

Higher Education Ministry's 'whole-of-nation approach' aims to boost student employability

By [Hakim Mahari](#), [Ainun Jariah](#) - January 12, 2024 @ 3:05pm



Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambrzy Abdul Kadir said the initiative would enhance the students' marketability by aligning their skills with the current needs of the nation. - BERNAMA pic

KUALA LUMPUR: The Higher Education Ministry will work with other ministries and government agencies to try to enhance students' marketability.

Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambrzy Abdul Kadir said the initiative would enhance the students' marketability by aligning their skills with the current needs of the nation.

"I have engaged in discussions with both the International Trade and Industry Ministry (Miti) and the Science, Technology, and Innovation Ministry (Mosti). In the context of Miti, the focus is on aligning university outputs with the dynamic needs of the job market.

"At the same time, collaboration between my ministry and Mosti can optimise the use of expertise from that ministry and provide job opportunities for graduates in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fields.

"This undoubtedly requires a collaborative framework between both parties," he said during the presentation of the Direction for the Higher Education Ministry in 2024 address at Universiti Malaya.

Zambry also underscored the essential need for harmonious synchronisation between the skills imparted to graduates and the actual demands of the industry.

He emphasised the importance of preventing a scenario where universities produce an excess of graduates perceived as inadequately equipped for the job market.

"This emphasis extends beyond mere market considerations; it is about meeting the requirements of both the market and various industries.

"Certain sectors, such as the semiconductor industry, hold particular significance for Malaysia on the global stage. Hence, strategic planning is necessary to bolster the production of technical graduates.

"This could be at the level of polytechnics, community colleges, or universities, catering to the preferences and inclinations of individuals and families towards this field."

Zambry stressed the critical need for Malaysia to attract a greater number of students with the potential to enter the semiconductor industry.

"We are experiencing high demand, with reports indicating over 40,000 job vacancies in the market. However, our university capacities are limited to 5,000, which is inadequate.

"There is a need for comprehensive planning to address this shortfall. My concern extends beyond universities; it also encompasses polytechnics and community colleges," he said.

On another matter, Zambry gave his assurances that despite the fact that he had just taken over as higher education minister, there will be no drastic changes to any policies that were laid out a year ago.

He said the ministry, which was previously led by Datuk Seri Khaled Nordin, was already on the right path.

"I want to stress to all members of the ministry that I do not intend to overhaul everything. Our approach will be to enhance wherever necessary with prudence."