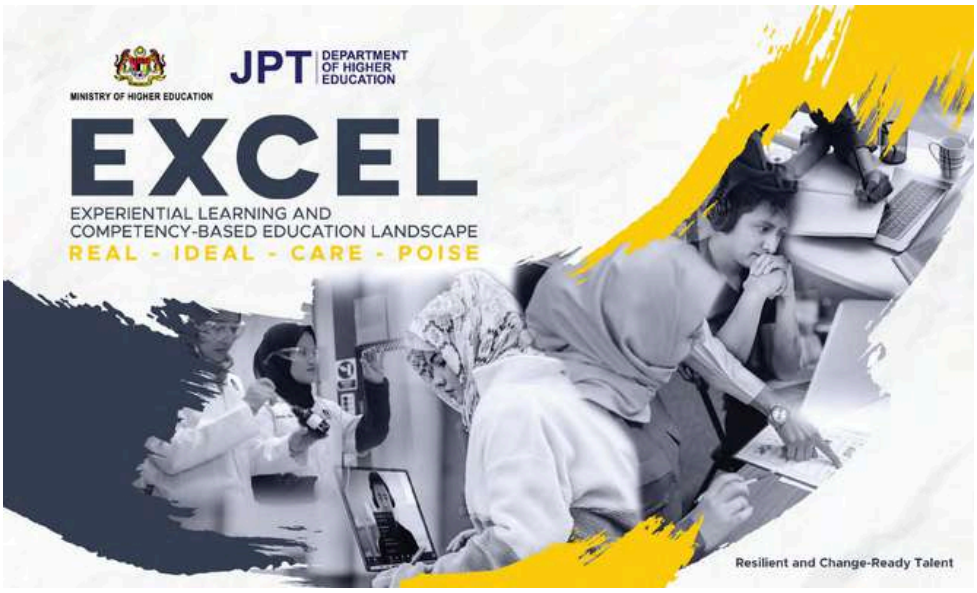


Flow of the DT processes in the project

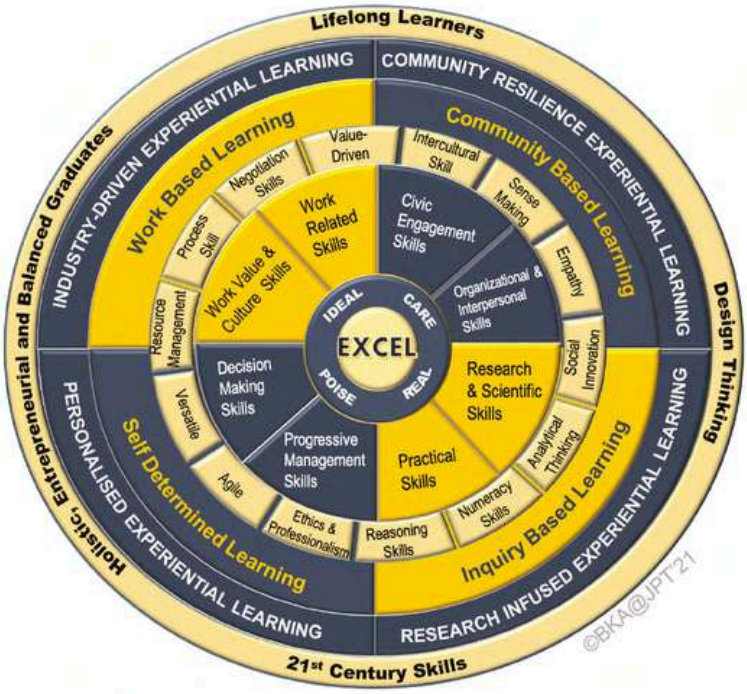


One of the prototypes - Istana Bandar website

2.3 Aligning SULAM with CARE-EXCEL Framework



The Experiential Learning and Competency-Based Education Landscape (EXCEL) framework was introduced by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) in 2021 to embed research, industry- and community-based elements, as well as personalisation, into curriculum development. SULAM complements one of the key thrusts of EXCEL, namely Community Resilience Experiential Learning (CARE). The pedagogical principles and practices of SULAM support and reinforce each component of the CARE EXCEL framework.



At the programme level, CARE provides a structured and coherent approach for integrating community engagement across the curriculum, ensuring alignment, continuity, and sustained impact. Through CARE, SULAM initiatives are positioned within a broader programme framework that supports holistic graduate development and community resilience.

Aspect	SULAM & CARE
Shared Vision	Both frameworks emphasize holistic, human-centric education that integrates character, civic responsibility, and academic rigor
Institutional Strengthening	Embedding SULAM in CARE-EXCEL enhances its systematic delivery, quality assurance, and educational impact across HLIs
Student Transformation	Aligning with CARE EXCEL ensures students emerge not only as academically strong, but also emotionally intelligent, socially conscious leaders
SDG Synergy	Both support achievement of SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities), and SDG 17 (Partnerships)

2.4 e-SULAM

e-SULAM, or electronic Service Learning Malaysia, refers to a service-learning implementation in which community engagement and service activities are conducted either fully online or through a combination of on-site (physical) engagement and online components.

While conventional SULAM predominantly emphasizes direct, face-to-face interaction with community partners, e-SULAM enables students to engage in meaningful community projects through digitally mediated modes of interaction, allowing technology to support communication, service delivery, collaboration, and reflection.

Benefits of e-SULAM

- Expands access to a broad range of SULAM experiences within communities by reducing geographical and logistical constraints, particularly during situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Enhances the diversity and inclusivity of learning experiences.
- Provides access to a wider range of community partners, including persons with disabilities, rural communities, and individuals who are shy or introverted.
- Enhances the potential for standardising SULAM experiences across the curriculum.
- Supports the efficient use of lecturer resources in designing, monitoring, and evaluating SULAM courses.

Examples of e-SULAM Activities

- University students majoring in education create virtual educational materials, such as webinars, streamed presentations, or online performances, to support community learning.
- Polytechnic automotive students develop simple digital maintenance records or vehicle tracking templates for community-based car workshops.
- Community college hospitality or culinary students produce short instructional videos or digital guides on food handling, packaging, and customer service practices to support community food vendors.

Good Practices in e-SULAM

There are two important components for good practices in e-SULAM. Together, they support meaningful community engagement, effective project management, and sustainable learning impact in virtual or blended SULAM contexts.

Technology

- Training for students, community partners, and instructors
- Use of appropriate synchronous and asynchronous methods
- Trial runs prior to live sessions
- Assess community partner and student technical readiness capacity

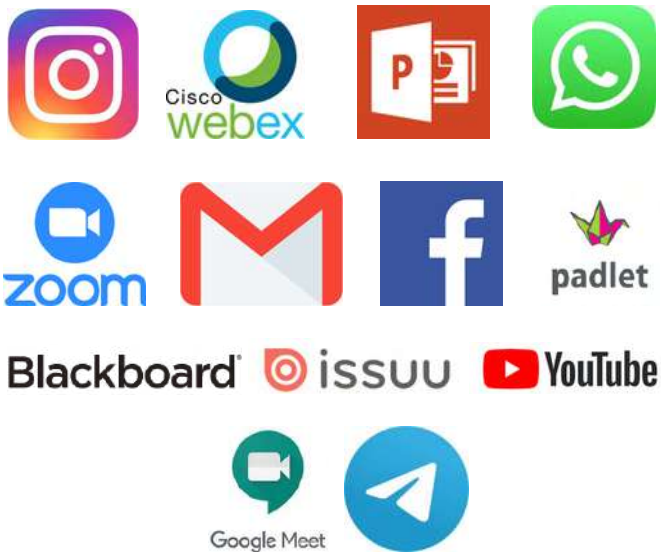
Communication

- Clear expectations and roles articulated through memorandums of understanding
- Community partner access to learning platform
- Early engagement with the community

(Modified from Waldner, McGorry, & Widener, 2012)

Component 1: Technology

Effective e-SULAM implementation relies on digital tools that support teaching, learning, communication, and assessment.



Examples of technologies used to support e-SULAM implementation include the following:

- **Course delivery and interaction.** Learning Management System (LMS) platforms such as Moodle, Google Classroom, and Canvas support course content management and student progress tracking, while video conferencing tools enable real-time interaction among students, lecturers, and community partners.

- **Collaboration and community engagement.** Collaborative platforms such as Padlet, Trello, Miro, and Jamboard support project-based activities, while content-sharing tools such as YouTube, Canva, and TikTok enhance community outreach and engagement.

- **Engagement and formative feedback.** Engagement and formative feedback tools such as Google Forms, Kahoot, Mentimeter, and Flipgrid support the collection of student responses, reflections, and continuous feedback throughout e-SULAM activities.

- **Monitoring and tracking.** Monitoring tools such as Learning Management System (LMS) analytics, including activity logs, access frequency, submission tracking, and participation reports, support the continuous monitoring of student participation and progress throughout e-SULAM implementation.

- **Evaluation.** Evaluation tools such as e-portfolios, digital showcases, rubric-based assessment tools, and online survey platforms support the evaluation of e-SULAM impact through indicators related to participation levels, quality of online engagement, and the development of skills such as digital literacy, communication, and empathy.

In addition to tool selection, effective e-SULAM implementation requires adequate training for students, instructors, and community partners, as well as trial runs prior to live sessions and assessments of participants' technical capacity to ensure readiness. The purposeful integration of synchronous and asynchronous technologies further supports flexible participation and sustained continuity of engagement.

Component 2: Communication

Effective virtual community engagement requires careful planning and collaboration to address real community needs.

- Trust and long-term partnerships are strengthened through consistent and transparent communication. Early engagement with the community helps build mutual trust, enables students to better understand the project context, and deepens their awareness of the real-world issues the initiative seeks to address.

- At the same time, institutions must address the digital divide by providing appropriate support and alternative modes of engagement to ensure inclusive and equitable SULAM experiences.

- Clear task allocation, effective time management, and strong communication are essential for managing virtual teams while developing teamwork and leadership skills.

- Inclusivity must also be considered through flexible engagement approaches and the provision of necessary resources to support equitable participation.

These practices are operationalised through clear agreements, structured collaborative spaces, and planned engagement with community partners.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined a coherent approach to designing SULAM initiatives by situating service-learning within both pedagogical and institutional contexts. It began by introducing Design Thinking as a human-centred framework to guide the systematic design of SULAM projects that respond to authentic community needs, followed by a discussion of CARE–EXCEL as a programme-level structure that supports alignment, continuity, and sustainability in community engagement. The chapter then extended these design considerations to e-SULAM, highlighting how technology-enhanced and flexible modes of implementation can support meaningful learning experiences and community impact. Taken together, these interconnected perspectives demonstrate that effective SULAM design requires intentional planning, alignment across multiple levels, and adaptability to diverse learning environments in order to realise its educational and societal goals.

