



# PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Education  
SINGAPORE

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## MORE PATHWAYS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

1 More progression pathways will be added to the secondary education system to cater to students with different learning needs and interests. These include new progression choices for Normal (Academic) students, two specialised schools for Normal (Technical) students, and an extension of the Integrated Programme (IP) to more schools. Elaborating on these initiatives today, Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence, Dr Ng Eng Hen, explained that the new avenues further enhance the secondary education landscape. They facilitate the progression of students and enable them to achieve their potential.

### (I) NEW THROUGH-TRAIN PATHWAYS FOR NORMAL (ACADEMIC) STUDENTS

2 The majority of Normal (Academic) [N(A)] students<sup>1</sup> progress to the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) or the polytechnics. To provide more progression pathways for N(A) students, MOE will expand progression to the polytechnics through two new "through-train" pathways for students who do well in their Singapore-Cambridge GCE N-level examinations: **(i) a new one-year polytechnic Foundation Programme (FP)** and **(ii) a two-year Higher Nitec pathway**. The latter builds on the existing ITE Direct Entry Scheme (DES). These new pathways will cater to about 30% of each Secondary 4 N(A) cohort.

#### (A) One-year Polytechnic Foundation Programme

3 Students who have performed very well in the Singapore-Cambridge GCE N-level examinations (expected to be among the top 10% of the Secondary 4 N(A) cohort)<sup>2</sup> will have a new option of completing a one-year Foundation Programme (FP) at the polytechnics, instead of taking their O-Levels in

<sup>1</sup> N(A) students form about 30% of each cohort.

<sup>2</sup> After the GCE N-levels, students will be informed of whether they are eligible for the FP based on their N-level results.

Secondary 5. The FP will offer a practice-oriented curriculum taught by polytechnic faculty, using applied teaching methods. This will better prepare polytechnic-bound N(A) students for entry into relevant diploma courses.

4 For the first phase beginning in 2013, polytechnics will offer a total of about 1,000 FP places that would articulate into a range of diploma courses. Students will gain admission into specific diploma courses upon entry to the FP and continue on to these diplomas if they complete their FPs satisfactorily. The FP could be expanded over time to cover more diploma programmes and offer more places.

### **(B) Progression via *Higher Nitec***

5 A second option for students who have performed well in the N-level examinations and can benefit from a more hands-on and experiential preparation at the ITE is to take up a *Higher Nitec* programme at the ITE and subsequently be assured of either a first- or second-year place in a related polytechnic course, provided they achieve the qualifying GPA scores in their *Higher Nitec* programme.

6 This new option builds on the ITE Direct Entry Scheme (DES) which was introduced in 2008 as a pathway for students who do well in their N-Levels to progress to ITE, instead of taking their O-Levels in Secondary 5. Eligible<sup>3</sup> Secondary 4 N(A) students enrol in ITE in January after the N-Levels. They take a 10-week preparatory course before joining the O-Level intake in *Higher Nitec* courses in April. The first batch of 377 DES students in 2008 has done well, performing on par with O-Level *Higher Nitec* students.

7 The new option will be available to students admitted to the ITE DES, who meet eligibility criteria, from 2013. When ITE College Central opens in 2013, MOE will also double the number of places for the DES to 1,000. The new option is expected to cater to the next 20% of Secondary 4 N(A) students after the FP.

8 A diagram summarising the current and new pathways for N(A) students is at Annex A.

## **(II) NEW SPECIALISED SCHOOLS FOR NORMAL (TECHNICAL) STUDENTS**

9 Normal (Technical) [(N(T))] students form about 13% of each cohort. Over the years, MOE has made several enhancements to the N(T) course. These include revisions to the N(T) curriculum to focus more on practice-oriented learning; the introduction of Elective Modules to develop students' interests and strengths in various areas; and the designation of three secondary schools as

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<sup>3</sup> EL-Maths-B3  $\leq$  19 (EL-Maths-B3 refers to the aggregate score of English Language, Mathematics and best 3 subjects at the N-Level examinations)

N(T) Mark II schools offering new specialised subjects developed in partnership with the ITE. These enhancements have resulted in improved student learning experience and engagement.

10 Building on these enhancements and lessons drawn from the setting up of Northlight School and Assumption Pathway School, **MOE will set up two new specialised secondary schools as an additional option for N(T) students.** A whole-school approach will further enhance the quality of their learning experience. The new schools will admit students from 2013.

