

SIWES: ITF TO SANCTION ERRING TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

The Industrial Training Fund (ITF) will henceforth sanction tertiary institutions that fail to comply with guidelines of the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES), especially as they relate to duration of attachment and breaches of carrying capacity approved by SIWES supervisory agencies.

The sanctions will include non-payment of allowances of the institutions and students, placement of institutions on probation for one year and de-accreditation of affected courses and programmes by the supervisory agencies amongst others.

Arising from the recently concluded 13th National SIWES Biennial conference organized by the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) at the Musa Shehu Yar'Adua Centre, Abuja, the conference also urged the ITF, Employers of Labour, and SIWES coordinators to ensure proper placement of students on attachment and enjoined employers of labour to actively participate in SIWES orientation seminars for better understanding of the guidelines of the Scheme.

On the issues of supervision of students on attachment and better management of the Scheme, the conference resolved that all stakeholders responsible for supervision of students on attachment-the ITF, Institutions and Industry based supervisors-must show evidence of such supervision just as it directed that all tertiary institutions must have functional SIWES Units with career SIWES Directors heading the Unit.

Similarly, it resolved that SIWES Coordinators be signatories to SIWES accounts and urged supervisory agencies-National Universities Commission, NUC, National Board for Technical Education, NBTE and National Commission for Colleges of Education, NCCE- to include establishment of SIWES units as a criteria for accreditation.

While emphasizing the need to benchmark SIWES with similar programmes in other countries in order to ensure continuous improvement of the Scheme, the conference also resolved that supervisory agencies should develop job specification documents for approved courses to guide industry-based supervisors and students on attachment and appealed to employers of labour to give priority to students from Engineering, Technical and Science backgrounds.

It frowned at demands for money by some companies before accepting students on attachment noting that the scheme was beneficial to both the students and employers.

The 2-day Conference was attended by the Hon. Minister of State for Industry Trade and Investment, Hajia Aisha Abubakar, the Minister of Labour, Sen. Chris Ngige, the Director-General, Sir Joseph Ari and other stakeholders drawn from the supervising agencies, the academia and the Organized Private Sector (OPS).