CHAPTER 3

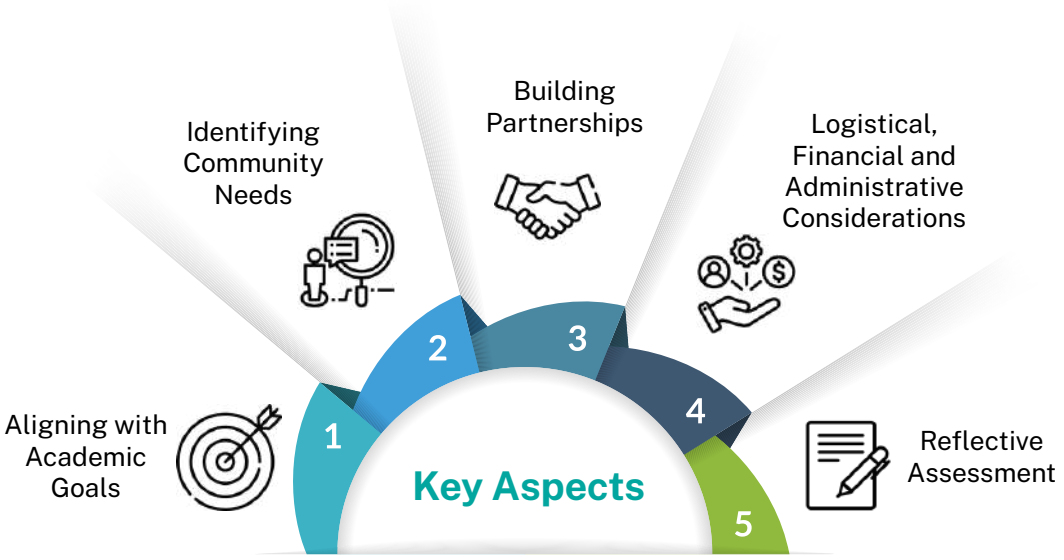
Community Partner Matching

3.1 Introduction

Community partner matching serves as a cornerstone in the design, implementation, and sustainability of high-impact SULAM initiatives. As SULAM evolves from a localised community project into a globally recognised model of community and HLI engagement, the process of identifying, aligning, and nurturing meaningful partnerships has become increasingly strategic, multilayered, and relational. Today, the SULAM ecosystem extends beyond traditional local partnerships to include international HLIs, global NGOs, transnational industries, government agencies, and diverse community groups. As a result, partner matching has become a deliberate and strategic endeavour that ensures projects remain academically rigorous while also being socially relevant, economically meaningful, and environmentally responsible.

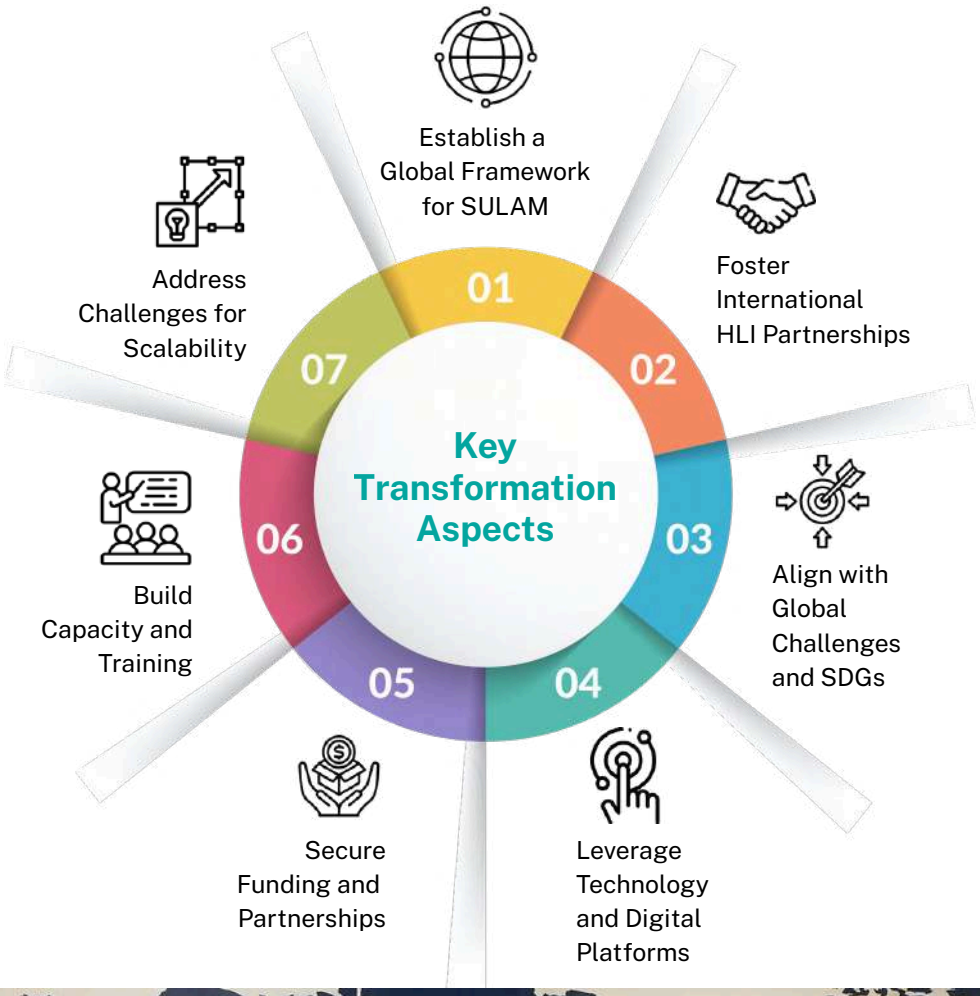
3.2 Community Partner Matching

The process of identifying and aligning HLIs, students, or academic programmes with community organisations, government agencies, or industry partners for collaboration in service-learning projects. This matching process ensures that projects are aligned with both the academic objectives of the course and the specific needs of the community, thereby creating mutually beneficial outcomes



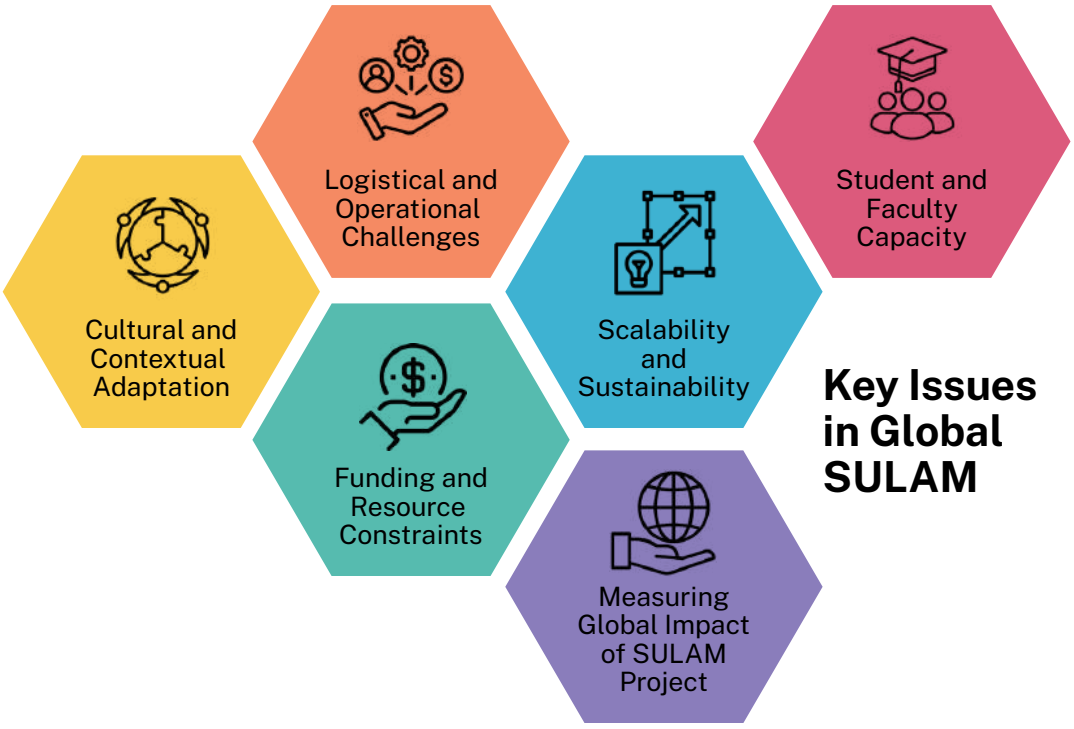
3.3 SULAM Going Global

Aligning SULAM with global educational and sustainability goals to extend SULAM's framework beyond Malaysia to the global stage, thereby promoting service-learning as a transformative pedagogy worldwide.

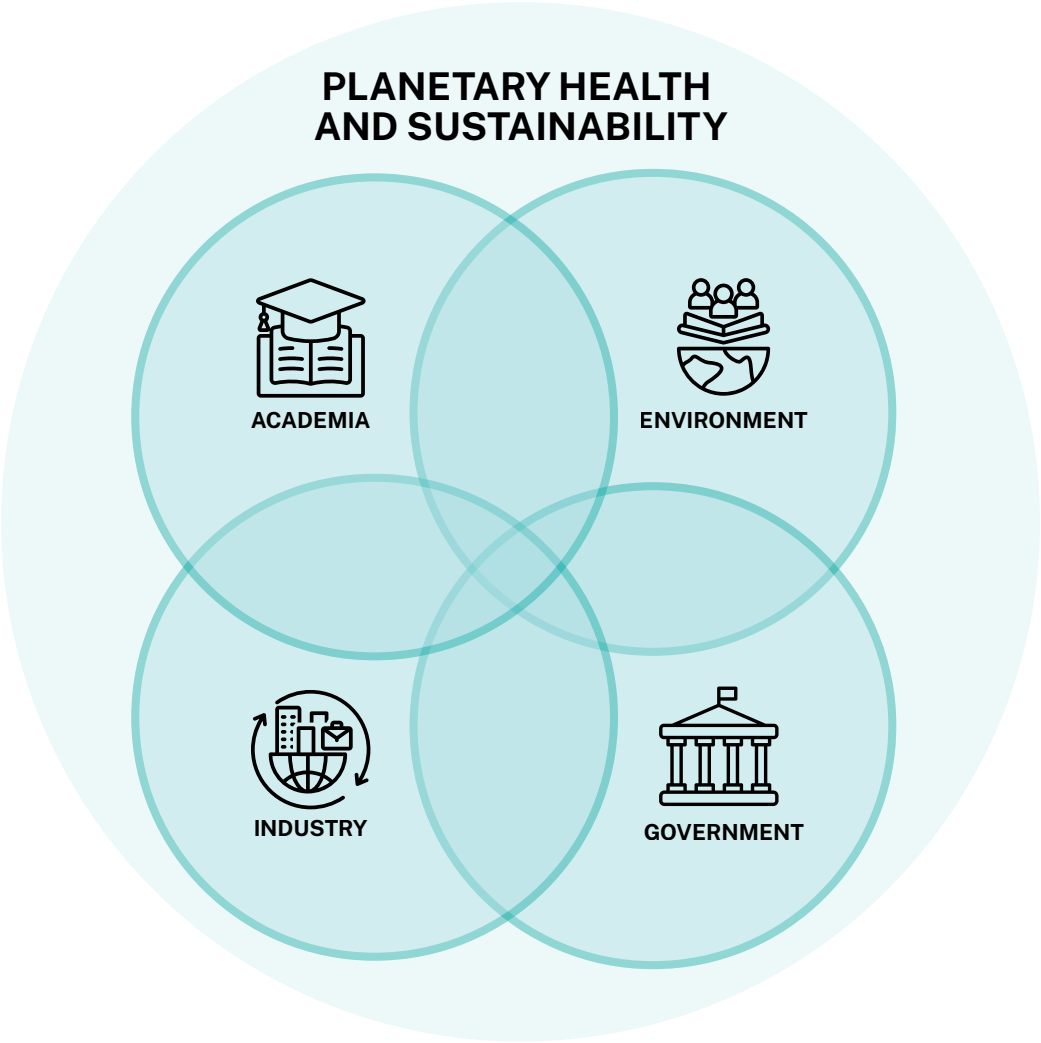


3.4 Key Issues

Expanding SULAM internationally introduces several key issues that must be addressed to ensure its success, sustainability, and alignment with global educational and societal goals. These issues stem from the complexities of adapting a locally successful model to diverse global contexts, managing cross-border collaborations, and ensuring equitable impact.



