

# Switch to English in varsities by next year

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■ By June Ramli  
june@nst.com.my

PUTRAJAYA, Wed. — All public universities will have to teach Mathematics and Science-based degree programmes in English by next year.

Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Shafie Salleh said institutions of higher learning that allow dual languages — Malay and English — in their examinations and teaching would have to stop by the end of this year.

“All Maths and Science syllabuses will be in English,” he said before chairing a post-Cabinet meeting at his ministry here today.

Shafie also said the National Language Act 1963/67 would be amended to enable public universities to conduct Maths and Science courses in English. At present, the Act’s provisions state that almost 70 per cent of the syllabus must be in Malay.

Shafie said the move was to complement the Education Ministry’s effort to go fully English for Maths and Science in primary and secondary schools.

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plaining that they are studying Maths and Science in English at the secondary school level but when they get to the university they go back to Bahasa Melayu,” he said.

It was earlier reported that several public universities had yet to fully implement the Government’s policy on Maths and Science degree programmes being in English, because most of the staff and students were not ready.

Shafie said the full switch to

English for Maths and Science courses in universities would enable students to maintain the use of English in the two subjects from primary level.

He said lecturers would have to buck up and take it upon themselves to improve their English to teach the students.

“We will not be sending them for special courses to cope with this change but it is up to them to improve.

“They must get themselves

ready for the change.”

Shafie also said the National Accreditation Board had agreed to discount levies on private colleges rushing to meet the deadline for accrediting their courses in order to qualify for National Higher Education Fund Corporation (PTPTN) loans.

“We want them to accredit their courses in bulk and to do that, we are willing to give them a discount if they accredit several courses in one go.”

At present, the board charges between RM4,000 and RM9,000 for accrediting various courses, while medical courses are charged RM12,000.

However, Shafie said the quantum of the discount had not been decided by the ministry. He advised private colleges not to wait until the last minute to have their courses accredited.

“The deadline is June,” he said. “We hope the colleges can get it done by then.”

Recently, it was announced that PTPTN would freeze all loans to private colleges who take in new students after June, unless the courses offered were accredited.