

Ensure grads are equipped with skills for high pay

LETTERS: The increasing number of graduates puts them under more pressure to get good jobs.

During the pandemic, we saw an increase in their struggle, and some who had just been employed lost their jobs.

The **Department of Statistics** says the number of unemployed people with tertiary education increased by 30.1 per cent from 181,200 to 235,700 in 2020 as the economy shrank by 5.65 per cent.

There were 4,616,400 people with tertiary education in the labour force in 2019, and only 4,435,200 people were employed.

The figure included those who accepted jobs that did not commensurate with their qualifications and received low earnings.

Ten per cent of fresh graduates earn between RM1,001 and RM1,500.

The increase in prices of goods and services rubs salt into their wounds.

The increase in the number of fresh graduates with low earnings implies that having a degree does not guarantee a good job, and this should have set alarm bells ringing.

Many believe that it is not worth pursuing university studies due to the fact that they will end up earning incomes that are not up to par.

This issue remains unresolved despite several government initiatives, including the apprenticeship programme.

There are several factors that contribute to fresh graduates' low earnings. One of them is a lack of capabilities and skills.

Also, some employers are loath to provide high pay, and they reckon that fresh graduates are new and have no work experience.

As such, fresh graduates should gain experience first in any job, regardless of how much they earn, for at least two years before they switch to high-paying jobs.

Higher education institutions must ensure that graduates are equipped with skills to meet industrial requirements.

Besides, government policies are needed to ensure that graduates have high earnings so that they can pay off their student loans and can survive the high cost of living.

The government may impose another minimum wage on fresh graduates.

Employers must also ensure that our efforts will not go down the drain.

Due to the minimum wage, employers must not avoid hiring graduates if the jobs are suitable for them.

More incentives should be provided to fresh graduates to create jobs rather than to find jobs.

<https://www.nst.com.my/opinion/letters/2021/12/756750/ensure-grads-are-equipped-skills-high-pay>