3.5 SULAM Quintuple Helix Model



Synergy Within the Quintuple Helix Framework.
Source: National Education Development Plan 2026-2035

The SULAM Quintuple Helix Model represents a collaborative framework that brings together five key sectors: academia, government, industry, the environment, and society to advance planetary health and sustainability through service-learning. Together, these stakeholders synergise to create impactful, inclusive, and context-specific initiatives that promote social responsibility, sustainable development, and community well-being (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2026).

SULAM Quintuple Helix: Roles of Each Collaborator

Academia (Universities, Educators, Researchers)

Role in SULAM: Curriculum Developer and Knowledge Facilitator

- Integrate SULAM into a curriculum and HLI planning.
- Guide students in applying disciplinary knowledge to real-world community challenges.
- Provide facilities, expertise, and resources for SULAM projects.
- Build partnerships with communities, government, industry, and media.
- Share project outcomes through reports, media, and public platforms.

Academia (Students)

Role in SULAM: Agents of Change and Learners

- Engage directly with communities to understand and address real-world issues.
- Apply academic knowledge to benefit society while gaining practical experience.
- Reflect on their experiences to develop empathy, problem-solving skills, and civic responsibility.

Environment and Society (Community, Ecosystem)

Role in SULAM: Community Co-Creator & Knowledge Holder

- Participate actively in addressing local issues and community needs.
- Share traditional knowledge and context-specific insights.
- Co-design and co-implement projects with students, academics, industry partners, and government agencies.

Government (Ministries, Local Councils, Policy Makers)

Role in SULAM: Enabler & Regulator

- Provide grants, funding, and incentives to support university–community engagement.
- Act as a bridge between local authorities and relevant agencies to facilitate project implementation.
- Provide data, permits, and approvals to support SULAM projects.

Industry (Private Sector, Social Enterprises, Entrepreneurs, NGOs)

Role in SULAM: Supporter and Real-World Partner

- Contribute to SULAM projects through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, sponsorships, mentoring, and in-kind support.
- Provide real-world challenges and opportunities for collaboration by co-developing solutions with students and communities to promote sustainability and innovation.
-

Ultimate Goal

All five collaborators synergise through SULAM to support planetary health, sustainability, and community well-being, ensuring that education remains transformative, socially responsive, and impact-driven.

3.6 Challenges and Opportunities

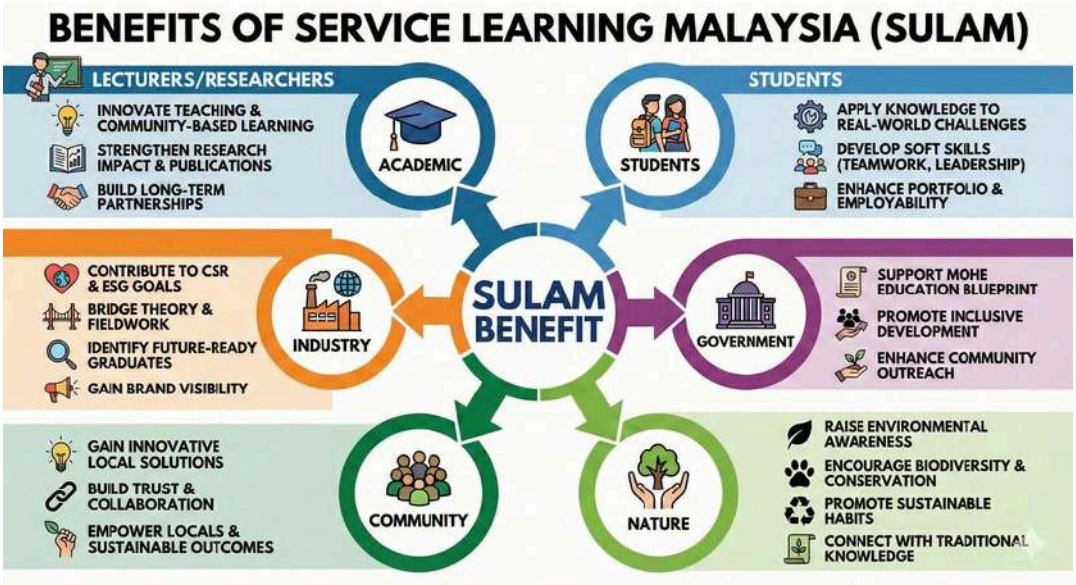
Challenges		Opportunity
Funding	• No funding or financial support	• Universities can allocate funding based on the number of students enrolled in SULAM courses. • SULAM proposals should be prepared early, with engagement involving industry and NGO partners initiated at least one semester in advance. •
Instructors	• Limited experience in SULAM and community-based projects • Heavy academic workload • Low motivation or confidence to engage with the community	• Organise training and sharing sessions with experts in SULAM or community engagement. • Encourage peer mentoring and support among SULAM instructors. • Collaborate across programmes or faculties to concentrate efforts on a shared community. • Provide templates and clear documentation procedures from the beginning of the semester. • Distribute SULAM-related tasks fairly among instructors. • Recognise instructors' involvement in SULAM as part of their workload or KPI.
Students	• Difficulty in distinguishing between volunteerism, community service, and SULAM. • Lack of experience in working with communities. • Heavy academic workload. • Low motivation to engage in community-based projects.	• Conduct a SULAM briefing at the beginning of the semester, led by the course coordinator. • Provide proper guidance on community engagement throughout the project. • Discuss realistic and achievable project outcomes with instructors. • Provide recognition for students' contributions, such as awards or public appreciation for their involvement in SULAM projects.

Challenges		Opportunities
Community	• Mistrust, limited participation, or unclear roles in project implementation.	• Engage the community from the planning stage • Build trust through dialogue and shared decision-making • Provide clear expectations regarding roles and responsibilities
Government Agencies	• Slow response • Bureaucratic processes • Limited collaboration	• Align projects with the agency's agenda and priorities. • Leverage the university's official support to strengthen project legitimacy. • Invite agencies to co-host activities and community programmes.
NGO's	• Different goals • Limited understanding of academic requirements	• Build long-term partnerships based on shared goals • NGOs help link students to grassroots realities • Involve NGOs in project planning
Industry	• Limited interest in non-commercial projects or CSR alignment	• Align projects with CSR/ESG values • Offer industry branding or exposure • Highlight graduate skill development and community impact

3.7 Challenges and Opportunities (eSULAM and International SULAM)

	Challenges	Opportunities
eSULAM	• Communication barriers (language, time zone, weak internet) • Limited immersion in the project experience	• Faculty to provide reliable online platforms and clear meeting schedules • Use messaging apps (e.g., WhatsApp, Telegram) for continuous updates • Conduct online ice-breaking sessions to build trust among students, instructors, and the community • Share videos, photos, and background materials in advance to enhance understanding • Use interactive digital tools (e.g., Padlet, Miro, Google Drive) for engagement and documentation
International SULAM	• Difficulty in identifying suitable HLI or community partners • Language barriers • Cultural differences	• Collaborate with the International Office, the HLI's SULAM Unit, or the Deputy Dean to identify suitable partners. • Assign bilingual students to serve as group translators or facilitators. • Organise cross-cultural sharing sessions to promote mutual understanding and respect.

3.8 SULAM Benefits



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SULAM promotes collaboration between academia, government, industry, and the environment (community and nature) to:

- Improve community well-being through real-world learning.
- Support long-term environmental stewardship and sustainable practices.
- Prepare students to become responsible leaders and problem-solvers.
- Integrate scientific and local knowledge to develop more effective solutions.
- Build strong partnerships to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This approach enables education to create meaningful impact by addressing present challenges while contributing to a healthier and more sustainable future for people and the planet.

3.9 Conclusion

In essence, effective community partner matching serves as a transformative driver that strengthens the depth, integrity, and sustainability of SULAM initiatives. As SULAM continues to expand across borders and engage diverse sectors, the ability of HLIs to strategically navigate complex community ecosystems becomes increasingly important. A well-matched partnership does more than support learning outcomes; it strengthens community resilience, encourages knowledge co-creation, and positions SULAM as a platform where academic expertise and lived community realities converge to create shared impact. In this evolving landscape, partner matching is no longer merely a preliminary step, but a dynamic and relational process that shapes the very foundation of community engagement practices.

Looking ahead, HLIs must cultivate community partnerships grounded in reciprocity, cultural understanding, and long-term commitment. By aligning shared priorities, integrating global competencies, and recognising the social, economic, and environmental dimensions involved, SULAM practitioners can build collaborations that remain relevant, ethical, and transformative. Ultimately, community partner matching enables SULAM to serve as a model of engaged scholarship that enriches academic learning while contributing to sustainable development and societal well-being at both local and global levels.

CHAPTER 4

Impactful SULAM Practices

4.1 Impact of SULAM Projects

Operational Definition

Impact refers to the measurable and observable changes that result from an action, intervention, or programme, whether in the short or long term.

It focuses on the effects, changes, or benefits to knowledge, skills, attitudes, the economy, society, culture, public policy and services, health, the environment, and quality of life beyond academia.

Why Impact matters?

Impact matters in SULAM activities because it ensures meaningful and measurable change for both communities and students, validates the initiative's real-world value, and supports continuous improvement.

Impact of SULAM on Students' Development

SULAM aligns with Shift 1 of the Malaysia Higher Education Plan 2026–2035, shaping students into humanity-centric, entrepreneurial, and adaptive learners. By connecting academic knowledge with meaningful community engagement, SULAM strengthens ethical values, empathy, and social responsibility, while encouraging contributions to collective and planetary well-being.

SULAM also supports students in developing innovative solutions to societal challenges. This is further strengthened through the SULAM Innovate Competition, organised by MOHE, which provides a national platform for students to showcase their projects, pitch impactful ideas, and translate solutions into real-world outcomes.

The skills and competencies gained through SULAM projects directly support graduate employability and long-term personal development by integrating knowledge, attitudes, and values into real-world performance aligned with each academic programme. SULAM also fosters adaptive resilience, preparing students for "post-normal" uncertainties and ensuring that graduates are academically competent, values-driven, and future-ready.

Cognitive Growth Through Societal Engagement

By achieving the CLOs, students develop a deeper understanding of course content, enabling them to apply theoretical concepts more effectively in real-world contexts, enhance their critical thinking skills, and cultivate a sense of social responsibility that enriches their overall educational experience.

For students, witnessing the lasting impact of their work reinforces the significance of their academic efforts beyond the classroom.

Enhancing Soft Skills and Personal Resilience

By participating in SULAM projects, students develop and apply essential soft skills, such as communication, leadership, and teamwork, which contribute to the successful implementation of projects.

This experience fosters significant personal growth, as students develop greater self-awareness through reflection on feedback from others and cultivate resilience by continuously challenging themselves to overcome fears and embrace new experiences.

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Fostering Empathy and Social Awareness

The SULAM project enhances students' motivation to learn and increases their awareness of community issues, fostering a more engaged and socially conscious learning experience.

Such experiences contribute to the development of socially responsible graduates who are sensitive to issues of inequality and inspired to make meaningful contributions towards community empowerment.

Image Generated by AI

Impact of SULAM on Community

Image Generated by AI

Addressing Local Needs

Under Shift 9 of the Malaysia Higher Education Plan 2026–2035, ollaboration with communities ensures that outcomes are contextually relevant and responsive to real-world challenges. This interdisciplinary co-design approach empowers learners to address complex global sustainability issues holistically while generating practical solutions that enhance community well-being and support planetary health.

Example: VibizPlan SULAM Project (UPSI)

The visually impaired community under the Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB) faces significant challenges in the field of entrepreneurship. Students enrolled in the Business Planning course provide guidance to entrepreneurs from MAB in developing business plans tailored to visually impaired entrepreneurs. At the same time, the project exposes participants to business skills and professional guidance that may assist them in securing grants, funding, and collaborative networks.

Empowerment and Capacity Building

SULAM projects often involve training, workshops, and collaborative activities that enhance the skills, knowledge, and confidence of community members. For example, rural entrepreneurs gain digital marketing skills, and local communities benefit from educational support, improving the community's self-sufficiency and long-term development.

