

SIT to offer 300 more places, 5 new degrees

School for polytechnic grads raises total intake to 1,300; new overseas partners for degrees highly ranked

Sandra Davie
Senior Writer

The Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT), which offers degree programmes for polytechnic graduates, will have 300 more places this year, raising its total intake to 1,300.

Students can also look forward to five new degree programmes, bringing the total number of bachelor's

degree programmes offered by SIT to 21.

The new degrees include early childhood education from Wheelock College in Boston, two design courses on interior design and communication design from the Glasgow School of Art, and two aeronautical degree programmes from the University of Glasgow.

Similar to SIT's seven current partners, the new partners are highly ranked.

The University of Glasgow belongs to the prestigious Russell Group of leading British research universities and counts among its staff six Nobel laureates.

The Glasgow School of Art is recognised as one of Europe's leading institutions for creative education and research in fine art, design and architecture, while Wheelock College is sought after by those aiming to become



ST PHOTO: DESMOND LIM

SIT differs from the other three universities by offering niche degrees through tie-ups with overseas institutions.

preschool educators.

SIT said it is also looking into offering a new degree course in physiotherapy, but details on the programme, including the partner institution, are still being finalised.

SIT president Tan Chin Tiong said that as the school ramps up the number of places, it is committed to expanding its offerings in partnership with reputable overseas universities that are leaders in their fields of specialisation.

"We have been selective in our choice of partner institutions to ensure that they are among the best. This will give SIT graduates an edge in the job market," he said.

SIT, which started running programmes for its first intake in 2010, was set up to offer polytechnic graduates an additional route to a university degree.

The institute, which runs the courses on its decentralised campuses in the polytechnics, differs from the other three publicly funded universities by offering niche degrees through tie-ups with overseas institutions such as the Culinary Institute of America and the DigiPen Institute of Technology.

The latter is dubbed the Harvard for video game designers and animators.

Another draw is that SIT undergraduates are given advanced standing, which allows them to complete their degrees in two years.

The Government pays 75 per cent of the tuition fee, so students would need to pay only between \$20,000 and \$27,000 over two years, depending on the course.

Professor Tan said the record number of applications last year signals that the institute is on the right path with its model of university education.

A record 4,000 polytechnic diploma-holders vied for the 1,000 places last year in 17 courses ranging from naval architecture to culinary arts management.

Many chose SIT's seven partner institutions, including the University of Manchester, DigiPen Institute of Technology and the Technical University of Munich, over the National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University.

Prof Tan said that despite the higher grade point average of the freshmen, SIT and its partner institutions would continue to look for more in students than just academic grades. That is why all shortlisted candidates are interviewed.

"Besides grades, aptitude and interest count as well, especially for some of the niche degrees, including the new ones such as design or early childhood education," he said.

He added that the institute recently launched workshops to build soft skills in its students, in areas such as personal branding and networking as well as social etiquette and grooming.

Polytechnic upgraders eyeing the SIT route to a degree welcomed the addition of new degrees.

Temasek Polytechnic student Serene Lim, 19, who works as a freelance designer, said she had decided to put her dream of pursuing a design degree on hold because of the high costs of going overseas.

"I am excited that the Glasgow School of Art is coming here. It is one of the best. And if it is offered through SIT, the fees will be affordable."

SIT is expected to eventually take in about 2,000 students a year.

✉ sandra@sph.com.sg

PROGRAMMES OFFERED

New SIT degrees from this year

■ **Glasgow School of Art:** Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Communication Design, Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Interior Design

■ **Wheelock College:** Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Educational Studies and Leadership

■ **University of Glasgow:** Bachelor of Engineering with Honours in Aeronautical Engineering, Bachelor of Engineering with Honours in Aerospace Systems

Current courses

■ **Technical University of Munich:** Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering and Information Technology, Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering

■ **DigiPen Institute of Technology:** Bachelor of Science in Real-Time Interactive Simulation, Bachelor of Science in Game Design, Bachelor of Fine Arts in Digital Art and Animation, Bachelor of Arts in Game Design

■ **Culinary Institute of America:** Bachelor of Professional Studies in Culinary Arts Management

■ **University of Nevada, Las Vegas:** Bachelor of Science in Hotel Administration

■ **University of Glasgow:** Bachelor of Engineering with Honours in Mechanical Design Engineering, Bachelor of Engineering with Honours in Mechatronics

■ **University of Manchester:** Bachelor of Science with Honours in Nursing Practice

■ **Newcastle University:** Bachelor of Engineering with Honours in Chemical Engineering, Bachelor of Engineering with Honours in Marine Engineering, Bachelor of Engineering with Honours in Naval Architecture, Bachelor of Engineering with Honours in Offshore Engineering, Bachelor of Engineering with Honours in Mechanical Design and Manufacturing Engineering, Bachelor of Science with Honours in Food and Human Nutrition



Publication: The Straits Times
Date: 8 January 2012
Headline: SIT to offer 300 more places, 5 new degrees