



Among the third cohort of Singapore Institute of Technology students who graduated yesterday were Mr Lee Poh Sein (left), 24, and Mr Bryan Yeo, 25. PHOTO: LIM YAOHUI FOR THE STRAITS TIMES

SIT urged to define identity in local varsity landscape

By AMELIA TENG

SINGAPORE'S fifth public university, the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT), must ensure its graduates have skills that the economy needs, said Education Minister Heng Swee Keat yesterday, as he noted its plans to offer cybersecurity and pharmaceutical engineering courses.

The SIT needs to define its own identity "in order to stand out in our university landscape", he said at the university's third cohort graduation ceremony at Suntec Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Mr Heng said it also needs to constantly innovate and come up with new degree programmes.

Set up in 2009, SIT was official-

ly established as Singapore's fifth public university in March. It offers 31 degree programmes, most of which are awarded by overseas schools like Glasgow University.

Polytechnic upgraders make up about 95 per cent of its intake of 1,500 students.

But from August, SIT will offer its own new degrees in infrastructure engineering, software engineering and accountancy.

About 400 students graduated from SIT's seven degree programmes this month, including the pioneer cohort of nearly 20 chemical engineering students.

The degrees were awarded by three overseas institutions: Technical University of Munich, DigiPen Institute of Technology and University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

About 120 students attended

yesterday's ceremony.

SIT president Tan Thiam Soon said at the event that this year's applications for its degrees had gone up by nearly 25 per cent, compared with a year before. The next two of its own new degree programmes will be in cyber security and pharmaceutical engineering, starting in August next year.

One of the graduates yesterday was Mr Bryan Yeo. The 25-year-old completed DigiPen's course in computer science in real-time interactive simulation and started work this month as a junior programmer at video game production firm Ubisoft Singapore.

He said: "I wasn't aware you could make money out of creating games. I didn't know this industry even existed in Singapore."

✉ ateng@sph.com.sg