

Lecture time at UMS is now reduced

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KOTA KINABALU: The amount of lecture time has been reduced at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) to allow students to pick up traits to increase their employability.

UMS Deputy Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Shahril Yusof said the move was part of the transformation exercise of the Higher Education Blueprint which offers flexibility to students to have a holistic development in their studies.

"In a general sense, the blueprint wants universities to do adjustments to their curriculum to allow students to have more time to carry out activities that would allow them to acquire communication skills, soft-skills and industrial exposure," he said.

Dr Sharil said this after opening the Repsol-UMS one-day seminar "Introduction to the Oil and Gas Industry for the first year students", here on Wednesday.

He said the adoption of the recommendations would allow universities to boost

the students' development faster than conventional methods that were "too academic" previously.

He said the introduction of the 2U2i is one example that allows students to do two years in university and two years in industry or a work-based programme.

"It is up to all universities to revise their curriculum and its execution to adjust the recommendations of the Higher Education Blueprint and allow its students to gain more exposure from the field," he said.

Meanwhile, Repsol's People and Organisation Manager Soh Mey Lee said such initiative was the reason why companies like Repsol are tapping into the young talents at universities.

Soh said companies require at least 10 years to allow their workers to learn the ropes of their business, hence the earlier exposure would be better.

"In the oil and gas industry for example, there is much to learn from the upstream all the way to the downstream.

"The first 10 years is sort of a learning curve, although there are those who are talented who need a shorter time to master the work," she said.

Soh said experts are needed in the industry to produce ingenuity and innovation that could solve problems related to the oil and gas field.

She recalled when she first started in the 1980s, her company had predicted the existing Malaysian oil wells could only produce up to 2 billion barrels over the next 40 years.

But the presence of experts appeared to have solve the issue due to the discovery of new reserves.

Repsol, which took over Talisman Energy sometime last year holds a Petronas contract and is a joint venture partner with Petronas Carigali.

It currently employs 800 workers nationwide most of whom are Malaysians, and currently in collaboration with UMS in the engineering field.



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