

# University degree no guarantee of employment

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University degree no guarantee of employment \* Features 2012-10-24 19:06 By Zulkiple Ibrahim KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 24 (Bernama) -- Fazren, 29, has a degree in transport management but has been working as an administrative assistant at a government agency over the past four years. " I have applied for many jobs, both in the civil and private sectors. When I was offered the post of an administrative assistant (at a government agency) I did not hesitate to accept even though the post is for those with SPM qualification. Getting a job is quite difficult these days," the Pahang-born clerk told this writer here. Amran obtained 7As in the 2009 Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examination and is now working as a nurse in a government hospital after obtaining a diploma in nursing from a government nursing college this year. When queried on why he opted for a nursing course despite having good SPM results and the opportunity to study in a university, the 22-year-old Perlis-born Amran replied, " It is for economic reasons. " I opted not to go to university as I believe getting a job will be difficult even after I graduated with a university degree. But with a nursing diploma, a job will be waiting for me at any government hospital or other private hospitals. " It is better to start working at a young age rather than waiting for many years in order to get a job," he said. Both Amran and Fazren (not their real names) are among many Malaysian job seekers who are not particular over the choice of employment as they believe that holding a university qualification does not guarantee them a salaried job. Unemployed graduates Last May, the Deputy Human Resource Minister Datuk Maznah Mazlan told Parliament that some 76, 200 graduates in the country were unemployed. She said that the Human Resource Ministry was trying to resolve the growing

rate of unemployment in the country. In 2010, the number of unemployed graduates was 42, 955 or 24. 62 per cent of 174, 439 Malaysian graduates. There are 20 public universities (IPTA) in Malaysia including Universiti Malaya (UM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) and Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM). The country also has 60 private higher education institutions (IPTS) like Universiti Teknologi Petronass (UTP), Universiti Multi Media (MMU) and Universiti Tenaga Nasional (Uniten).

Bachelor's degree According to the Higher Education Ministry, universities, university colleges and polytechnics nationwide produced 184, 581 graduates last year and 44, 391 or 24 per cent of them were unemployed. Based on statistics, Arts and Social Sciences graduates have the highest number of unemployment numbers, constituting 44. 5 per cent or 19, 784 from the total number of unemployed graduates. Next were graduates from technical fields where 12, 321 were employed, constituting 27. 7 per cent of the total number of unemployed graduates. Science graduates came in third with 7, 321 which accounted for 16. 49 per cent of the total number of unemployed graduates. The ministry said that a total of 21, 248 bachelor's degree holders were still unemployed whereas diploma holders have the lowest unemployment rate at 3 per cent. According to industry sources, many graduates are still unemployed because the courses they studied at university do not have a wide market. Poor communication skills Human science lecturer Amien Iskandar said that one of the reasons why graduates could not secure jobs was that their qualifications do not meet market demands and requirements, thus rendering them 'not marketable'. " Another factor is the bad command of English. A good command of the English

language could help graduates secure employment, especially in the private sector. " To this end, there is a need to ensure that these graduates are equipped with the necessary skills so that they could be hired for employment after graduating," he said. Amien also cited poor communication skills, wrong work attitude and unrealistic expectations as other barriers in gaining employment. " If you have a good command of English but cannot communicate with others due to poor attitude, (then) you may also find difficulties in being employed," he explained. Lack of technical training According to the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM), the lack of industrial training is also among the factors why graduates are unemployed. Meanwhile, the Higher Education Ministry Student Development and Affairs Director, Prof Dr Mohd Fauzi Ramlan was reported by the media as saying that other factors that compounded the issue are low problem-solving skills, tendency to switch jobs or job-hopping and lack of self-confidence. He called on graduates to improve their command of the English language to boost their communication skills. "(Can they expect to be employed) if they fail to convince their prospective employers on their potential, (then) their chances of getting hired are very slim," he was reported as saying. Mohd Fauzi also advised graduates to drop the 'negative attitude' of preferring to gain jobs in their home towns. <http://www.mysin Chew.com/node/79072>