

Support from industries is vital — UMS

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KOTA KINABALU: Support from industries is imperative in the higher education system of the nation as students require early exposure to equip themselves for working life.

Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) deputy vice chancellor for research innovation Professor Dr Shahril Yusof said industry support was also in line with the higher education blueprint designed to produce more holistic students.

“With the blueprint transformation, concepts of flexibility are incorporated where students are groomed to have a higher value, such as good communication and problem solving skills as well as critical thinking.

“If we continue with the old curriculum or system, we cannot advance quickly. So with this blueprint, it is up to all universities to re-evaluate their curriculum and execution, which roughly requires adjustments,” he said.

Shahril added that universities also required more time to allocate more activities to instil soft skills in students.

“With the previous curriculum, students had no time to adjust socially as it was too academic. Now, with the review and adjustments along with its execution, that’s what we want -- for students to fulfil other needs.”

He said this during a press conference after officiating at the ‘Introduction to the Oil and Gas Industry’ seminar for first-year engineering students at UMS here yesterday.

According to Shahril, the



Soh (second left) presenting Shahril with a token of appreciation after the opening of the seminar.

programme is a collaboration between the university engineering faculty and Repsol Oil and Gas Malaysia Limited, which has been ongoing since 2014.

Meanwhile, Repsol people and organisation manager Soh Mey Lee said the industry needed young talent and the best way to tap into that was to work in tandem with universities.

“Because we have operations in Sabah, we work very closely with UMS to tap into young talent. This is an ongoing effort and commitment from Repsol and we would like to see this effort continue and we will build a thicker layer of young talents to join the industry.

“I think it’s very important for students who graduated from local universities to be ready material as human resource to any of the industries,” she said.

Soh, who has been in the business for 37 years, added that especially in oil and gas, a lot of efforts is being put into working with universities through various programmes to give students the exposure they need because they

require time to learn and train.

Earlier in his opening address, Shahril also reminded students not to be too calculative when entering the working world.

He said a change in attitude and mindset was of the essence to advance in any field, and also told students that upon graduation, there was still much to learn.

“Once you graduate, you are not a specialist yet. You don’t know everything in the world. The reality is that the moment you enter into your new job is the first time you are learning a new thing.

“What you learn in the classroom is just basic knowledge to guide you along the way. When you start working, it’s another learning process.

“I would say that the first 10 years of your career is learning -- it’s not just applying what you already know,” he said.

Shahril also told reporters that Repsol had been giving out scholarships to students, and that 11 recipients had benefited from it so far, expressing hope that it would be continued in the future.