

A pharmacy alum's journey

VANESSA Liew Hui Shan started her scholarly journey at the International Medical University (IMU) by joining its Foundation in Science (FIS) programme back in 2014. Subsequently, she joined the pharmacy programme at the same university and graduated with a Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons) in 2019.

She then decided to venture into the Provisional Registered Pharmacist (PRP) liberalised R&D Academia track while pursuing her Master by Research postgraduate programme in IMU. Liew shares her IMU journey here.

"Many have asked me why I decided to study IMU's Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons) in the first place? To be honest, without a doubt, IMU has the reputation as the most established private medical and health sciences university in Malaysia.

That's the primary reason that I joined the institution at the beginning, and it has been a wonderful life-changing journey. I truly appreciate that the Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons) programme allows the students to have an excellent integration of both theories (lectures) and practical (hands-on) sessions in every semester so that we can learn, apply and brush up our knowledge and skills as a pharmacist.

Being chosen to be a member of Dr Low May Lee's research team during my final year project has allowed me to explore and gain fruitful experiences. I was so honoured to be given the golden opportunity to visit and to complete my research project at École Normale Supérieure (ENS), Paris, one of the most prestigious higher educational institutions in France.

This research attachment offered me the chance to learn more about bioinorganic chemistry research, to widen my knowledge and to enhance my experimental techniques while working in a conducive research environment. I really enjoyed meeting people from all over the world and experiencing the cultural and educational differences between France and Malaysia.

Some have asked me why do I choose to undergo my PRP training in IMU instead of in a hospital or community pharmacy? My interest towards research has grown so much during my BPharm final year project. Once I graduated and after a discussion with Dr Low, I began my PRP journey with my main preceptor, School of Pharmacy dean Assoc Prof Mohd Zulkefeli Mat Jusoh and my supervisor Dr Low.

With the occurrence of the Covid-19 pandemic and the implementation of the movement control order, I had to delay my compulsory three-month clinical module attachment at Pantai Hospital Kuala Lumpur. After the announcement of the recovery movement control order, I officially started my training in September 2020.



In 2019, Liew graduated with IMU's Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons).

My past one-year PRP training journey was not easy. It was a roller-coaster ride with ups and downs, however, it certainly made me a better pharmacist, researcher and person. I have my fair share of sad and stressful days. Research will involve numerous repetitions to optimise the experimental procedures. It was not an easy task, but I was able to brave through it and made good progress in my project. I am also delighted to be able to publish a review paper in the peer-reviewed journal *Molecules*.

On the whole, studying at IMU has been an enriching journey filled with excitement, discovery, achievements and prospects. I can't believe how much I have grown over the years, both professionally and personally. IMU has shaped me into the person that I am today, allowing me to achieve my dreams and I am always proud to be a part of IMU."

At IMU, students have the options to complete the entire pharmacy programme locally at IMU or credit transfer to the University of Otago, New Zealand or University of Tasmania, Australia.

These international partnerships are a clear testament of the alignment of IMU's innovative education to global standards.

Additionally, students who opt to complete the entire degree in Malaysia also have the opportunity to go overseas for elective placement.

The commencement for the Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons) programme is in July and September. If you are inspired to join a diverse career that is involved with the safe and effective use of medicines, make an online application today to study IMU's pharmacy programme.

If you have just completed your SPM and do not have pre-university qualification, consider enrolling in the one-year IMU Foundation in Science, the preferred foundation and direct route for entry into any of the university's degree programmes.

■ For more information, refer to www.imu.edu.my, email start@imu.edu.my or call IMU at 03-2731 7272.