

# QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

## AT A GLANCE (Part One)

reported by: Agus Santoso

This is going to be a serial report on my visit to QUT to pursue my EdD there.

Finally, I arrived at Queensland University of Technology! It was the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2006 and it was around 13:00 p.m. Totally exhausted due to the approximately 10-hour flight from Jakarta the night before, I got out of the taxi, paid AUS\$32 to the taxi-driver and not really knowing where to go, I asked a student passing by where Room B403 was. He himself got confused, not being able to locate where that room was. Yet, he helped me carry my big bag up the stairs through the exit door to the designated room. When we reached the exit door to the fourth floor, the door was locked. He said, "Please wait here. I'll unlock the door for you." So, he went downstairs but only to find that the door was completely locked. So, he went to me again, who was waiting for him anxiously, of course, and both of us went down again and tried to find another way to go up again, of course with the big bag. It was just one of those pet-peeves!

At 13:20 I managed to arrive at B403, completely saturated with my sweat all over my body and gasping for air as well. I thanked the student for having helped me out but forgot to ask what his name was. Soon, I realized that B403 was empty!!! Where was everyone? They were supposed to be attending a program run by the university. I checked the schedule and learned that it was lunch time. I felt relieved and decided to wait outside. All alone, I was trying to make myself comfortable.

At the same time I was also worried about the place where I had to stay during that first night. I hadn't made any arrangements of whatsoever concerning the accommodation because much earlier the person in charge promised me to find one upon my arrival at QUT. I should have arrived earlier if it hadn't been for the 'delayed' flight from Sydney to Brisbane. It was a real nightmare for me. Well, back then, while I was calling a travel agent in Indonesia, I asked the person for the next flight available to catch to Brisbane because I had a class to attend at 8.30. After some calculation of time and so on he finally came up with an itinerary like this: QF42 Jakarta – Sydney, arriving at Sydney at 08:20, then QF152 Sydney – Brisbane, arriving in Brisbane 9:35 local time. I was satisfied. I also notified the EdD coordinator via email that I would be a little late because of the flight, promising her that this would be my last tardiness.

What really happened was like this. I did arrive on time at the Sydney International Airport. However, I had to be transferred from the 'International Flights' to the 'Domestic Flights' and that was where the painful journey started. My flight got 'delayed'. What made things worse was the long queue at the Immigration! It was just like a very long snake! Thousands of people were in the queue. I tried to be tricky, as what Indonesian people do. I pretended not to know where the line was and I passed hundreds of people!!! I was so worried to miss the next flight. I asked an officer whether there was a possibility for me to miss the next flight and she said yes. I got more and more worried. Then I saw some Indonesian students and we talked. One of them said, "It's okay. Don't worry. You can still catch the next flight." "Yeah, I know but I have to attend a class at 8.30."

Hopeless, I just followed where the current was moving. Finally, I managed to pass the Immigration officer! "Welcome to Australia!", I thought, "But, what is next?" I had to go

to the Domestic section of the airport. I got surprised to know that there was also a long queue to catch the next flight. I decided to follow where the current was moving one more time. Then, I managed to get a boarding pass. I was happy. When I arrived at the terminal, I was again shocked because we had to take a bus to go to the other terminal for domestic flights. What a long journey! I should have booked a direct flight to Brisbane but all flights had been fully booked at that time. After all of those painful process, eventually, the plane took off, heading for Brisbane.

At the Brisbane International Airport, I was searching for my friend who would pick me up but was unable to find him. I tried to sms my wife in Indonesia to contact him using his home phone since I had lost his cellular phone number. After several attempts, my wife could reach him but it was too late. “He said he came at the airport on time and waited outside to pick you up. One by one, the passengers left the airport but he could not see you”, my wife smsed me. Then came the second sms, “Being desperate, he left the airport because he had to be on duty at 2.00 p.m.”

After I realized that I could not find him at the airport, I decided to get out of the airport as soon as possible because I had to attend a class. I looked at my watch and it was around 12:30 p.m. Oh no! I was too late to attend the class!!! Hurriedly, I took a taxi and left for QUT straight away. I said confidently to the driver, though, “QUT–Kelvin Grove, please.”

