

INTERACTIVE ONLINE MATERIALS TO SUPPORT CLASSROOM TEACHING

Digital learning key part of SkillsFuture modules by polys, universities

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SINGAPORE – Online learning will be a key feature of the bite-sized courses to be offered by the publicly-funded universities and polytechnics as part of the SkillsFuture initiatives to drive lifelong learning.

For example, interactive online learning materials and online discussions will support classroom teaching, the institutions said in response to queries from TODAY.

And these short courses — which can lead up to qualifications such as a diploma or degree — will be adapted from existing part-time offerings, they said. Lessons will be held in the evenings or at weekends to suit the needs of working adults.

Last month, the Government announced that 300 skills-based modules — ranging between 30 and 60 hours each — would be introduced under the SkillsFuture framework. Singaporeans aged 25 and above can use their SkillsFuture Credit — S\$500, for a start, from next year — to defray course fees. Individuals enrolling in a single course can also enjoy subsidies — 75 per cent for part-time degree courses and 85 per cent for post-diploma courses aimed at degree or diploma holders.

The Singapore University of Technology and Design said it would be rolling out courses in areas such as applied health sciences and sustainable urban solutions. These modules can lead to a certificate or a Master's degree, its spokesperson said. Classes will be held in small groups, but the university is also exploring the inclusion of online courses.

Nanyang Technological University will be offering specialist certificate programmes in naval architecture and marine engineering, as well as power and clean energy. The university will employ a “flipped classroom” approach for students to access learning materials online before engaging in face-to-face discussions with classmates once a week.

Other universities, such as the Singapore Institute of Technology and SIM University, are still firming up their course line-up, but they said online learning would also be a key consideration.

Among the polytechnics, Nanyang Polytechnic plans to hold classes in the areas of counselling and media production, and its modules will be designed for applicants with no prior industry knowledge.

Temasek Polytechnic will be offering courses in aerospace as well as information and communications technology, among others. Its spokesperson said that while course materials would be available online, students would need to attend at least 50 per cent of classroom lessons.

Ngee Ann Polytechnic will start with 20 modular courses in sectors such as engineering and life sciences. E-learning features such as online discussions and interactive online learning materials will comprise up to 20 to 30 per cent of each course.

Singapore Polytechnic will offer 18 courses in areas such as Web programming and digital forensics and investigation, while Republic Polytechnic will hold classes in sports science and career counselling.

These courses may be bite-sized, but they will still be held to the standards of full-time courses, the institutions said. Applicants' education and training background will be assessed on a case-by-case basis before admission, they added.