

Gaining industry experience with Intel

GETTING practical experience through internships gives students hands-on exposure they need to develop key skills they cannot get in the classroom.

The MOE-Intel Elite Programme, a partnership between Education Ministry and Intel Malaysia, hopes to improve the employability of Malaysian graduates in the electronics and microelectronics field.

The first batch of the programme would see 100 students from six public universities gain exposure to industry-standard chip-design software over the period of 10 weeks. This would include hands-on lab work to ensure students could use the tools effectively and efficiently.

Muhd Izani Zulkifli, 23, a Bachelor in Electrical and Electronics Engineering student at Universiti Teknologi Mara, Permatang Pauh in Penang, said he looked forward to the internship and hoped to gain knowledge and experience as much as he can.

"Internship is a platform that gives the opportunity to engineering students like me to gain real-life exposure of the industry," he said.

"Most employers will ask fresh graduates if they have any working experience, but many fail to answer that question. But I am proud to say that the training at Intel Malaysia will enable to answer that question."

Sugania Ramachandran, 23, who is studying Computer Engineering at Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP), said it was a great opportunity for her to be selected for the programme, which gave her the experience of working as a trainee.

"I hope to gain more exposure in terms of knowledge and experience on chip designing practically, which I have learned theoretically in university," she said.

Izani and Sugania were two of the trainees selected for the two-month internship from June 24 to Aug 30 at Intel Malaysia in Bayan Lepas, Penang.

Launching the event was Education Minister Dr Maszlee Malik, who said this programme was initiated at the right time as the need for electronic engineers were crucial, in



Education Minister Dr Maszlee Malik (seated, third from left) and Suresh Kumar (seated, third from right) with interns and participating lecturers at the launch of the MOE-Intel Elite Internship Programme at the Education Ministry in Putrajaya.

PIC BY LUQMAN HAKIM ZUBIR

line with the Industrial Revolution 4.0, which emphasised on electronic automation.

He urged students to grab the opportunity and absorb the knowledge transfer in the industry.

"The experience of using the industry-standard IC design software during hands-on sessions will enhance their design problem-solving skills," said Maszlee.

"The ministry hopes other kinds of smart partnership

between the academia and industry can be continued in the future. Graduates from the electronics and microelectronics field can be directly absorbed into the industries.

"At the same time, it will increase the percentage of graduate employability in the engineering field."

The programme is a part of the new Higher Education Department initiative called Academia Industry Expert Exchange Programme, a two-way sharing of expertise that can promote greater understanding of the needs and expectations of the academia and industry.

The six public universities involved in the programme are UniMAP, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Mara and Universiti Tun Hussein Onn.

Maszlee congratulated the 12 visiting lecturers selected to join the train-the-trainer programme and hoped that the sharing of knowledge, ideas and expertise would benefit not only students, but lecturers as well.

Intel Malaysia will provide training to 12 lecturers from these six universities through the visiting faculty member programme to

equip them with industry knowledge on silicon design.

Over the past three years, Intel Malaysia has accepted more than 2,300 students as interns and graduate trainees.

Intel Malaysia Design Centre general manager Suresh Kumar said the company continued to play an active role in collaborating with the ministry, especially in terms of university engagement.

The engagement, he said, could be seen and felt through the four pillars — curriculum enabling, tools enabling, joint research and talent development.

"The above four pillars are the areas that Intel Malaysia has been focusing on for university engagement activities. The MOE-Intel Elite Internship Programme is just one of the programmes we are conducting, which focuses on talent development curriculum and tool enabling," said Suresh.

"With this close collaboration between Intel and the ministry, we are confident we can scale greater heights together."



Sugania Ramachandran



Muhd Izani Zulkifli