

News

New degree programmes at polytechnic

Lower fees are a big draw

S'poreans pay less for Singapore Institute of Technology-Trinity College Dublin courses

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THE four Singaporean students were attracted to the programmes for many reasons. But one main draw was the lower cost compared to similar programmes overseas.

Miss Nani Adilla Zailani, 22, Miss Yap Li Wen, 23, Mr Barron Soh, 23, and Miss Jaclyn Chow, 24, are in the first batch of the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT)-Trinity College Dublin (TCD) undergraduate degree programmes in Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy.

The two programmes were introduced last month and are offered at Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP), the only polytechnic in Singapore that offers diploma courses in Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Diagnostic Radiography and Radiation Therapy.

SIT is an initiative by the Ministry of Education offering undergraduate degree programmes mainly to polytechnic graduates.

The 420-year-old Trinity College is recognised worldwide as Ireland's premier university. It is ranked 67th worldwide and 21st in Europe by the QS World University Rankings for 2012.

The first batch comprises 83 students – 32 occupational therapy diploma holders, and 51 physiotherapy diploma holders. Most of them are Singaporeans and all are NYP alumni.

The signing ceremony for the SIT-TCD degree programmes was held at NYP yesterday, and the Guest of Honour was Minister of Health Gan Kim Yong.

Others in attendance included Irish Ambassador to Singapore Joseph Hayes, Trinity College President and Provost Dr Patrick Prendergast, Trinity College Academic Director Associate Professor Juliette Hussey, SIT president Professor Tan Chin Tiong, SIT president-designate Professor Tan Thiam Soon, and NYP principal and chief executive officer Chan Lee Mun.

Graduates of NYP's Diploma in Physiotherapy and Diploma in Occupational Therapy programmes will be given advanced standing and will graduate with honours after one year under the degree programmes.

They will graduate with a Bachelor in Science (Physi-

otherapy) or Bachelor in Science (Occupational Therapy) respectively. The degrees awarded here are the same as those awarded on-campus in Ireland.

International students have to pay fees of \$45,000 for each programme, but Singaporean students pay only \$15,000, thanks to a Ministry of Education tuition grant.

Miss Nani Adilla, who is studying in the Bachelor in Science (Occupational Therapy) programme, said: "Besides the lower cost... studying in Singapore means no problems with accommodation and I will be near my family."

"The TCD programme will cater more to the Singapore context and teach more analytical skills, which will enable me to be a service provider to better meet Singapore's health-care needs."

Miss Yap, who is in the same programme, said: "The degree programme has the potential to add to our clinical skills, and enables us to explore more avenues in the (physiotherapy) profession."

Mr Soh, who is studying in the Bachelor in Science (Physiotherapy) programme, said: "Besides the lower cost, the TCD programme offers two modules, Critical Appraisal and Leadership and Management, which are not offered in programmes from other schools."

Miss Chow said the course is tailored for the local context.

"What I study complements what I studied in my NYP diploma programme," she said.



TNP PICTURE: ARUL JOHN

INTERNATIONAL: Students under the Singapore Institute of Technology-Trinity College Dublin's Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy programmes get a hands-on learning experience.

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