Universities, polys and ITE raise tuition fees

Hike for next academic year bigger for PRs, foreigners than for citizens

By AMELIA TENG

SINGAPORE’S four Government-funded universities, five polytechnics and the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) have raised their tuition fees for the next academic year.

As with previous hikes, the increase will be bigger for permanent residents and foreigners than for citizens.

At polytechnics and the ITE, the fee increase will affect new and existing students. At the universities, only the incoming freshmen will be affected. Tuition fees for male students who applied for places before their national service will be pegged to the date of their applications.

With the exception of 2006, university fees have been increasing almost yearly. The Government has said previously it would increase more frequent but smaller fee increases rather than a hefty hike every few years.

Singaporeans starting at the National University of Singapore (NUS) will pay up to 8 per cent more than their seniors depending on their course, while those at the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) will pay up to 2.5 per cent more. Those starting at Singapore Management University (SMU) and Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) will pay nearly 2 per cent more.

Fees have also gone up at the Singapore Institute of Technolo-

$150 to $500 more, depending on the course. It is also reviewing fees for three of its courses.

At the polytechnics, Singaporeans enrolled in diploma courses this year will pay up to 2.2 per cent more than last year, amounting to a total fee of $2,300 a year.

At ITE, Singaporeans studying a Nitec or Higher Nitec course will pay $10 more a year, bringing their course fees to $310 and $4402 respectively.

On its website, NUS said the average operating cost per student has risen globally and the increase will “defray higher costs of talent, supplies and services”.

NTU said the new fees “remain competitive internationally”.

An SMU spokesman said the fee increase was needed to maintain its small seminar-style classes of up to 50 students.

The institutions also stressed that financial help is available.

Chairman of the Government Parliamentary Committee (GPC) for Education Lim Boon Huan said universities must be transparent and justify their fee hikes.

Fellow GPC member Indrjit Singh said the increase is fair, as “it is actually less than rising cost of running the universities”.

Former Raffles Institution student Andrea Lok, 19, plans to study medicine at NUS this year. "Studying here is still less than half the price in the UK; in the UK can cost up to $60,000."

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