

'Graduates need skills to succeed'

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KOTA KINABALU: Graduates desiring to secure jobs need to look beyond academic qualifications and develop their soft skills to enable them to find success.

"Getting an academic degree is often given too much focus by graduates instead of developing their soft skills and competencies needed to meet the expectations of the industry," said Jusman Bin Nali, President of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Student Representative Committee.

Speaking at the UMS Intellectual Discussion on Graduate Employability 2018 yesterday, Jusman who was one of the panellists, stressed that firms and employers are no longer looking only at paper qualifications but more on the ability of graduates to adapt to the needs of the industry.

"For instance, conflict management, working under pressure and teamwork are among the soft skills companies and employers are looking out for in graduates," he added.

He noted that the poor command of English is another key factor hurting the chances for graduates in securing jobs after graduating.

Without English proficiency, soft skills and a good amount of competencies, Jusman noted, it would be difficult for graduates to kick-start their careers.

The forum which also featured Akademia Fantasia 5 celebrity Nur Heliza Bin Helmi, was attended by 100 participants comprising mostly university students from various faculties at the UMS Post Graduate Auditorium.

Nur Heliza who was also guest panellist highlighted positive behaviour, attitude and working experience as added boosts for graduates to be relevant in the eyes of prospective employers.

"They (graduates) would also need to deepen their knowledge and keep abreast of the latest economic environments, developments and trends facing their companies in their respective industries," she said.

Other panellists in the forum include UMS Head of the Department of Student Affairs, Ahmadi Bin Nurdin, Sufian Bin Nanta as well as Programme Director, Mohd Afiq bin Kandi.