Example: Capacity Building for Community-led Composting Initiative (UNIMAS)

The SULAM R.I.Y.A.L (Research, Inform, Youth, Action & Legacy) Project strengthens community capacity through training and skill development while raising environmental awareness and improving waste-management practices, creating a cleaner and more sustainable wet market.

Economic and Social Impact

Small businesses and local economies often benefit from support related to innovation and sustainable practices. Socially, communities may experience increased cohesion, pride, and motivation to participate in further development initiatives.

Example: Seaweed Community Farming (UMS)

Students transferred their knowledge and skills to the local community, particularly the coastal communities in Kampung Kibagu, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, by assisting in the establishment of a seaweed farm. This initiative contributed to the creation of a new source of income and supported the growth of the local economy.

Impact of SULAM on Lecturers

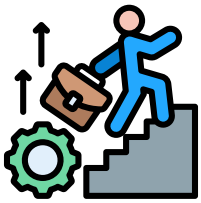
Enhances Teaching and Learning Approaches

SULAM encourages lecturers to move beyond traditional lecture-based methods. Through hands-on, community-based projects, lecturers can apply experiential learning strategies, making their teaching more engaging and impactful. This shift often leads to improved student understanding and retention of course content, which in turn contributes positively to teaching effectivenes.

Empowering Academic Innovation

SULAM's experiential learning approach strengthens the academic domain by generating relevant research opportunities and applying theoretical knowledge to address real-world issues, thereby driving academic nnovation. This academic innovation creates strategic pathways for securing grants, publishing high-impact scholarly work, fostering interdisciplinary research collaboration, and achieving key academic performance indicators (KPIs)

Professional Growth and Development



Lecturers involved in SULAM will have the opportunity to share their projects through academic platforms such as conferences, seminars, and publications. This not only fosters collaboration and networking across disciplines and institutions but also positions them as subject matter experts in community-based education. Over time, such recognition can significantly enhance their academic portfolio and open new pathways for career advancement.

MOHE has established structured initiatives as developmental pathways for academicians, namely the National Conference on SULAM, the SULAM Innovate Competition, and Anugerah Khas YB Menteri Pendidikan Tinggi: Rekabentuk Kurikulum dan Penyampaian Inovatif (AKRI), which provide scholarly avenues for knowledge sharing, research dissemination, and academic networking. Collectively, these initiatives support academicians in translating SULAM activities into recognised academic outputs, including innovation recognition, while fostering a culture of excellence in experiential and community-engaged learning.

SULAM Project Title:
An Innovative Alternative Assessment for the Engineers in Society Course Integrating SULAM and Design Thinking Approaches (EiS-Dt)
Prof. Ir. Dr. Che Maznah binti Mat Isa (UiTM)
Winner Alternative Assessment Category, AKRI 2022

SULAM Project Title:
Unifying P.S.I.: Learn-Create-Deliver For Educators
Dr. Hamidah binti Idris (UPSI)
1st Runner Up Transformative Teaching Category, AKRI 2024

SULAM Project Title:
CHEM-WISE: Empowering Future Chemists Through Industry and Community-Relevant Waste Management Designs
Assoc. Prof. Dr Rafeah Wahi (UNIMAS)
Winner Immersive Learning (Face to Face) Category, AKRI 2025

Dr Luqman Abu-Bakar (UMK)
Best Poster Award
2nd National SULAM Conference 2023

En. Amsalib Pisali (UPSI)
Best Presenter Award
3rd National SULAM Conference 2025

Dr. Rahimah binti Jamaluddin (UPM)
Best Paper Award
3rd National SULAM Conference 2025

Impact of SULAM on HLIs

Strengthening University-Community Partnerships
SULAM serves as a bridge between HLIs and local communities, NGOs, and government agencies. These partnerships could often lead to long-term collaborations that benefit both students and the wider society.

Increased Institutional Visibility and Reputation
By engaging in impactful community projects, HLIs enhance their visibility at local, national, and even international levels.

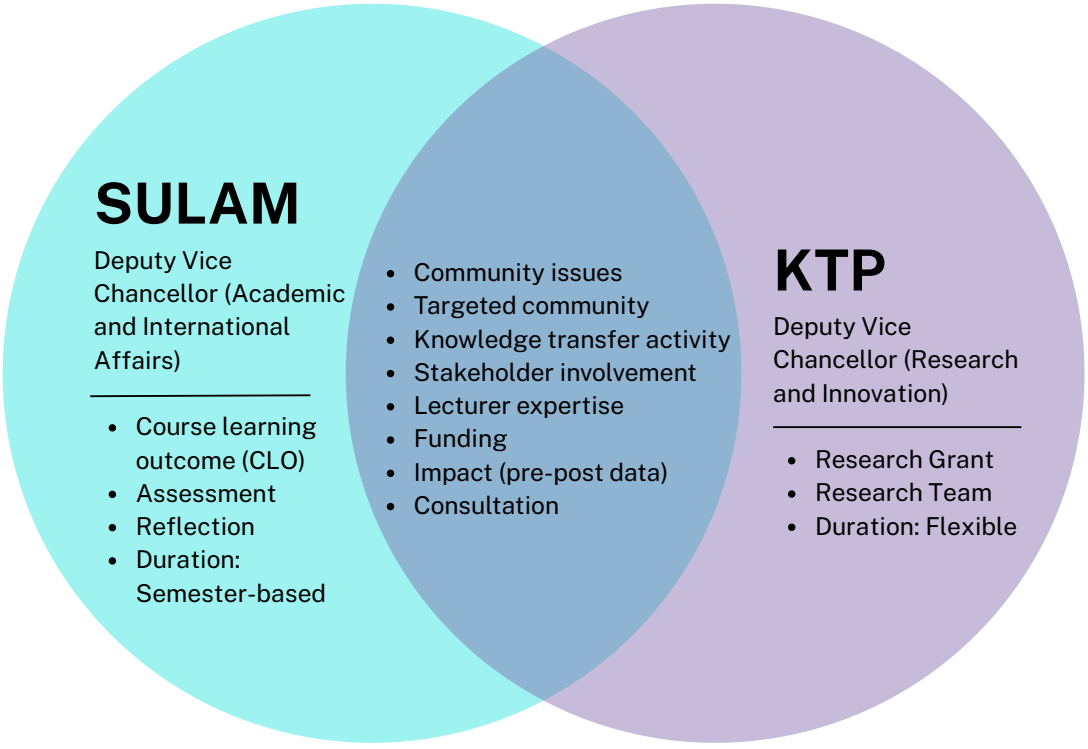
Successful SULAM initiatives often gain media coverage, attract recognition from stakeholders, and highlight the institution's commitment to social responsibility, sustainability, and nation-building.

Contribution to MyRA (Malaysian Research Assessment Instrument) and UI Green Metric

SULAM activities can positively contribute to a HLI's MyRA scoring, particularly under sections related to knowledge transfer and community engagement and UI Green Metric through student learning, and practical sustainability solutions.

4.2 Alignment of SULAM and Knowledge Transfer Project (KTP) for MyRA

As SULAM projects extend the application of classroom-based learning into real-world contexts through community engagement, they carry the potential to contribute towards HLI MyRA Star Ratings. SULAM also aligns closely with Knowledge Transfer Programmes (KTP), which aim to disseminate university expertise for the benefit of external stakeholders, including local communities, industries, and government agencies. The synergy between SULAM and KTP enhances both student learning and societal development, as knowledge is not only acquired but also actively co-created and applied to address pressing community challenges.



MyRA Star Rating for Community Engagement

Level	Description	Impact	Indicator	Example
⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐ **5 Star**	Empowerment	Well-being of the community and improvement of environmental quality. Sustainability of innovative practices. Empowerment through innovation	Community/ participants independently manage changes without the involvement of the institution being assessed	Urban hydroponic garden development project that produced community experts among local residents who trained other communities
⭐⭐⭐⭐ **4 Star**	Change in Practice	Direct benefits from innovative practices such as quality improvement, income increase, or cost reduction	Community/ participants apply the innovation in their respective fields	Development of an oil filtration machine for use by the fried banana (pisang goreng) vendor community with measured impacts
⭐⭐⭐ **3 Star**	Change in Knowledge, Attitude, Skills, and Aspirations (KASA)	Community action programs lead to increased knowledge, attitudes, skills, and aspirations within the community	Community/ participants show improvements in knowledge, attitudes, skills, and aspirations. Evidence: Assessment results through analysis and other methods	Rugby training program in schools to prepare students for participation in the district-level rugby championship
⭐⭐ **2 Star**	Support and Engagement	The community develops awareness of the importance of community action programs. Strategic relationships with the community/ organizations	The assessed institution implements programs jointly with the community/ participants	STEM advocacy program during STEM carnival
⭐ **1 Star**	Relationship Building	The community has a positive perception toward the assessed institution and its community action programs	Strengthening relationships between the assessed institution and the community/ participants through visits, letters, emails, and other forms of communication	Conducting psychometric tests on residents and provide findings to be used by elderly home management

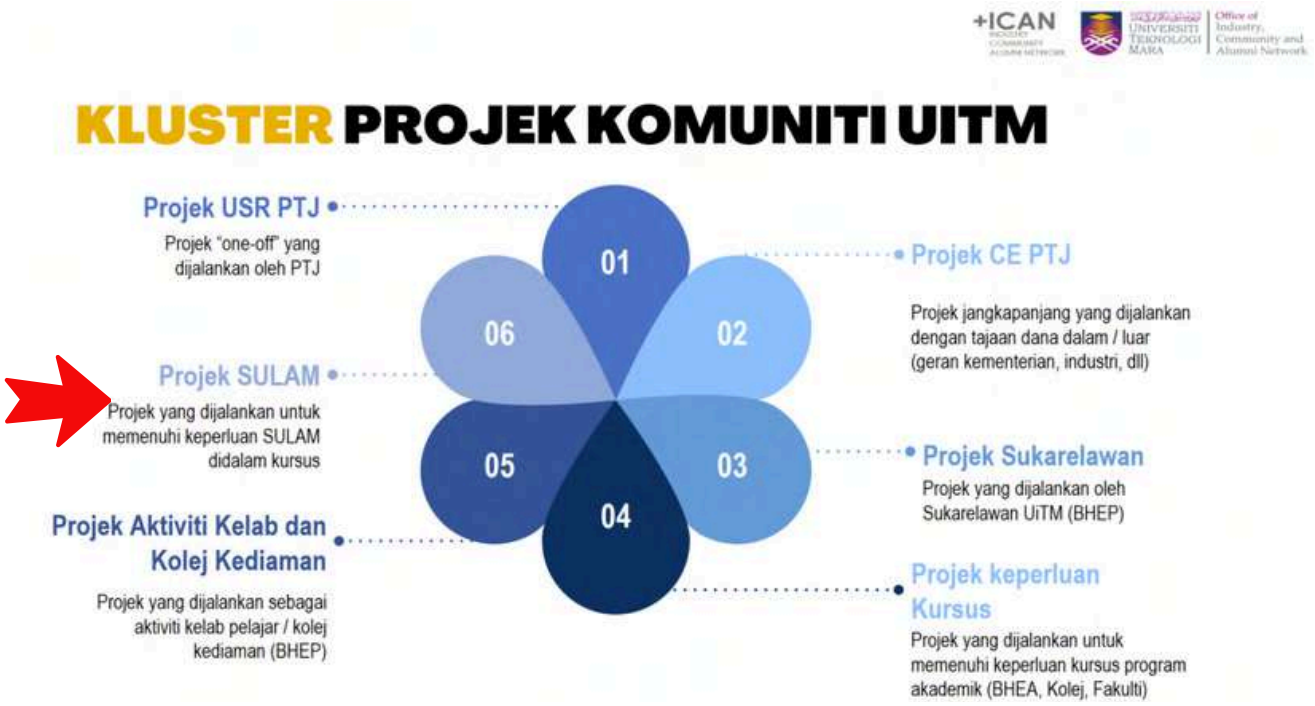
Source:
GLOSSARY MyRA® I & II (AMENDMENT 2023)
Updated: 22 November 2023

