



Placement Provision within Higher Educational Institution – The Case at the University of Mauritius for Undergraduate Programmes

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Abstract

As the world evolves into a global village, the demand for highly qualified manpower have tremendously increased. This had led to the expansion of higher educational institutions in producing more and more graduates for the world of work. However, it has been observed that throughout the last decade fresh graduates stepping into the world of work face a lot difficulties in adapting and performing in organisations. Companies facing severe competition complained several times that they can no longer afford running lengthy graduate skills training programmes for their new recruits. They need man power that are fit for purpose and practice so that they can stay competitive in the market. According to I.J. Kemp and L. Seagraves [1], the ability of higher education to successfully foster the development of personal transferable skills within the academic curriculum has been questioned. Higher educational institutions therefore has a leading role in reviewing their curriculum so as to make the necessary provisions for their students to be exposed to the world of work for higher skills acquisitions within their programme of studies.

Besides, recent research on the outcomes of education, particularly at the tertiary level, has shown that there is a gap between the knowledge needed at work and the knowledge and skills produced through formal education. Successive reports in the UK have stressed the need for students to familiarise with the world of work through work experience such as Dearing, R [2] and the development of employability skills, such as communication, numeracy, technology and learning how to learn stated by Bloom, N et al [3]. In addition, Leitch, S Review Report [4] expressed concerns about the skills of recent graduates in UK. Strong recommendations were made about how UK could 'raise its game' and skills trajectories to meet the demands of employers, employees and the nation.

Mauritius face similar problem, fresh graduates are seen to lack the required skills to integrate in organisations. The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) Report expressed concerns about fitness level and employability of fresh graduates of the University of Mauritius (UoM) in almost all its report since 2004. This instigated the UoM to establish placement learning provisions within the programme of studies for undergraduate students so that they are exposed to the real working environment well before they are graduated.