

Not cut out to be doctors - Nation | The Star Online

PETALING JAYA: Desperate to do medicine, many unqualified Malaysian students are going abroad to get their degrees.

Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) director-general Datuk Prof Dr Asma Ismail said the ministry was asked to verify the SPM results of a batch of students currently enrolled in a foreign university in the region.

“The university wanted to know if the students met the ministry’s minimum requirement for a ‘No Objection Certificate’ (NOC).

“We checked and found that they did not qualify. There are, however, no reports of fake or forged documents,” she told the *Sunday Star*.

Dr Asma, however, declined to reveal the number of students involved and the location of the university.

She was responding to claims that students with Ds and Es for science subjects, those from the arts stream, those without the NOC and those who failed the entrance exams, were among those studying medicine and dentistry abroad.

The *Sunday Star* received complaints that unscrupulous agents here could be falsifying SPM result certificates and NOC.

Students wanting to pursue medical courses overseas must get NOCs from the ministry.

EXCLUSIVE

The issuance of the certificates is based on the students having the same minimal entry qualifications as stipulated for entry to local universities.

“We are aware of unqualified students going abroad but we cannot take action as it’s beyond our jurisdiction. The intake of students is handled by the universities abroad.

“We have dealt with complaints of document falsification in the past. The ministry has lodged police reports and the cases are now under police investigation,” she said.

Dr Asma said falsifying official government documents was a serious offence, adding that anyone with information on forged or fake results should report to the MOHE, or in cases of SPM certificate forgery, to the Education Ministry, so that action could be taken.

The Malaysian Medical Association wants the Malaysian Medical Council (MMC) to investigate the allegations.

Its president Dr Ashok Zachariah Philip said the complaints exemplified loopholes in the system.

“Under the existing law, the Health Ministry must give Malaysians with recognised degrees posts for housemanship.

"The problem is when unqualified students do medicine in less discriminating colleges.

"Given that these colleges are willing to bend the rules and may not have good facilities or faculties, the shortcomings of less qualified students won't be addressed," he said.

On Tuesday, the MMC urged MOHE to impose more stringent entry requirements for medical courses to arrest the deteriorating standards of foreign university graduates.

In response to *The Star's* articles on the medical graduates' glut and poor performance of graduates from some medical schools abroad, MMC president Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said minimal entry qualifications for undergraduate courses were determined by the ministry.

Dr Noor Hisham, who is also Health director-general, said MMC monitored local university students without minimal qualifications but did not have the authority to regulate their entry into medical courses in universities abroad.

He said many foreign universities ignored the NOC for minimal entry qualifications and took in students with lower qualifications or circumvented the requirement by conducting their own foundation courses, many of which were found to be of dubious standards.