Govt may use SIT as full-fledged university

SINGAPORE: The government may use the Singapore Institute of Technology as a full-fledged university and expand its campus plans beyond 2012.

Speaking to reporters after a closed-door football service, Minister of State for Education Lawrence Wong said this is one area the Committee on University Education (CUE) is looking into.

The Education Ministry is considering expanding the technology sector released its preliminary findings two weeks ago, and Tuesday’s budget is a key way to further hand over its areas.

One particular question is how to ensure the quality of education remains even as the government opens up more places to cater to greater demand and more diverse aspirations.

Participants also raised questions about instilling values and character development in university education.

Mr. Wong said that in the future, “What makes that sector, I think will be to truly develop it for us.”

“For example, would it include SIT offering its own degrees, basically SIT being transformed into a university in its own right, offering a very different kind of programme, a graduate-oriented, leading university in partnership with some of its key research partners as well. So those are ideas which we have to think about.”

Even as the sector transforms for more pathways to university, some forum participants, including a career counsellor and an academic professor, stressed that a university degree should not be viewed as an end point. They observed that the importance of thinking about the pathways to university is more than ever, given the nature of the job market.

If it’s just about university education alone, then this will be the bottleneck, and there will always be demands for more, but it cannot be that learning stops at a university degree,” said Mr. Wong.

Mr. Wong said this is why the government will continue to expand its Continuing Education and Training programmes, while looking into more ways to incentivise part-time degree courses.

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