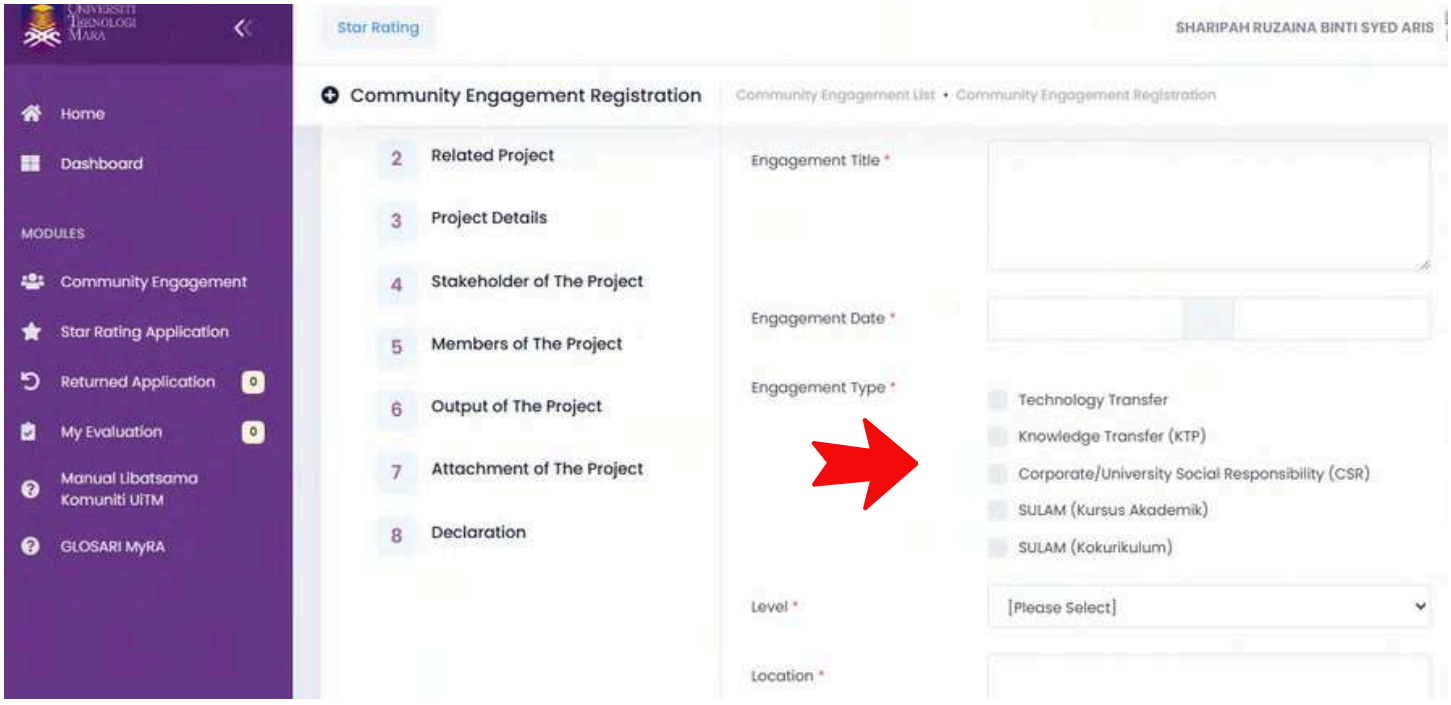
SULAM-KTP Initiative Examples

SULAM's contribution towards MyRA is reflected in initiatives undertaken by UPSI and UiTM through the endorsement of SULAM projects based on the Star Rating for Community Engagement (refer to the MyRA manual). In addition to contributing towards MyRA, these initiatives also support the development of holistic graduates, strengthen stakeholder engagement, enhance institutional visibility, and increase lecturers' motivation in implementing SULAM projects.

SULAM-KTP UPSI

SULAM-KTP UiTM





Contribution of SULAM Projects to The UI Green Metric

UI Green Metric is a global ranking system that assesses how well universities practice sustainability and environmental management. It uses a questionnaire with 39 indicators grouped into six main criteria:

Criteria	Weight (%)	Description
Setting & Infrastructure	15	Green campus, open space, infrastructure
Energy & Climate Change	21	Efficiency, renewable energy, GHG reduction
Waste	18	Management, recycling, hazardous waste
Water	10	Conservation, recycling, efficiency
Transportation	18	Sustainable transport, emission reduction
Education & Research	18	Courses, research, publications, events

SULAM projects contribute to the UI Green Metric World University Rankings by:

✔ Enhancing **education, research, and student engagement** in sustainability
✔ Supporting waste, **water, and energy management initiatives**
✔ Promoting **behaviour change and environmental awareness**
✔ Providing **measurable evidence and outcomes** for UI Green Metric indicators
✔ Strengthening the HLI's overall sustainability strategy

This makes SULAM initiatives valuable not only for community impact but also for strengthening a HLI's sustainability performance on an international benchmark like **UI Green Metric.**

4.3 Criteria of Impactful SULAM Project

The rationale for designing and implementing impactful SULAM projects lies in their ability to transform higher education from traditional, content-driven instruction to experience-based, meaningful learning. Impactful SULAM projects empower students to become agents of change—learning with and from the community rather than merely about it. Furthermore, impactful projects ensure that the time, resources, and energy invested by both universities and community partners translate into sustainable outcomes.

DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
Builds trust and mutual understanding between students, communities, and stakeholders, forming a strong foundation for collaboration and meaningful outcomes

SUSTAINED STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT
Active involvement and support from all parties (HLI governance, finance, industrial support) and consistent contributions, which drive the success and relevance of the project

COGNITIVE, AFFECTIVE, AND SKILL-BASED TRANSFORMATION
Reflects personal and collective growth, where participants (students, community and stakeholders) gain insights and competencies that influence how they view and address real-world issues

IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES
Translates learning into action, where new methods, habits, or approaches are adopted in community or institutional settings, creating visible improvements

CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT
Enables individuals and communities to take initiative, make decisions, and sustain the positive changes brought by the project beyond its formal end

4.4 Best SULAM Practices

DIRECT

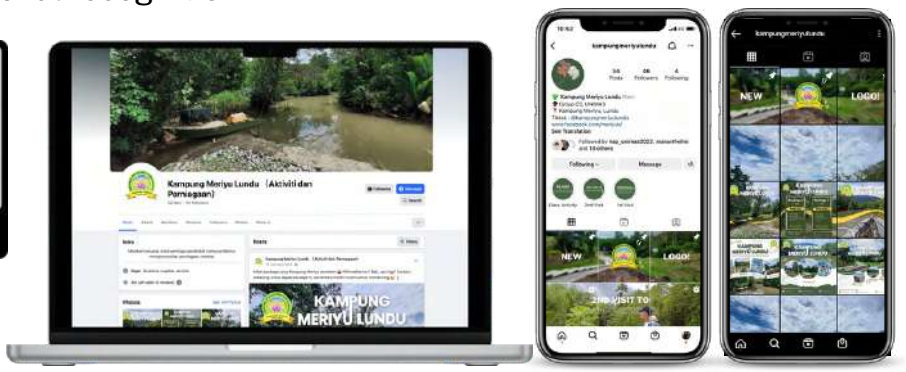
SULAM Innovate 2023 1st Runner Up & Overall Winner (SULAM Project Category)

Project: Place Branding for Kampung Meriyu (Universiti Malaysia Sarawak)

- Course: GKT3133 Design, Culture and Society
- Community: Kampung Meriyu, Lundu, Sarawak
- Impact: The project powerfully elevated Kampung Meriyu's identity through strategic place-branding, equipping locals with marketing skills and media exposure that amplified community pride, visibility, and national recognition.

SCAN ME

Place Branding for Kampung Meriyu eBOOK



DIRECT

SULAM Innovate 2025 1st Runner Up & Overall Winner (Social Science Category)

Project: ReIPvolution: Inspirational Edutainment Park Using Hexa-Helix Collaboration Approach (Universiti Malaysia Sabah)

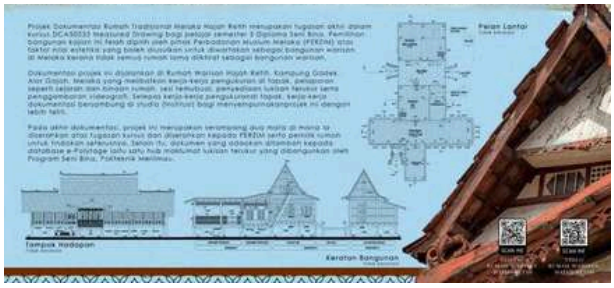
- Course: AA20703 Social Inequality
- Community: Sekolah Kebangsaan Kokol, Sabah
- Impact: The project significantly heightened students' reading interest, motivation, and wellbeing, while cultivating a dynamic learning environment that deepened school–community partnerships.

INDIRECT

SULAM Innovate 2023 1st Place Winner (SULAM Project Category)

Project: Dokumentasi Rumah Tradisional Hajah Retih, Gadek, Melaka (Politeknik Merlimau, Melaka)

- Course: DCA6163 Measured Drawing
- Community: House owner & Jawatankuasa Kemajuan & Keselamatan Kampung (JKKK) Kampung Gadek, Melaka
- Impact: Improving documentation and measurement skills for uniquely designed heritage buildings boosts cultural tourism by safeguarding and showcasing their architectural value.



INDIRECT

SULAM Innovate 2023 2nd Runner Up (SULAM Project Category)

Project: Kelestarian Pelancongan Pantai Kundur (Kundur Gateway) (Universiti Malaysia Kelantan)

- Course: HPT30103 Volunteerism
- Community: Kampung Pulau Kundur, Kota Bharu, Kelantan
- Impact: Enhances tourism and supports economic growth through homestay development, tourism passport, spa experiences and promotions of Pantai Kundur's gastronomy in collaboration with local authorities.

ADVOCACY

SULAM Innovate 2025 Winner (Science & Technology Category)

Project: Modul Penjagaan Gigi Si Cilik: Misi Senyuman Menawan (Universiti Sains Malaysia)

- Course: GNT407 Periodontik II
- Community: Sekolah Kebangsaan Kuala Sungai, Gua Musang
- Impact: The Children's Dental Education Module significantly enhanced pupils' knowledge, awareness, and healthy dental practices, resulting in a sustained positive impact.

ADVOCACY

SULAM Innovate 2025 2nd Runner Up (Science and Technology Category)

Project: Kesedaran Hari Ini, Harapan Hari Esok: Perangi Kanser Payudara (Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin)

- Course: MIP20803 Additional Radiographic Procedures
- Community: Institut Pendidikan Guru Malaysia Kampus Dato' Razali Ismail, Kuala Terengganu
- Impact: Expanding screening outreach through mobile units and boosting students' early detection skills through a self-exam app significantly strengthen community health outcomes.

RESEARCH-BASED

e-SULAM Innovate 2021
1st Place Winner
(e-SULAM Project Category)

Project: Measured Drawing Research Project of Old Mosque Kg Kuala Serdang (Politeknik Port Dickson)

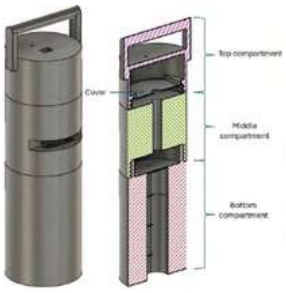
- Course: DCA6163 Scaled Drawing
- Community: Kg Kuala Serdang, Kuala Pilah, Negeri Sembilan
- Impact: Enhancing measurement proficiency to support accurate documentation and the preservation of uniquely crafted heritage buildings..

