

MEF: Intern allowance rule will deter employers

NATION

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KUALA LUMPUR: The proposal to make it compulsory to pay allowances to students who undergo industrial training in the private sector will discourage employers from offering places for internships, says the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF).

MEF president Datuk Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman suggested that the government consider increasing incentives for employers to hire more interns and making internships mandatory for all university students.

He said an internship was a good opportunity for students or recent graduates to gain valuable industry experience that would make them more employable.

“Generalised statements that industries do not pay interns (at all) are unjust to employers,” he said.

Currently, private companies that take in interns to undergo industrial training pay allowances at their discretion, with the average amount in bigger cities being about RM1,200, though some are paid less than RM1,000 per month.

Syed Hussain said, in fact, employers had to carry out a lot of planning to ensure knowledge and skills were transferred to the interns, and that stakeholders should thank the industries for helping to train interns.

Recently, Youth and Sports Minister Hannah Yeoh said a proposal to make it mandatory to pay allowances to interns undergoing industrial training in the private sector, as was done in the public sector, would be brought to the Cabinet for consideration.