After some problems which I encountered (reread the paragraphs above), I was, at last, able to attend the class. How happy I was! Then, I was introduced to everyone as a new student coming from Malaysia. I corrected her, telling everyone that I come from Indonesia. She was blushed and I knew it! Then the coordinator came in and introduced herself to me. She also suggested that it would be better for me to find a place to stay first. She also told me that if I could not find one, she was willing to help me with the temporary accommodation by offering me to stay at her house. She also allowed me not to attend the class. I was then told to go to the International Students Office to find a place to stay that night. Someone from the Administration Building accompanied me to go there. To make the long story short, I was able to find one to stay that night. It was already around 4.00 p.m. when I moved in. Again, I felt relieved and thanked the Lord for all of his guidance and blessings.

(to be continued)

# QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AT A GLANCE (Part Two)

reported by: Agus Santoso



These are the fulltime students having the second 2006 Cohort Meeting, posing with their supervisors: Rod [holding his PDA] and Susan [in the foreground]



Building A



Building B



Building S – ‘My Office’

[.....Kelvin Grove Campus.....]

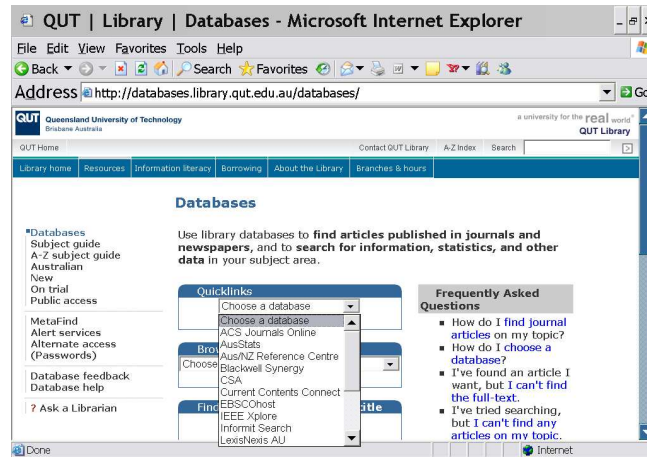
I got up very early the next morning. I took a quick shower, got dressed, had my breakfast and hurried to the Kelvin Grove campus at round 7.00. I decided to walk because someone told me that it would only take 20 minutes to go there on foot. I arrived there at around 7.20. It was right. It only took me 20 minutes to get there but I was sweating. It was really hot at that time.

I went to the room one more time but was a bit amazed because everybody used his/her card to enter the room by swiping it at the small box near the entrance. I couldn't get in since I hadn't got my card then. Later that day, I tried to get my card and I did. I also managed to sneak out of the room to send email to Pak Mul, Ibu Ferly and Pak Nggandi just to let them know that everything was fine with me.

I really enjoyed the session that day. We had a chance to share ideas related to our research. It was something new to me because as far as I knew it would not be like this in

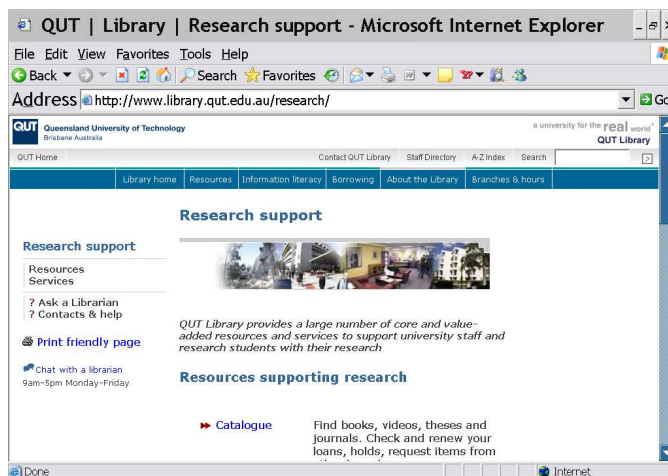
Indonesia. We tend to work independently (=secretly) so that our ideas wouldn't be 'stolen' by someone else, don't we ?

What amazed me the most was the massive databases that QUT has. That has enabled HRD (Higher Research Degree) students to access their data easily. By having such databases, students are also able to finish their projects earlier because everything is provided as long as they are diligent and committed to themselves.



