

By KATHLEEN ANN KILI  
educate@thestar.com.my

HIGHER education institutions are encouraged to engage industry players to produce collaborations that lead to win-win outcomes for both the students and the industry.

Deputy Higher Education Minister Datuk Mary Yap said universities should take advantage of the recently launched Two University Two Industry (2U2I) initiative from her ministry.

The 2U2I programme allows students to gain relevant exposure during their varsity years as they undergo two years of classroom learning and another two years of hands-on experience.

“With the exposure, students will gain an idea of the industry and some entrepreneurial skills while industries will be able to screen for fresh talent during the period,” said Yap after attending the closing ceremony of the National Young Leaders Symposium 2016.

The event was held recently at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia’s Skudai Campus in Johor Baru.

She urged more universities to identify suitable courses that could be incorporated into the initiative.

She added that only Universiti Malaysia Kelantan and Universiti

# Yap: Students must work and gain from industry

Putra Malaysia were currently offering this option for some of their courses.

Yap said the ministry did not issue a blanket directive on the 2U2I initiative as each course would have their own specific requirements.

“When we implemented 2U2I, we had to look into the collaboration with the industries as well as the relevance of the topics and availability of facilities.

“The readiness of students for the industry is also a major factor, as it is pointless to send students out into the industry if they are not equipped with sufficient theoretical learning,” Yap added.

She pointed out that hands-on learning had become an important aspect as proven by the high employability rate of graduates from polytechnics and community colleges, where students were exposed to skills training.

“We aspire to produce learned and educated graduates and groom them to be job creators rather than just job seekers,” she said, adding that it was very much in line with the National Education Development Plan (Higher Education) 2015-2025 blueprint.

Meanwhile, UTM vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Wahid Omar said the university would apply the initiative but would lengthen the duration for one of its computer courses next semester.

Called the 3U1I programme, the course will require students to pursue the programme for three years in the university and one year in industry, he said.

“Most of our courses are engineering-based, so we will need to comply with the requirements of the engineering accreditation council before we can send students into the industry,” he said.



**Say Cheese:** Yap ( in black and white blouse) posing with participants after the symposium’s closing ceremony.