

# SIT becomes fifth autonomous university

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THE Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) was officially awarded the status of an autonomous university by the government yesterday, making it the Republic's fifth autonomous university after the National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore Management University and Singapore University of Technology and Design.

The SIT Act grants it the right to confer and award degrees, diplomas and certificates under its own name, giving SIT the same status and flexibility as the other four universities.

"This is an epochal moment for SIT and Singapore's higher education landscape," said SIT president Tan Thiam Soon. "SIT has steadily built a reputation for specialist, industry-focused education. The establishment of SIT as

Singapore's fifth autonomous university will enable us to better serve our students and ultimately contribute more to our economy and nation."

The move comes as the government aims to increase the number of publicly funded full-time university places.

By 2020, it hopes to have such degree places available to 40 per cent of each Primary One cohort, up from 27 per cent in 2012. SIT will contribute to that end by expanding its annual intake of students to 2,000 by next year.

As an autonomous university, SIT will offer its applied degree programmes in the areas of sustainable infrastructure engineering, information and communications technology and accountancy.

Education Minister Heng Swee Keat said during the second reading of the SIT Bill in Parliament that it was well-placed to

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pioneer the applied degree pathway. "The applied degree pathway can better meet the broad range of learning preferences, strengths and interests that our young Singaporeans possess. By fostering a strong nexus with industry, it will enable our graduates to seize new and diverse job opportunities. This enriched university landscape will meet the individual learning needs of our youths, and in so doing, help them fulfil their potential to the fullest," he said.