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Entry criteria not workable

IF THE Advanced Technology Training Centres (Adtec) strictly used the academic criteria for its student intake, many would fail to qualify. Almost 79% of 606 students' records showed that they met the general criteria – they passed the intake interview and were Malaysians aged between 18 and 25 – but did not have the required credits in Maths and Additional Maths, Science or Physics, and failed English in the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) exam.

Adtec told the Auditor-General's department that if the centres based their intake of trainees on the academic criteria, their numbers would be far from the intended target. Adtec was set up in 2001 under the Human Resources Ministry to conduct skills training programmes to produce highly skilled workers. The government spent RM348mil under the 7th Malaysia Plan to set up the four centres in Selangor, Johor, Kedah and Malacca.

Between 2003 and last year, 2,916 trainees graduated with diplomas specialising in sectors like electronics, manufacturing, power, machinery, telecommunication, air-conditioning and information technology. The cost of managing the centres, including the training programmes, facilities and teaching aids for the two years, was RM76.30mil, and each course was for a two- to three-year period.

The Auditor-General's report said, generally, the Adtec programmes were carried out well, but there was a critical shortage of lecturers. The report also said new lecturers should be sent for a course on teaching techniques and study to better equip themselves.

While generally the lecture halls in all four of the Adtec were satisfactory, four lecture rooms at the Adtec in Malacca could not be used because there were not enough chairs and tables, and some were used as store room for damaged furniture. The Auditor-General's report also noted that the seminar room at the Shah Alam Adtec was often used for other activities such as the staff monthly meeting, which caused a number of lectures to be postponed as a result.

Between 2003 and 2005, forth-eight lectures had to be postponed, which caused problems to the lecturers and trainees.