11 The specialised secondary schools will offer a four-year customised programme that will prepare students for subsequent studies in ITE or employment. In addition to the N(T) subjects, students will also be able to offer industry-focused modules in a range of areas, developed in conjunction with ITE and the industry. The schools will adopt a strong focus on interactive, practice-oriented and ICT-enabled teaching methods. To ensure a holistic education experience, there will be integrated modules on Aesthetics and Physical Education throughout their four years of learning. There will also be special programmes to address their socio-emotional needs, personal development, and the learning of life skills. To better support the teaching of industry-focused modules that entail the handling of equipment, the new schools will have a higher teacher-to-student ratio.

12 The schools will work in close partnership with ITE and industry partners to develop their curriculum and programmes, and to provide opportunities for attachments and internships for their upper secondary students.

13 The new schools will be led by experienced principals with the passion to work with the N(T) students. The schools will have a good mix of MOE teachers, seconded ITE lecturers and individuals with relevant industry experience.

### (III) EXPANSION OF THE INTEGRATED PROGRAMME

14 The Integrated Programme (IP) was introduced to provide clearly university-bound students with a broader educational experience. The initial batches of IP<sup>4</sup> graduates have performed well. The feedback from IP students is that they enjoy the learning environment which has allowed them to stretch their intellectual potential, while equipping them for self-directed learning. MOE will expand the IP so that more university-bound students will benefit from an enriched educational experience.

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<sup>4</sup> The IP was one of the key recommendations of the Junior College/Upper Secondary Education Review Committee (2002). It allows secondary students to proceed to Junior College without taking the 'O' levels, so that they can use the time freed up to engage in broader learning experiences.

15 **MOE will expand the Integrated Programme to seven more secondary schools**, namely, Victoria School, Cedar Girls' Secondary School, Methodist Girls' School, Catholic High School, CHIJ St. Nicholas Girls' School, Singapore Chinese Girls' School, and St. Joseph's Institution. These new IP schools will offer both IP and O-Level tracks, so that late-bloomers or those who find themselves better suited for the O-Level track can make lateral transfers. Temasek Junior College will also extend its four-year IP to a six-year programme beginning in Secondary 1. The expansion of the IP landscape, which will take effect from 2012 onwards, will allow our top talent to be nurtured in a more diverse group of schools.

16 Victoria School and Cedar Girls' Secondary School will partner Victoria Junior College, and Methodist Girls' School will partner Anglo-Chinese School (Independent) to offer the IP. St. Joseph's Institution will expand to offer a six-year programme leading to the International Baccalaureate.

17 IP students from Catholic High School, CHIJ St. Nicholas Girls' School and Singapore Chinese Girls' School will progress to a new Government junior college to be set up by 2017. Details on the new junior college will be provided later.

18 Students who wish to join the IP after some time in their secondary schools can also apply to these new IP schools at Secondary 3. There will continue to be sufficient access for non-IP students to enter the various junior colleges that will have IP student intakes.

