

**GENERIC SKILLS FOR THE WORKPLACE: A STUDY OF
GRADUATING STUDENTS AT UiTM SARAWAK**

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31 March 2006

Date : 31 March 2006

Reference No. : 600-IRDC/SSP 5/3/1414

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**FINAL RESEARCH REPORT “*GENERIC SKILLS FOR THE WORKPLACE:
A STUDY OF GRADUATING STUDENTS AT UiTM SARAWAK*”**

With reference to the above, we enclose 3 copies of the Final Research Report entitled, “*Generic Skills for the Workplace: A Study of Graduating Students at Uitm Sarawak.*”

Thank you.

Yours sincerely



PROF. MADYA PAULINE ACHAN
Project Leader

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ABSTRACT

This research was undertaken to firstly determine the extent to which Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Sarawak's graduating students are prepared in terms of the four types of employability skills. Secondly, to determine the extent to which these skills are teachable. Thirdly, to gauge the lecturers' perception of the students' preparedness in relation to the skills and lastly, to determine whether the skills identified match with the employer's/the industry's needs and requirements. The research involved 334 UiTM Sarawak's graduating students in semester July to November 2005; 13 employers experienced in supervising students who had undergone practical training with them; and 34 lecturers. Quantitative as well as qualitative approaches were employed to investigate the extent of UiTM Sarawak's graduating students' level of preparedness. Surveys were carried out to gauge the employers' perceptions on the level of preparedness of the students and the lecturers' perception on the teachability of the skills. The results from the surveys undertaken on the employers showed the skills identified are representative of the needs of the industry. The overall results of the students' and the employers' surveys showed that the UiTM students are quite skilled and thus quite prepared for the workplace. Although the response level from the lecturers' is not very enthusiastic in respect of the teachability of the generic skills, it does show that the skills can be taught.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

A survey conducted by Zainal (2002) indicates that the higher percentage of unemployment is among bumiputeras (22, 244), while the Chinese and Indian graduates only experience 3.7% and 1.6% unemployment rates respectively. The large number of unemployed bumiputera graduates seems to imply rather strongly that those graduates might be from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) whose student population is 100% bumiputera. However, based on the percentage of graduate unemployment breakdowns in terms of academic disciplines reported by Zainal (2002): 31.1% (social science graduates), 11.3% (economic graduates), 9.2% (accounting graduates), 8.8% (business graduates) and 8.6% (Islamic studies graduates), it seems that the unemployed bumiputera graduates do not represent the bulk from UiTM. This is because the first two highest percentages of majors (social science and economics) are not available at UiTM. Nonetheless, the high percentage of unemployed bumiputera graduates should remain a cause for concern because the main reason for the inability to land a job for these graduates as Zainal points out is their lack of communication skills. In other