

Many using fake degrees

Job applicants also forge resumes

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PETALING JAYA: With the employment market becoming increasingly competitive, many people are using bogus degrees, diplomas and certificates besides telling outright lies to secure jobs.

A company specialising in pre-employment screening has detected an average of five applications with forged degrees or certificates every week while a fraud-investigation firm found that 10% to 15% of applications it scrutinised had fake paper qualifications, some of them from non-existent universities.

Verity Intelligence Sdn Bhd managing director Mark Leow Boon Kuan, whose clients are mostly multinationals and finance companies, said many of the documents were cleverly forged and could fool anyone.

He added: "Of about 2,000 applications we check each month, about 20 are found to have fake degrees or certificates. That's five a week. We have detected 130 forged documents so far this year.

"The bulk of the cases involved degrees and diplomas but we also found bogus Master's degrees and PhDs. Most of the forgeries were done by the job applicants themselves."

He recalled a man who faked his SPM certificate.

"It was quite funny because his certificate stated that he was from a girls' school," he said.

Leow also said that about 50% of applicants lied about something in their resumes.

Association of Certified Fraud Examiners Malaysia president Akhbar Satar also found job applicants lying in their resume about their qualification, experience and previous salaries.

The criminologist – whose company Akhbar and Associates detected fake degrees in about 15% of applications – said some employers were using lie detectors to screen potential employees as well as detect any case of fraud



Dubious record: Pre-employment screening firms routinely detect about 15% of fake qualifications sent in by applicants.

among existing staff.

Malaysian Employers Federation executive director Shamsuddin Bardan said some cases of fraud had been discovered when the employees concerned could not display the kind of skill based on their supposed qualification.

He said that degree checks should be part of a bigger screening process that includes reference from previous employers.

Meanwhile, MyStarJob.com head Serm Teck Choon said the company was monitoring the situation closely although it had not received any complaint from employers registered with it.

"We are aware of the issue and will work closely with the employers. We are also looking at long-term measures to tackle the issue," he said, adding that over 100,000 job seekers were registered with the company.

JobStreet.com Malaysia country manager Chook Yuh Yng said the company was working with several universities to tackle the problem of fake degrees and verify the qualification of job applicants.

A human resource manager with a leading government-linked company said the standard practice was to cross-reference degrees from private colleges and foreign universities with the Malaysian Qualifications Agency to ensure they were legitimate.