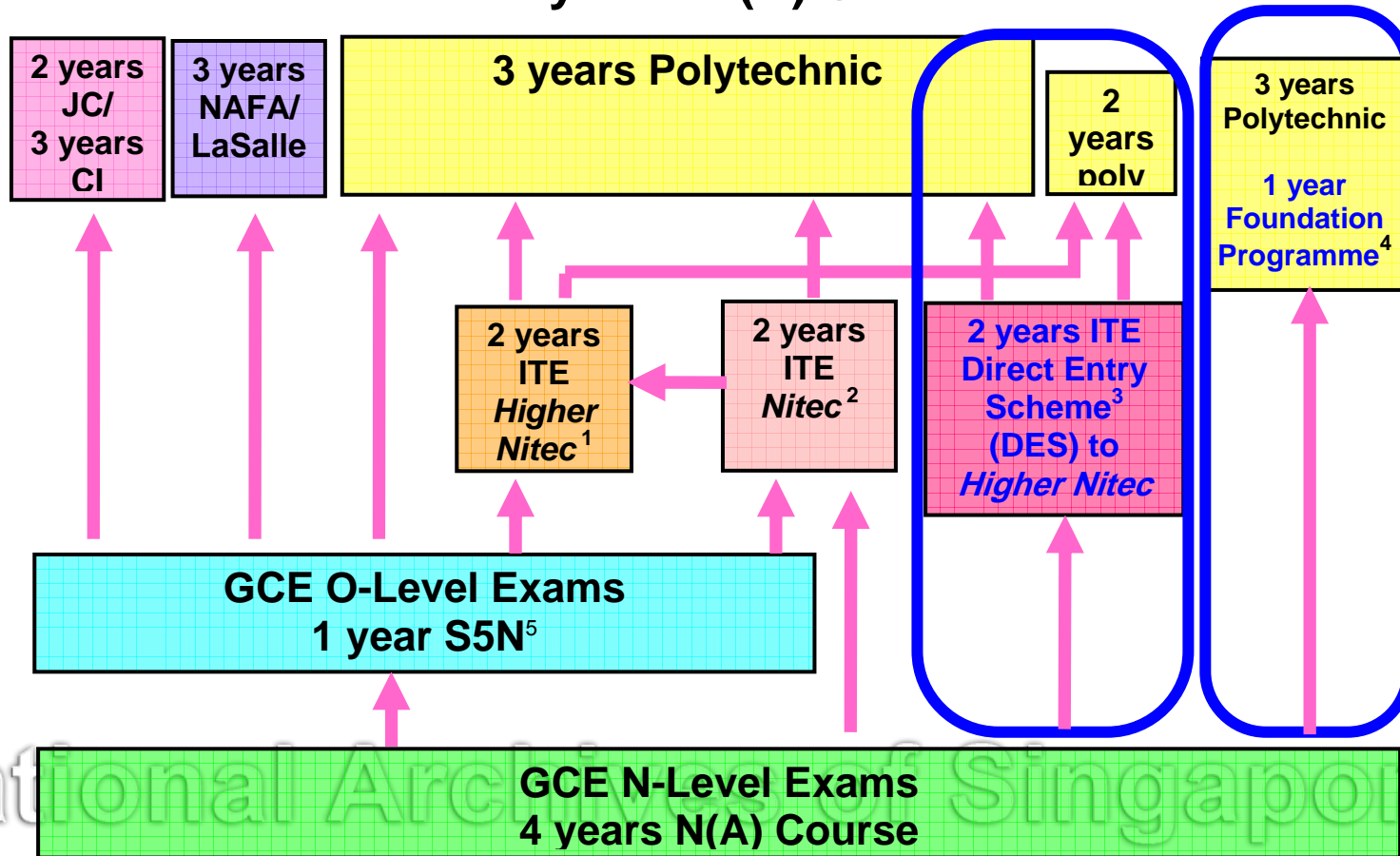
19 The details on the IP in the various schools are in [Annex B](#).

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## Pathways for N(A) Students



**Eligibility criteria:**

<sup>1</sup> ELR1B3 (O-Levels) [for Accounting & Business courses] / ELR2B2 (O-Levels) [for Science & Tech courses]

<sup>2</sup> Two O-Level passes / 3 N-Level passes

<sup>3</sup> EL ≤ 4, MA ≤ 4, ELMAB3 ≤ 19 (N-Levels) [for Engineering & ICT courses] / EL ≤ 3, MA ≤ 4, ELMAB3 ≤ 19 (N-Levels) [for Business & Services courses]

<sup>4</sup> Students who have performed well in the Singapore-Cambridge GCE N-level examinations – expected to be among the top 10 per cent of the Sec 4N(A) cohort. Additional requirements for specific subjects may be set, according to the demands of the courses.

<sup>5</sup> ELMAB3 ≤ 19 (N-Levels)

**Note:** Dark blue boxes on the right highlight the new through-train pathways.

**Expansion of the Integrated Programme to More Secondary Schools**

School	JC Partner	Sec 1 Start Date
Victoria School*	Victoria Junior College	2012
Cedar Girls' Secondary School*		2012
Catholic High School	New Government JC	2013
CHIJ St. Nicholas Girls' School		2013
Singapore Chinese Girls' School		2013
Methodist Girls' School	Anglo-Chinese School (Independent)	2013
St. Joseph's Institution	Extend upwards to Years 5-6	2013
Temasek Junior College	Extend downwards to Sec 1-2	2013

\* These schools will also identify around 50 students each from their Secondary 3 cohort in 2013 (i.e. Secondary 1 in 2011) for the IP.

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