RESEARCH-BASED

SULAM Innovate 2025
Winner
(Science and Technology Category)

Project: Madura Smart Salt House (MaSS)
Project: Smart Salt Solutions Empowering Communities Through IoT (Universiti Teknologi Petronas)

- Course: CFB3043 Process Instrumentation & Control
- Community: Pulau Madura, Surabaya, Indonesia
- Impact: The project significantly strengthened local salt farming by driving research through rigorous needs assessments, sensor validation, and prototype refinement, ultimately delivering transformative, data-driven solutions.
-

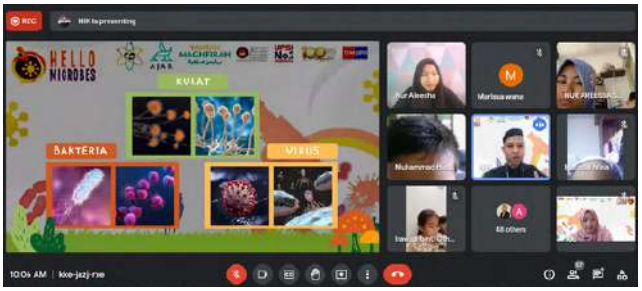


e-SULAM

e-SULAM Innovate 2021
Winner
(e-SULAM Concept Category)

Project: Biowars Kit Good Bacteria Vs Bad Bacteria (Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris)

- Course: SBB3033 Principles In Microbiology
- Community: AJAR Malaysia, Yayasan Maghfirah & Children of several PPRT in Malaysia
- Impact: Working with NGO to deliver knowledge in microbiology for children, Enhance critical thinking and understanding in microbiology field and application in real life context



e-SULAM

e-SULAM Innovate 2021
2nd Runner Up
(e-SULAM Project Category)

Project: Stranger Danger Awareness (Universiti Malaya)

- Course: POA7002 Instructional Design and Technology
- Community: Children aged 7–10 years old from Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina (SJKC) Shin Sheng (Harcroft)
- Impact: Children demonstrated increased awareness of online safety and safer information-sharing behaviours.

4.5 Conclusion

The dual impact on learners and society affirms SULAM's role in nurturing socially responsible graduates while strengthening universities' contributions to national development. In addition, the integration of SULAM into the MyRA® and UI GreenMetric frameworks underscores the strategic importance of community engagement in higher education by aligning with key indicators such as collaboration, impact, and research. This, in turn, enhances students' learning experiences, addresses community needs, and strengthens institutional recognition through star-based rating systems.

CHAPTER 5

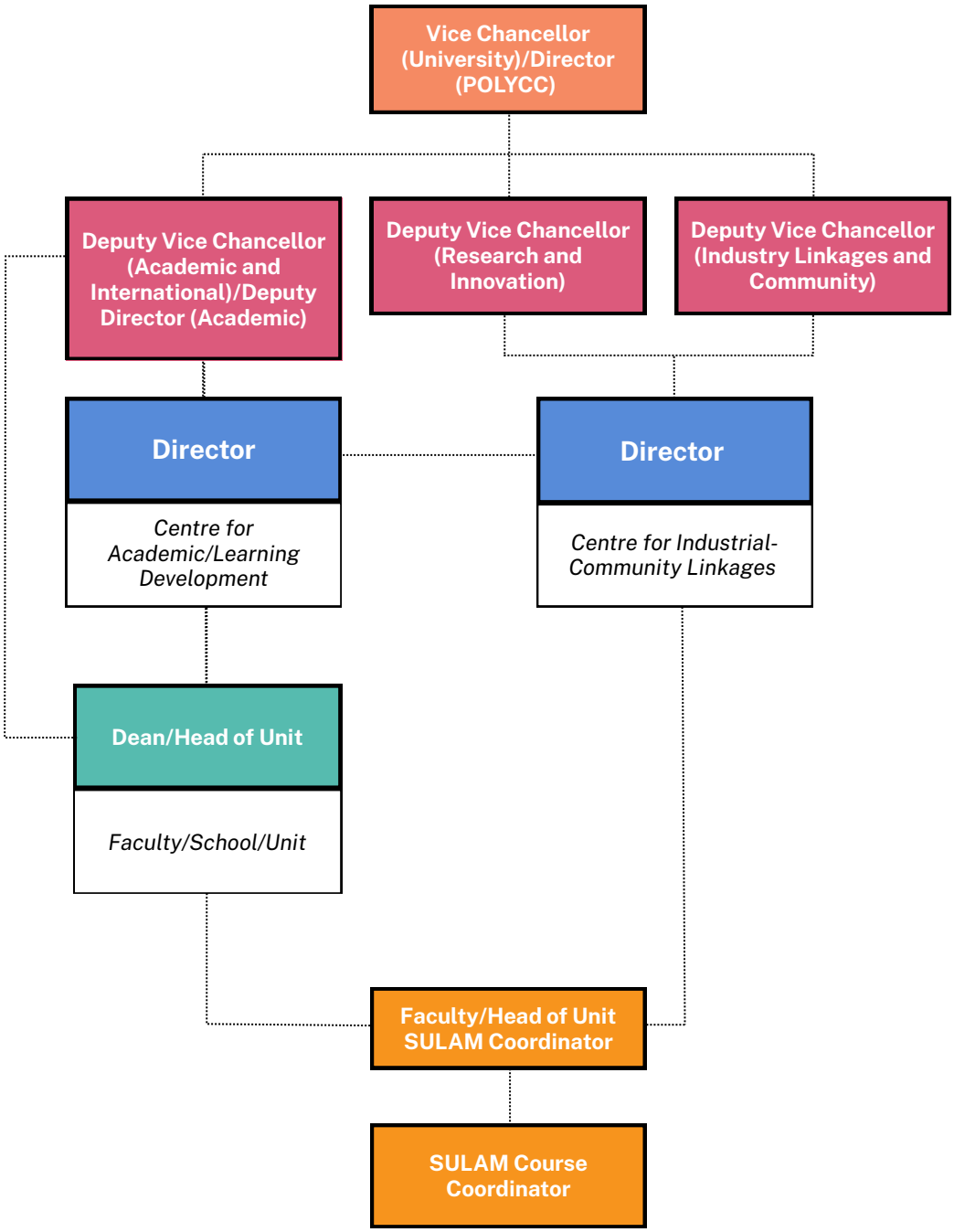
Governance, Sustainability, Risk Management and Ethics

5.1 Introduction

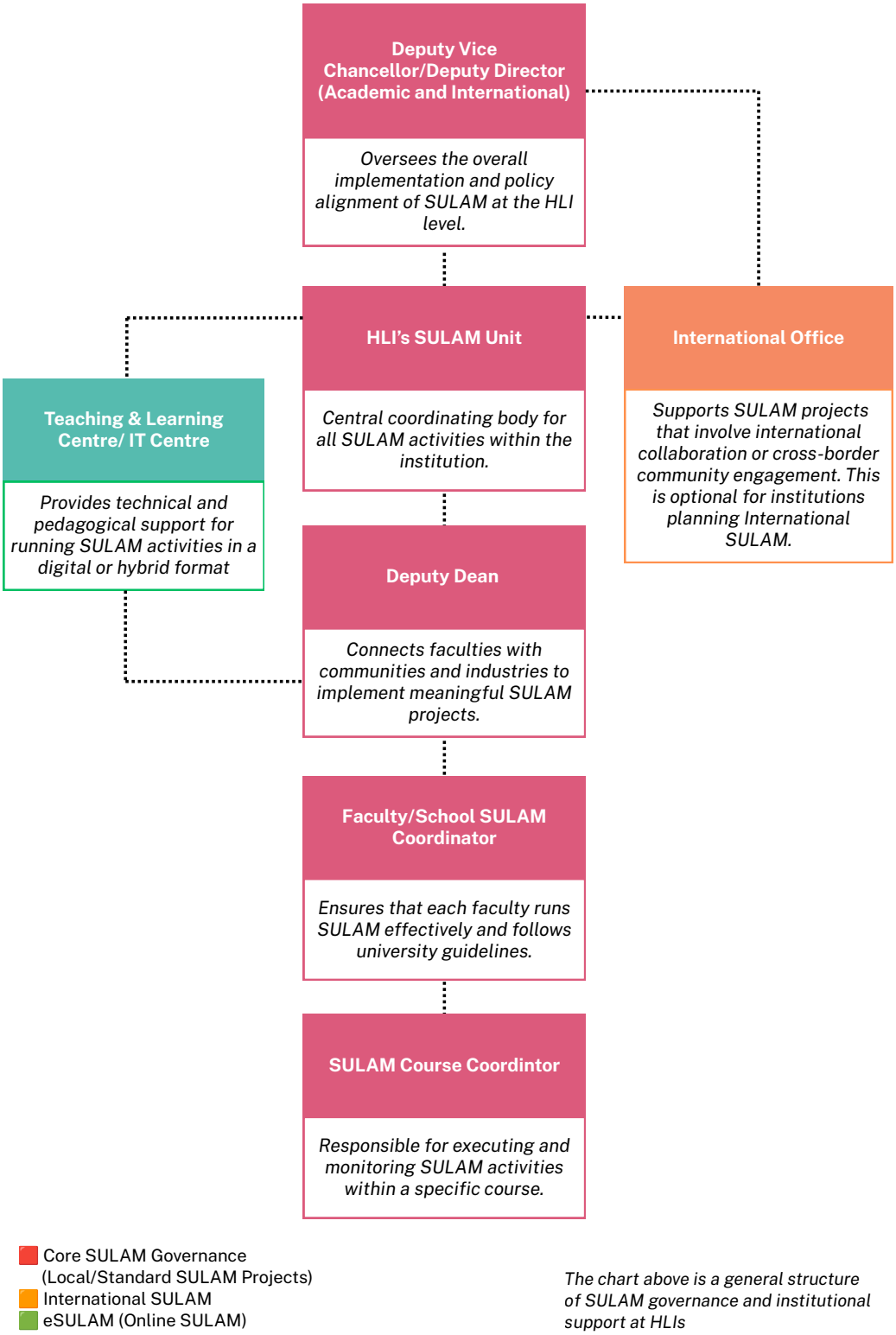
This chapter outlines the key institutional elements that support the effective implementation of SULAM, namely governance, ethics, risk management, and sustainability. Together, these elements provide a structured foundation to ensure that SULAM activities are well coordinated, responsible, and impactful. Governance establishes clear leadership, roles, and decision-making processes that guide SULAM implementation at all levels of the institution. Ethical principles ensure that engagement with communities is conducted respectfully, fairly, and for mutual benefit. Risk management supports the safe and effective implementation of SULAM by identifying and addressing potential challenges, while sustainability focuses on long-term community impact and the continuous integration of SULAM into teaching and learning. By integrating these four elements, HLIs can implement SULAM in a systematic, ethical, and sustainable manner that benefits students, institutions, and society

5.2 SULAM Governance & Institutional Support (HLI's Level)

Robust governance and coordinated institutional support are essential for sustaining high-quality SULAM practices. Effective governance ensures clarity of roles, alignment with institutional policies, and consistency in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of SULAM. It strengthens cross-unit coordination, supports ethical and safe community engagement, and provides the administrative, financial, and digital infrastructure needed for lecturers and students to implement SULAM effectively. When governance and support systems function effectively, SULAM becomes embedded within the academic culture and contributes meaningfully to student learning and community impact.



