

Recent Developments in the Singapore Education Landscape

Integrated Programme

The Integrated Programme was first introduced in 2004 as a programme which provides an additional education choice for students who are clearly university-bound, and could do well in a less structured environment. The programme spans secondary and junior college education without intermediate national examinations at the end of secondary school. Hence, time previously used to prepare students for the GCE 'O' Level Examination would be used to engage them in broader learning experience. Selected schools could also offer alternative curricula and qualifications (eg International Baccalaureate and High School Diploma).

New Institute of Technical Education Certification System

The New Institute of Technical Education (ITE) Certification System was introduced in July 2002 to enable ITE to better respond to emerging industry manpower needs requiring certifications in the new knowledge-based economy, especially the service sector. The new certification system is applicable to post-secondary technical educational programmes as well as ITE skills training courses. It is more generic compared to its predecessor and defines ITE certifications by level of training while providing a more visible progression path for students and adult learners to maximise learning within the ITE certification framework.

Customised Vocational Programme

Schools that provide customised and vocational curriculum have been established since 2007. These schools provide enhanced vocational programmes that cater to a small group of students who have completed their primary education. Graduates of these schools can progress to further education at mainstream vocational/technical institutes, employment in the labour market or apprenticeship with industries.

Continuing Education and Training: Singapore Workforce Skills Qualification System

WSQ, or the Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications, is a national credentialing system that trains, develops, assesses and recognises adult workers for competencies to enhance their employability. Based on standards developed by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) and various industries, WSQ ensures workers acquire skills needed by employers at the workplace. With clear progression pathways, workers can also use WSQ to upgrade their skills and plan their careers. As training and assessment are competency-based, workers have to demonstrate the right competencies before they are certified. WSQ is accessible to all workers, as its entry criteria are skills and knowledge, not solely based on formal qualifications. The quality of WSQ is assured by WDA, from the

development of competency standards, accreditation of training providers to the award of its qualifications.