

special Go Guide — Beyond Poly



In the case of MDIS, it seeks to provide a transformative education that nurtures future-ready graduates. PHOTO: MDIS

Private education institution MDIS works to equip students and graduates with skill to tackle new economy

Skilling up for innovative workplace

As disruptive technologies have changed our workplace and economy, jobs of today have to come with new skills that did not exist 10 years ago.

The new innovation-led economy is leading to the creation of new jobs with these new skills, and the elimination or re-design of jobs that used to thrive on more traditional skill sets.

Ms Jesline Wong, senior director of communications at Management Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS), said: "Those entering the workforce now need new skills to thrive in the fast-changing landscape while existing workers may have to retool their skill sets to stay relevant. Today's workers need to be skilled in communication, teamwork and leadership to navigate change and disruption."

She said skills-based industries that will have high demand for skilled workers now and in the future, include food and beverage, creative, information technology, healthcare/social services, logistics, and (precision) engineering industries.

The changing workplace could herald in increasing part-time employment, continual

"Today's workers also need to be skilled in communication, teamwork and leadership to navigate change and disruption."

— Ms Jesline Wong, senior director of communications at Management Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS)

training and upgrading of skills, more small business start-ups, increased opportunities for self-employment, and more.

Ms Wong said ways for graduates to future-proof their careers include developing a range of transferable skills, pursuing higher education with a focus on developing skills, and building and maintaining a good professional and social network.

She said: "Some of the new and emergent skills polytechnic graduates would need... include creativity and problem-solving skills, which help to cope with and tackle scenarios such as... borderless business and collaborations, and remote working, and flexibility and adaptability, to manage the increasing complexity of work requirements."

"There are also digital skills to utilise information and data,

as well as create and share content, and people management skills... to help manage an increasingly diverse, and even remote or virtual workforce."

As a recognition of this trend, many private education institutions (PEIs) in Singapore — including MDIS — are offering programmes designed to help mature students and working professionals succeed in the new disruptive workplace.

The schools have tweaked the curricula of traditional courses, such as finance and business, or created new ones.

In the case of MDIS, it seeks to provide a transformative education that nurtures future-ready graduates. It does so by building and enhancing their mastery of skills through curricula that emphasises vocational skills training to equip them with rel-

evant knowledge and skills.

The PEI has recently launched 27 new courses to date, ranging from certificate level to bachelor's with emphasis on vocational skills training.

Between 10 per cent and 20 per cent of the new courses rolled out between this year and 2019 will be eligible for SkillsFuture credits.

The PEI also aims to develop 100 new collaborative partnerships with industry partners to provide our students with a platform to build and enhance industry-relevant skills.

Ms Wong said: "The programmes and curricula are regularly reviewed and updated for industry relevance."

"To equip our graduates with the skills needed to navigate the new economy, MDIS will be rolling out new vocational (skills-based) programmes in nine key academic areas, namely food and beverage, health and safety, healthcare, management/support, leadership and people management, health/life sciences, fashion, engineering, information technology, nursing, and media and communications.

"The choices of these fields

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are aligned to support the Government in tackling challenges of a slowing economy, technological disruptions, and greying population that the country will face in the next 50 years.

"MDIS trains students and graduates to adopt a... flexible way of thinking and gain industry experience through its Experience Workshops."

These workshops help enhance critical and soft skills, and include industry talks, internships and overseas immersion programmes.

The Career Assistance Unit at MDIS also helps train and equip students and graduates with knowledge and skills to increase their chances of securing jobs.

Former logistics supervisor Cameron Liew, 34, wants to upgrade himself with skills more relevant to the new economy.

He said: "When I have skills in computer programming and management, I will be prepared in case my job is eliminated or my job scope changes to accommodate economic needs."

"Private schools such as MDIS have courses suited for these changes, so I am considering enrolling there for part-time courses."