This figure presents an example of the SULAM governance and role structure at the HLI level. It illustrates how strategic leadership from the Vice Chancellor/Director and Deputy Vice Chancellors/Deputy Directors provides policy direction and institutional oversight, while designated directors and centres support coordination and implementation. At the faculty level, Deans and Faculty SULAM Coordinators ensure alignment with institutional guidelines, while SULAM Course Coordinators are responsible for implementation at the course level. This structured governance framework supports effective coordination, accountability, and the sustainable implementation of SULAM across the institution.



The chart above is a general structure of SULAM governance and institutional support at HLIs

This figure illustrates an example of an institutional SULAM coordination structure that emphasises operational support and cross-unit collaboration. It highlights the role of the Deputy Vice Chancellor/Deputy Director (Academic and International) in providing overall oversight and policy alignment, with the HLI's SULAM Unit functioning as the central coordinating body for all SULAM activities. Supporting units such as the Teaching and Learning/IT Centre and the International Office provide pedagogical, technical, and partnership support, particularly for digital, hybrid, and international SULAM initiatives. At the faculty level, the Deputy Dean/Head of Unit and Faculty SULAM Coordinator facilitate collaboration between faculties, communities, and industry partners, while SULAM Course Coordinators are responsible for implementing and monitoring SULAM activities at the course level.

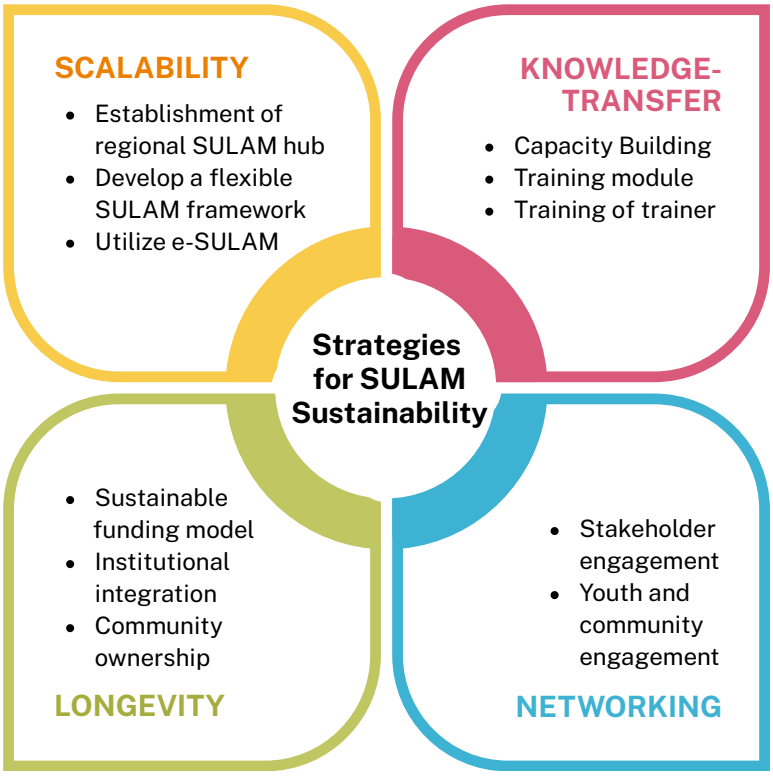
5.3 Sustainability of SULAM Initiative

Sustainability of SULAM projects can be viewed from several perspectives:

1. **Scalable and Replicable Projects/Modules/Frameworks/Models:** Developed SULAM modules and toolkits can be reused or adapted by other institutions and communities. This scalability supports knowledge continuity and long-term sustainability, particularly when resources are embedded within institutional repositories.

2. **Strengthening Community Empowerment and Resilience:** SULAM projects empower communities with lifelong skills that foster independence and resilience beyond the duration of the project. Sustainability is further enhanced when communities are able to take ownership of the initiatives.

3. **Continuous HLI–Stakeholder Partnerships:** By formalising partnerships through MoUs and MoAs, SULAM projects promote long-term commitment between universities and stakeholders. This collaborative framework enables continuous engagement and shared responsibility even after the academic cycle has ended.



5.4 Risk Management and Ethics in SULAM

Risk management and ethics in SULAM ensure that service learning activities are safe, responsible, community-centred, and educationally meaningful. A strong framework protects students, community partners, and HLIs while upholding SULAM's core values of reciprocity, sustainability, inclusivity, and social impact. Risk areas in SULAM implementation can be summarised as follows:

RISK AREAS IN SULAM IMPLEMENTATION
Student Safety and Well-being
• Physical risks during off-campus engagement and fieldwork • Health and environmental risks (e.g. waste handling, industrial or rural settings) • Emotional strain when working with vulnerable or marginalised communities
Community and Stakeholder Risks
• Misalignment between university objectives and actual community needs. • Reinforcement of dependency, power imbalances, or tokenistic engagement. • Overburdening communities through short-term or extractive projects.
Institutional, Legal, and Compliance Risks
• Liability, insurance, and duty-of-care obligations and financial integrity • Data privacy, digital safety, intellectual property, consent, and ethical research compliance • Alignment with HLI policies, SULAM guidelines, and government regulations
Academic, Impact, and Reputational Risks
• Weak integration between service activities and CLOs • Poor supervision or inadequate reflection that undermines learning quality • Loss of trust if SULAM projects fail to deliver promised community benefits

SULAM RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Pre-Implementation Planning

- Conduct risk assessment and site evaluation before project approval
- Align SULAM activities with CLOs, PLOs, and community priorities
- Define clear roles, responsibilities, timelines, and expected outputs

Student Preparation and Supervision

- Provide mandatory training on safety, ethics, professionalism, and cultural sensitivity
- Ensure continuous academic supervision and structured reflection
- Establish clear incident reporting and escalation mechanisms

Governance of Partnership

- Use MoUs or Letters of Commitment to formalise expectations and risk-sharing
- Apply participatory decision-making with community partners
- Maintain two-way communication and feedback loops throughout the project cycle

SULAM Monitoring, Evaluation and Improvement

SULAM consists of a continuous cycle of monitoring, evaluation, and improvement. Data from SULAM initiatives should be systematically collected to assess student learning outcomes and community impact, followed by reflection, refinement, and adaptation. Ethical oversight and best practices guide this process to ensure continuous quality enhancement, sustainability, and meaningful outcomes for both learners and communities.

Ethical practices are foundational to credible, impactful, and sustainable SULAM implementation. They protect stakeholders, strengthen community trust, and ensure that SULAM remains a transformative learning model that benefits both society and the university. The diagram below illustrates the different dimensions of ethics in SULAM implementation.

Ensuring ethical SULAM practices requires the shared responsibility of all stakeholders, including HLIs, lecturers, students, communities, and other involved parties such as government agencies and industry partners. The following table summarises examples of the roles that may be played by each stakeholder in the ethical implementation of SULAM.

Stakeholder	Examples of Role in Ethical SULAM Implementation
Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs)	• Establish governance, ethical oversight, and safe reporting channels. • Integrate lessons learned into policy, training, and course design.
Lecturers	• Co-design projects with communities and clarify scope, risks, and expectations. • Ensure students follow ethical conduct and facilitate reflective learning.
Students	• Treat communities as partners and obtain informed consent. • Reflect on impacts and report ethical issues promptly.
Community	• Actively shape project goals and provide feedback. • Exercise the right to pause, redirect, or withdraw from projects.
Government Agencies & Industry	• Respect community and university priorities, ensuring mutual benefit. • Support transparency, ethical standards, and sustainable engagement.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter highlights the key elements required for effective SULAM implementation, namely governance, ethics, risk management, and sustainability. Clear governance structures ensure proper leadership, defined roles, and coordinated implementation of SULAM across the institution. Ethical practices ensure that SULAM activities are carried out with respect, fairness, and mutual benefit for all stakeholders. By upholding ethical principles, institutions protect community partners while providing meaningful learning experiences for students. Risk management supports the safe and effective implementation of SULAM by identifying and addressing potential challenges at an early stage. This helps protect students, communities, and institutions while ensuring the continuity of activities. Sustainability ensures that SULAM initiatives create long-term value for both the community and the institution. When governance, ethics, risk management, and sustainability are integrated effectively, SULAM becomes a structured, responsible, and impactful approach to community-engaged learning.

CHAPTER 6

SULAM Reflection

6.1 Introduction

Critical reflection is the cornerstone of meaningful learning in SULAM. It serves as the essential bridge connecting academic learning (course content) with community engagement (SULAM experiences).

Through critical reflection, students not only recount what they did, but also analyse how and why their experiences matter, both to their personal development and to the communities they serve.

The term "critical" in critical reflection emphasises the need to move beyond merely describing what happened. Rather than simply recounting experiences, students are encouraged to interpret them through analytical and evaluative lenses.

This involves reflecting on their own assumptions, considering multiple perspectives, and identifying the underlying causes and effects of their actions.

In the context of SULAM, critical reflection is not an optional add-on, but a core learning strategy and integral component of assessment that enables students to make sense of complex real-world challenges while growing as reflective learners and civic-minded individuals.
Detailed explanations of critical reflection models are provided in *SULAM Playbook 1.0* (2019).

6.2 Aspects to Consider in Implementing Critical Reflections in SULAM

To implement critical reflection effectively in SULAM, educators must consider three key dimensions:

- Structure
- Timeline, and
- Formats of the reflections.

Structure

Reflection can take on various levels of structure depending on the intended depth and scaffolding required:

- **Unstructured reflections** are free-form narratives where students express their thoughts and feelings without predefined guidance.

- **Semi-structured reflections** are more focused, using reflective prompts or guiding questions to help students explore specific themes or experiences.

- **Structured reflections** rely on clear templates or step-by-step frameworks (such as Gibbs' and DEAL models), ensuring a systematic process of critical thinking and meaning-making.

It is **encouraged to use semi-structured and structured reflections** for SULAM projects, as they provide students with guided prompts or models that support deeper, more meaningful engagement with their SULAM experiences.

Timeline

Reflection can be conducted as a one-time event or embedded at various points throughout the SULAM project. For example:

- **Weekly or monthly reflections** allow students to continuously track their learning and adapt their approaches in real time.

- **Three-point reflections per semester**—at the beginning, mid-semester, and end—can capture students' developmental progress across the course.

- **Pre- and post-project reflections** are particularly powerful for assessing shifts in mindset, personal growth, and changes in civic awareness.

By spacing reflections over time, students are better able to process their experiences and articulate long-term learning.

The decision on when to implement reflection activities depends on the **structure and flow of each course that best fits the scope and rhythm of their SULAM projects.**

Format of Reflections

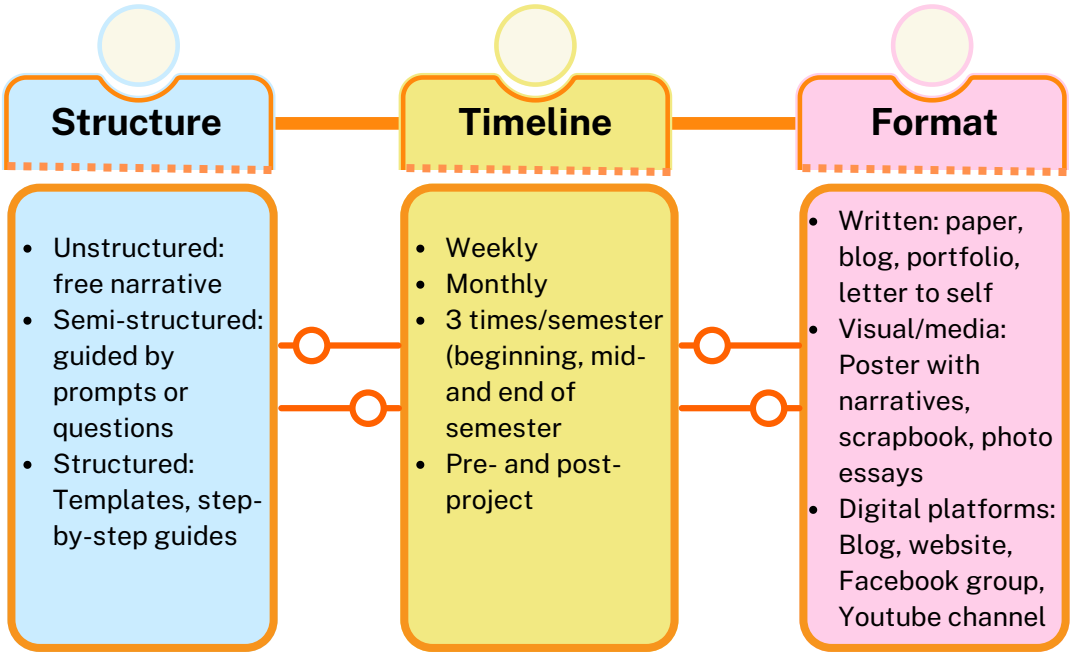
Critical reflection can take many creative forms beyond the traditional written paper:

- **Written reflections** may include blog entries, portfolios, or even personal letters to one's future self.