There are also a lot of support facilities to help students out with their problems. Free-of-charge sessions are conducted on a regular basis. There are different kinds of sessions offered for one semester, ranging from English classes for International students who have difficulties with their English to data-interpretation sessions, to name a few. All of the support facilities are dedicated to helping QUT students finish their studies on time.

Research is also one of the key issues at QUT. A lot of research covering different disciplines has been conducted and some are still underway. A lot amount of money has definitely been spent to conduct such research.



One day, I was invited to attend a session on an OLT (Online Learning & Teaching) review. Apparently, I was the first person to arrive. It was so 'early' that the room was still dark. I decided to leave the room but, on second thoughts, I decided to enter the room partly because it was hot outside. I was completely surprised when I opened it because the lights suddenly were turned on automatically. It was a very modern room, indeed, because it was fully equipped with modern technologies needed to conduct conducive

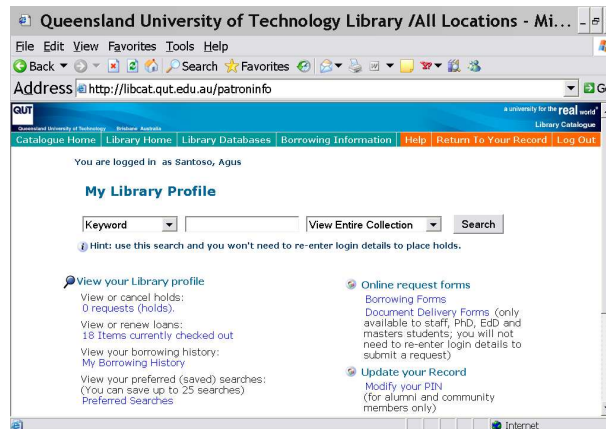
teaching and learning activities. The following picture is one of those modern lecture rooms.



Some of the areas at QUT, such as: meeting rooms, and particularly areas near the library, provide wireless access also. So, I can use my tablet PC to explore the Internet. I have to find the following sign first, though.



When I went to the library for the first time, I didn't have any clue at all. So, I asked a librarian, "Where is the section for education located?" She replied, "Well, it is on the fourth floor. But, you know, the library is very extensive. You need to find your books in the catalogue first." Deep in my heart, I said, "Yes, I know that for sure. What I need to know is where the section for education is located." I went to the fourth floor and found that the collection of books was really a wow. I couldn't believe my eyes. I even got difficulties in locating the books I wanted to borrow. Then, after I got some books, I went down to the counter and before I had the books checked out, I asked a question, "How many books can I borrow?" She replied, "Well, for undergraduates, they can borrow up to 40 books." I got surprised. She thought I was an undergraduate student. I produced the student ID card and gave that to her. That time she got surprised, saying, "So, you are a postgraduate student?????" "Ya.. iya lah...", I thought to myself. "Oh, one more thing," she said, "You can extend the books online if you want to." So, one day I did decide to extend some of the books online. It worked. I was so happy and thought, "Why go to campus/the library quite often if I can access everything online from 'home'?"



The EndNote application software, which is incorporated in the Microsoft Word, has helped me a lot in writing my annotated bibliography. I can access the library files from home. The EndNote is somehow connected to the databases in the library which has made it easier for me to manage my entries.

Then, I had a chance to visit the Gardens Point campus. This campus is really a nice place to study. There a lot of trees around the areas because it is located next to a public garden. How nice! Students can have a stroll around the compound for a change whenever they are tired of studying.



The Gardens Point campus is a very nice place to study, isn't it?

I have to take a bus if I want to go from Kelvin Grove to Gardens Point or vice versa. However, the bus services are free of charge. What students do is just waiting for the bus to come and when they get on the bus, they show the ID card to have a 'free ride'!!!! The buses connect the three QUT campuses.

So, I am really lucky to be able to pursue my further studies at QUT. For more information about QUT, you can visit the following website: [www.qut.edu.au](http://www.qut.edu.au). With all of the facilities offered, I am planning to get the 'confirmation' by August 2006 and then return to Indonesia in late September. I am looking forward to seeing everybody at UPH, then.

Have a good day, mate!

