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# Apel now offering Master's programmes

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**T**HE Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL), an initiative that provides an alternative entry path to higher education is now offering courses at Master's level, said Second Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh.

The Master's degree is open to Malaysians who are 30 years and above with STPM qualifications or its equivalent and is currently applicable to four fields of study: Business Administration, Information Technology, Education and Performing Arts.

"APEL is in support of the Education Ministry's commitment to life-long learning. By recognising the relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes gained through experiential learning, it widens the mobility of adult learners," said Idris.

He said that APEL administered by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA), was created for those who lack formal education but possess prior experiential learning.

This includes work experience,

voluntary and community work, independent study, family duties, hobbies or leisure activities, coaching and mentoring others, participating in seminars, conferences and workshops and attending short courses.

Apart from the Master's programme, APEL also offers courses at degree, diploma and certificate levels.

Interested applicants may submit their applications to MQA, after which they will sit for an aptitude test and have a portfolio interview.

Following a successful evaluation process, the applicant will receive an APEL certificate rendering them

eligible to apply for admission into Master's programmes at any local public or private higher education institution, said MQA chief executive officer Datuk Dr Syed Ahmad Hussein.

The entire APEL certification process takes about two to four months, he added.

To date, the programme has received 170 applications of which

107 have been successful.

Of the 13 Master's level applicants, eight make up the inaugural batch, including Raja Zulkarnain Raja Mohd Yusoff from Ampang who is looking to undertake a post-graduate Performing Arts course at Universiti Malaya.

"My research will be on Malay traditional instruments," said the 43-year-old who has been a music lecturer at Universiti Teknologi Mara and Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris for the past 10 years.

His only formal qualification is a diploma from the Institute of Contemporary Music Performance, London.

"In the UK, work experience is an acceptable requirement to get into postgraduate courses. I thought it was the same here but I faced some difficulty when I came back without a first degree.

"So the APEL certification programme has been a real help in letting me further my studies," added Raja Zulkarnain.

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**Proud moment:** APEL recipients are all smiles after being honoured as they pose with Idris (fourth from left) at the ceremony. Looking on are Dr Syed Ahmad (second from right) and Education Ministry secretary-general II Prof Datuk Seri Dr Zaini Ujang (left).