

Mohd Amirul Kasyful Nur bin Zulkifli

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Subject: UUM SoHK LAUNCHED AND MEMBERS OF INDUSTRY FACULTY PRESENTED WITH LETTERS OF APPOINTMENT



UUM Corporate Comm.

Universiti Utara Malaysia

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"UUM : UNIVERSITI PENGURUSAN TERKEMUKA"
(*THE EMINENT MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY*)

Translated by Mahaliza Mahadhir (mahaliza@uum.edu.my)
Pictures by: Shamsaimi Ezil

UUM SoHK LAUNCHED AND MEMBERS OF INDUSTRY FACULTY PRESENTED WITH LETTERS OF APPOINTMENT



UUM ONLINE: Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) made history when the Minister of Higher Education Dato' Seri Dr Noraini Ahmad launched the School of Hard Knocks (SoHK) managed by UUM Centre for University-Industry Collaboration (CUIC) virtually yesterday afternoon. She also graciously presented letters of appointment to Industry Faculty members during the launch.

In her virtual opening speech, Dato' Seri Dr Noraini Ahmad stated that UUM should be commended, particularly for dealing with the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, UUM-CUIC had undergone significant changes in response to current changes in teaching and learning methods.

According to her the initiative to provide graduates with specific industry skills in various disciplines had become more of a necessity for the development of the country's human capital, which included high-level thinking ability, a strong hold on values, ethics, and spiritual elements.

She stated that the adaptation to new norms and the development of the global scenario demonstrated that the education ecosystem needed to change holistically in order to ensure graduates' long-term marketability in producing more competent skilled labour.

In this context, she agreed that UUM made the right decision by exposing its students to the four main elements that graduates must master, namely critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity in the new world.

All of these elements must be polished in every aspect of a student's life, whether in person or virtually, so that students can remain competitive and resilient. She stated that the Ministry of Higher Education, through the National Economic Revitalisation Plan (PENJANA) or PENJANA KPT-CAP, would assist students in addressing the challenges of graduate marketability and reducing unemployment caused by the COVID-19 epidemic.

The selected graduates will participate in the PENJANA KPT-CAP programme, where they will have the opportunity to improve their skills and find work after completing the programme.

"The method implemented by UUM will undoubtedly enable its students to develop their talents and fulfil job opportunities later," she added.

Meanwhile, the Vice-Chancellor of UUM, Prof. Dato' Dr Ahmad Bashawir Abdul Ghani in his welcoming speech described the initiative to establish SoHK as a model for the Public University's involvement with industry, particularly in terms of student readiness before embarking on a real career.

SoHK can be viewed as a medium that adds value to existing knowledge among students from UUM's academic programmes. The students involved will be given the opportunity to participate in all types of work at selected organisations, where they will be trained and given the title of "Padawan." They will then be awarded a certificate of recognition from the organisation that they eventually join.

During the first phase, 25 students from various study programmes were placed at ViTrox Corporation Bhd. and trained in industry-specific skills by appointed industry experts. The programme will also provide students with opportunities for practicum placements and employment, while also supporting UUM and MoHE's graduate marketability agendas and assisting in the development of a resilient workforce in this new world era.

"The new method of collaboration between UUM and the industry can undoubtedly increase and reshape students' paradigms for a new world," he added. He stated that this programme indirectly provided a platform for UUM students to be actively involved with the industry as early as semester five, and that it will open up opportunities for them to get practicum placements and jobs in the future.

Meanwhile, a 'padawan' of the programme, Hemaviknesh Supramaniam, a Semester six student from the School of Creative Industry Management and Performing Arts (SCIMPA), who was contacted, stated that her participation in SoHK was to strengthen existing skills, as well as to gain real-world work experience. "I learned a lot from Vitrox and I would like to encourage more of my friends on campus to join SoHK as well," she added.

During the ceremony, ten representatives from the industry, namely TalentCorp Malaysia Berhad, Lembaga Tabung Haji, PETRONAS Berhad, Maybank Berhad, Microsoft Malaysia Sdn Bhd, PKT Logistics Group Sdn Bhd, Vitrox Corporation Berhad, NTV7, Zurich Takaful Malaysia Berhad, and KPMG Malaysia, received letters of appointment as members of Industry Faculty.

Meanwhile, Dr. Shahrina Othman, the Director of CUIC, who was contacted, expressed hope that the initiative would create a space for industry players to collaborate in guiding students undergoing industrial training to better prepare them to face the world of practicum with more confidence, as well as open up job opportunities for them.

Through the implementation of this new method, UUM will be able to work more closely with the SoHK industry faculty in developing student talents in order to remain relevant in the current situation.



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