UCSI revamps diploma to suit work-based learning

KUCHING: UCSI University (UCSI), playing host to the Malaysia Centre for Tourism and Hospitality Education (MyCenTHE) here, has swiftly revamped its Diploma in Hotel Management to encapsulate the advocated work-based learning concept.

Following the revamp, a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) signing ceremony between UCSI, Sarawak Cultural Village (SCV) and a 5-Star resort hotel took place yesterday to further promote the skill-based training programmes to boost the tourism, hotel and culinary industry here.

"Come January, the university will roll out a Diploma in Tourism and Event Management as well as a Diploma in Culinary Arts. These programmes will provide more options and with more courses in the pipeline we are confident that we will cover every nook and cranny in the industry.

"With the Sarawak and Kuala Lumpur clusters already up and running, we are eagerly awaiting the impending launch of the Penang, Sabah and Johor clusters which target an average of 2,000 students by the year 2015," said MyCenTHE president Assoc Prof Dr Wong Kong Yew in his speech before the MOA signing.

The event was held in conjunction with MyCenTHE's Independent Management Team (IMT) appreciation cocktail reception held at the Sarawak Tourism Complex here.

Present was Tourism Minister Datuk Amar Abang Johari Tun Openg who witnessed the signing, Tourism Ministry principal assistant secretary Mary Wan Mering, SCV representatives and general manager Jane Lian Labang and head of Heritage Research Centre Narawi Rashidi.

Also present were UCSI University president and vice-chancellor Dr Robert Bong, UCSI Sarawak campus chief operating officer Lu Huong Ying, associate dean Gracie Geikie, Sarawak Tourism Federation president Audry Wan Ulo.</p>

Wong added that MyCenTHE would also expand its work-based learning programme by partnering with vocational and community institutions to offer up-skilling programmes.

Abang Johari, when delivering his keynote address, said a work-based training is a trend that is practised globally as 70 to 80 per cent of the students’ study time would be based on practical training while the rest on theory.

"This is the model that we should adopt in order to give practical training to those who are involved in the various industries," he added.

He mentioned that the state is in the midst of trying to improve on getting people involved in the tourism industry.

Highlighting that tourism is very sensitive where there is a need to have long-term planning to be active in this industry, he reminded the moment there is a defect, people will go elsewhere.

Therefore, Abang Johari explained, the state is now on the verge of revamping its tourism industry from policy right up to the players with the hope that those involved in the industry would try to improve by using the latest mode and approach while at the same time using the latest equipment and tools in managing the industry.

MyCenTHE was originally created under the name of Entry Point Project 10 (EFP10), which was one of 131 total projects under the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP).