

Parents, students should talk about further education

April 15, 2024 @ 12:05am



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LETTERS: The Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examination for 2023 ended last month. For many school-leavers, the next phase of education will start soon.

Having three kids in private tertiary education, I know this is a testing time for parents.

Private tertiary education is not cheap and can put parents back up to hundreds of thousands of ringgit per child. The costs will be higher if it involves overseas education.

It doesn't help that our ringgit has weakened considerably, which affects parents whose kids are studying overseas.

Parents would want their children to opt for tertiary education that is more affordable. But they also want their children to enjoy quality education.

Some parents are led by the nose by their children who have a big say on where they study. But the children can be oblivious to their parents' financial abilities. Some students face peer pressure, taken in by the "glamour" of studying in certain institutions.

Communications and research are key for parents and students. Parents should communicate the parameters they have in mind when their children select where to further their education.

Students should also articulate their expectations to their parents. Ideally, both sides can meet halfway.

Some parents and students quickly decide on a college or university without much research. In Malaysia, there are different tiers of tertiary institutions.

Top-tier institutions have a good track record and reputation but can be costly.

Second-tier institutions offer comparable quality education but are more affordable. But they may not be as "glitzy" as the top-tier ones.

There's no need to only choose top-tier institutions. Some programmes may not be suitable for the student.

It's understandable that in an industry as competitive as education, certain institutions have strengths in certain areas and weaknesses in others.

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