

# Taking the path less travelled

Mr Joseph Lim thrives in his undergraduate programme at SIT despite taking a longer academic route

**HAZEL TAN**

AT 27, Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) scholar Joseph Lim is quite a few years older than most of his peers.

But far from considering this a disadvantage, Mr Lim feels that his circuitous route to university has given him strength and a new purpose.

"When I was younger, I was rather playful and my grades suffered as a result," says Mr Lim, whose educational path took him through Nlevels, two different programmes at the Institute of Technical Education (ITE), followed by three years at Nanyang Polytechnic.

"Because of that, it has driven me to work even harder so that I can achieve my goals. My goal back then was very simple — get a diploma and with that, start looking for a job to gain experience before heading to university," he adds.

Hoping to make good on lost time, Mr Lim had initially wanted to join the workforce immediately after attaining his diploma in the field of Infocomm Technology and Communication.

"My thinking was that if I go straight to university after polytechnic, I would be 30 by the time I graduate, with no relevant work experience," he recalls.

But fate had other plans in store for him. Persuaded by his polytechnic lecturers, friends and family, Mr Lim finally applied for a place in university.

His good grades secured him places at two universities and he eventually chose SIT.

**Practice-oriented**

"After attending the course briefings in SIT, I found I preferred its degree programme because of how practice-oriented and industry-ready it is," explains Mr Lim,

who also feels that the young university is innovative and unique in its approach to higher education.

Its industry-relevant curriculum ties in well with an applied learning pedagogy that integrates work and study, he adds.

He also accepted SIT's offer of a scholarship, and is pleased to be able to represent his university as a scholar.

"I wanted to be more involved with the university as a whole and the bond-free SIT Scholarship provides that opportunity," he says.

The SIT Scholarship is aimed at developing future leaders in their respective fields and provides scholars with full tuition coverage for the duration of their degree courses.

Currently in the first of a four-year Bachelor of Engineering degree programme in Information and Communications (Information Security), Mr Lim is enjoying the learning process.

"Information security appeals to me with topics on secured software development, ethical hacking, digital forensics as well as security governance and management," he shares. His favourite module so far is programming fundamentals.

"This module teaches programming languages, Python and C. I enjoy this module because I love programming as a hobby and it enhances my thinking and visualising skills," he says.

**Room for creativity**

He gets to be creative and learn how to work around a problem. It gives him a great sense of satisfaction to see the programme he wrote run nicely.

He admits that the learning curve can be steep at times, but he is determined to do well.

"My first challenge would be that my understanding of concepts is a

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**MR JOSEPH LIM**  
undergraduate  
Singapore Institute of Technology

little weak compared to some of my peers," he adds.

But he has a close circle of encouraging friends, as well as lecturers, who are approachable and willing to help.

"I believe that staying optimistic and focused under pressure is the key to success," he says.

Mr Lim is setting his sights on a bright future, confident that SIT will groom him to become, in due time, a good candidate for a management position in IT.

"I hope that my skillsets built during my undergraduate years will eventually enable me to manage a small team of IT engineers overseeing projects in IT vendor corporations in future," he adds.

As for his career upon graduation, he is open to several possibilities.

"I enjoy being an IT engineer, setting up infrastructures and laying policies.

"However, I'm also a people-person and would love to meet people from different walks of life, so being a sales engineer would also fit," he says.



Mr Lim believes in remaining optimistic and focused even when under pressure. PHOTO: CHONG JUN LIANG