- **Visual and multimedia formats** such as posters, photo essays, documentaries, and scrapbooks can engage students who express themselves better through images or creative media.

- **Use of digital platforms** such as websites, YouTube channels, and Facebook groups offers public or semi-public avenues for reflection, which can encourage authenticity and real-world impact.

Allowing flexibility in the format of reflective products acknowledges diverse learner strengths and promotes more meaningful engagement. The diagram below summarises the 3 aspects to consider when implementing critical SULAM reflections (Yusop, 2025).



6.3 Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the central role of critical reflection in deepening student learning and strengthening the educational impact of SULAM initiatives. By attending to the structure, timing, and formats of reflection, educators can guide students to move beyond descriptive accounts towards more analytical and transformative engagement with their service-learning experiences.Thoughtfully designed reflection practices not only support the integration of theory and practice, but also foster self-awareness, civic responsibility, and sustained engagement with community issues. As such, critical reflection should be intentionally embedded within the design and implementation of SULAM to ensure meaningful learning and lasting community impact.

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FAQ

Frequently Ask Questions

FAQ

SULAM FOR SUSTAINABLE AND VALUES-BASED HIGHER EDUCATION

What are the core principles or philosophy behind SULAM?
Service-Learning Malaysia (SULAM) is grounded in experiential learning and human-centric education. Its principles include academic-community integration, mutual benefit, structured reflection, civic engagement, and personal growth. It emphasises love, happiness, and mutual respect, supporting value-driven education.

Why is it beneficial to integrate SULAM into a course?
Integrating SULAM into a course offers profound benefits for students' learning by bridging theoretical knowledge with practical application. It significantly deepens their understanding of course content by allowing them to see how academic concepts apply to real-world challenges and community needs. Beyond academics, SULAM is instrumental in developing crucial soft skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, communication, and leadership, which are essential for future success. It cultivates a strong sense of civic responsibility and promotes vital human-centric values like empathy, love, and mutual respect, leading to more holistic and well-rounded student development.

How is SULAM different from volunteering?
SULAM *differs from volunteering by intentionally integrating academic learning objectives with community service, where the service experience enhances classroom understanding and the learning informs the service, unlike volunteering which is primarily focused on providing service without a structured academic connection.*

What are the key components of a SULAM project?
The key components of a SULAM project typically include meaningful community service, explicit learning objectives, structured reflection activities, and opportunities for reciprocal partnership between students, faculty, and community organizations.

How does SULAM support human-centric and values-based education?
By connecting students with real community issues, SULAM fosters empathy, ethical thinking, and civic responsibility. It promotes education rooted in values like compassion, integrity, and mutual respect, nurturing socially conscious graduates.

FAQ

SULAM FOR SUSTAINABLE AND VALUES-BASED HIGHER EDUCATION

Is SULAM compulsory for all university courses/subjects/modules?
SULAM is not compulsory for all courses/subjects/modules in an academic programme. However, universities are encouraged to integrate it where appropriate. It is especially recommended for courses where societal engagement can enhance learning outcomes and personal development.

Is SULAM compulsory for all academic programmes?
SULAM is an extension of service learning pedagogy mandated by the MOHE/MOE since January 2015 under the HIEPS (High Impact Educational Practices) initiatives. Each undergraduate programme must embed or create at least one designated core course for SULAM.

What is the difference between SULAM and CARE?
SULAM focuses to the integration of service learning into a single academic course, where students engage with the community to achieve course learning outcomes. CARE (Community Resilience Experiential Learning), on the other hand, involves the implementation of multiple SULAM courses across an academic programme, guided by the CARE framework to build community resilience through interdisciplinary collaboration. For more details on CARE, refer to the EXCEL Playbook published by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE): https://jpt.mohe.gov.my/portal/index.php/ms/penerbitan/129-excel-experiential-learning-and-competency-based-education-landscape

FAQ

SULAM COURSE DEVELOPMENT

How is student learning assessed in a SULAM-integrated course?
Assessment includes reflective journals, project reports, presentations, community feedback, peer reviews, and instructor evaluations. Both cognitive and affective learning are measured to ensure academic rigor and personal development.

Can SULAM be done virtually or online?
Yes, SULAM can be conducted online through virtual projects, digital content creation, and remote community engagement, as long as learning outcomes and community needs are effectively addressed.

What is the role of reflection in SULAM?
Reflection is crucial in SULAM as it allows students to critically analyze their service experiences, connect them to academic content, articulate their learning, explore personal values and societal issues, and plan for future action, thereby transforming experience into meaningful learning.

How much credit should be allocated for SULAM course?
Credit allocation is based on the total Student Learning Time (SLT), following the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF), where 40 SLT = 1 credit hour. Since SULAM requires a minimum of 20 SLT, it is usually embedded within an existing course and does not require a separate credit. However, if the total SLT for SULAM-related activities reaches 40 hours or more, it may justify assigning an additional credit hour, subject to institutional curriculum policy.

How much assessment weight should be allocated for SULAM-related activities?
Assessment weight should reflect the extent to which SULAM activities contribute to the course learning outcomes (CLOs). Generally, 15%–40% of the total course assessment can be allocated to SULAM, depending on the number and complexity of CLOs addressed through the SULAM project. The assessment should include components like planning, implementation, community engagement, reflection, and outcomes, evaluated using appropriate rubrics and feedback mechanisms.

FAQ

COMMUNITY PARTNER MATCHING

How does SULAM align with community needs?
SULAM enables students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world contexts, fostering mutual growth and sustainable community development.

In what capacity is the community partner expected to contribute within a SULAM framework?
Community partners act as co-educators, providing contextual expertise, identifying authentic community needs, facilitating access to the community, and engaging in joint planning and implementation of activities.

How are community issues identified and translated into academic learning outcomes?
Through collaborative needs assessment, discussions, and site visits, educators and community partners co-design projects that address pressing community issues while aligning with course/program learning objectives.

How does the community get involved in a SULAM project?
Community partners are involved in the preparation stage at the Faculty/Centre of Study level, where they participate in fieldwork and discussions with students. During the implementation stage, the community works with students to carry out the SULAM activities.

FAQ

COMMUNITY PARTNER MATCHING

What criteria are used to match community partners with specific SULAM courses?
Matching criteria focus on ensuring a symbiotic relationship: the community's identified needs must align with the course's learning outcomes and content, and the scope of the project should be feasible for students within the academic timeframe and their skill sets. Mutual benefit, clear communication, and the potential for a sustainable partnership are also key considerations.

What are the typical sources of funding for SULAM projects?
The budget for SULAM projects usually comes from HLI internal funds, faculty or departmental allocations, and sometimes special grants from government agencies. Additional support may come from community partners, industries, or other external funding bodies involved in the project. Students are advised to adhere to relevant rules and regulations on fundraising/in-kind contributions.

How can a community partner propose a project for SULAM?
Projects should be planned based on identified community issues or needs. Community and course matching process will be done before SULAM implementation. Community partners are encourage to engage with the HLI's SULAM coordinator.

Can industries or government agencies get involved with SULAM projects?
Yes, collaboration with the industrial sector, government agencies, or statutory bodies is highly encouraged to broaden the impact and resources of SULAM projects.

- *Industries can participate through their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, providing funding, expertise, technology or equipment for students involved in SULAM projects.*
- *Government bodies can support SULAM projects that are aligned with national priorities, offering policy support and providing funding, resources or access to specific communities and data.*

FAQ

BEST SULAM PRACTICES AND IMPACT

How can lecturers design and plan a successful SULAM project?
Lecturers can design and plan successful SULAM project by:

- *Identifying suitable community issues and partners.*
- *Aligning project goals with course learning outcomes (CLOs).*
- *Co-designing the activity with community input.*
- *Planning for risk management, logistics, and assessment.*
- *Integrating regular reflection and feedback loops.*

What are the roles of students in SULAM?
Students should participate actively in SULAM projects, apply course knowledge to address real issues, reflect on their learning and personal growth, and collaborate respectfully with community members.

Should students be involved in SULAM proposal writing?
Yes, involving students in SULAM proposal writing is encouraged. It helps them understand project planning, enhances ownership and responsibility, and ensures the proposal reflects their perspectives and ideas. Early involvement also fosters stronger engagement and alignment with both course objectives and community needs.

What are the roles of course instructors in SULAM?
The course instructor is responsible for designing SULAM-integrated course activities aligned with learning outcomes, facilitating student preparation, guidance, and reflection, engaging with community partners to co-develop meaningful projects, and assessing both academic and service components of the course.

Who are the main stakeholders involved in SULAM implementation?
The main stakeholders involved in SULAM implementation include students, lecturers, and the community.

What are the roles of students in SULAM?
Students are expected to participate in community-based projects as part of their course requirements, conduct reflections and document their learning experiences , and report learning outcomes to their lecturers.

FAQ

BEST SULAM PRACTICES AND IMPACT

What tools or platforms can be used to document and report SULAM activities and impact?
Documentation tools include project reports, reflection portfolios, blogs, videos, and infographics. Platforms like Google Classroom, e-portfolio systems, or Learning Management Systems (LMS) can be used to manage and assess SULAM activities. Some universities use dedicated SULAM reporting templates.

What are the roles of lecturers in SULAM?
Lecturers are responsible for planning and implementing activities with students and the community, evaluating students based on learning outcomes and community impact, and preparing implementation reports.

How is the impact of SULAM on student values, civic responsibility, and academic performance measured?
Impact is measured through:

- *Pre- and post-activity surveys.*
- *Reflective writing analysis.*
- *Rubrics for community engagement and learning outcomes.*
- *Feedback from community partners and peers.*
- *Long-term tracking of graduate attributes.*

How is the impact of SULAM on the community measured?
The impact of SULAM on the community is primarily measured by assessing how well projects address community needs, improve quality of life, empower residents, and foster engagement, often through feedback, surveys, and case studies to gauge tangible and sustainable positive changes.

How does SULAM contribute to graduate employability and holistic student development?
SULAM nurtures soft skills, for example, communication, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability, and leadership, that are critical to employability. It also enhances moral reasoning, empathy, and social awareness, contributing to balanced graduate profiles.

FAQ

BEST SULAM PRACTICES AND IMPACT

What is the typical duration and intensity of a SULAM engagement?
Most SULAM initiatives are semester-based (approximately 12–14 weeks, with a minimum student learning time (SLT) of 20 hours), involving structured engagement. However, duration and intensity may vary depending on mutually agreed-upon deliverables and implementation plans.

Are there financial implications for the community partner?
Typically, SULAM does not impose financial obligations on community partners. Nevertheless, contributions such as venue provision, local expertise, or basic logistical support may be required.

Can community partners participate in project monitoring and evaluation?
Community partners are invited to provide feedback and participate in impact assessments to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with community expectations.

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