

SIM's international school ready for September opening

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THE Singapore Institute of Management (SIM), one of the most established private education providers here, will soon open its doors to its first international school for teenagers from the region and beyond.

The SIM International Academy, as it is called, is already accepting applications for its inaugural cohort of up to 90 students this September.

It will offer secondary-level education – the curriculum is focused on applied learning in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (Stem) and the social sciences – that leads to an International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), the equivalent of the O-Levels.

The hope is that many of these students will continue their studies at SIM Global Education (SIM GE) after they graduate from the academy.

One confirmed route is for them to take a management foundation studies programme, move on to earn a diploma, and finally pursue a degree with one of SIM GE's 10 overseas university partners.

Besides the IGCSE curriculum, there are also plans to provide a two-year Cambridge International A-Level programme as another pathway for students to consider.

The academy is the latest member of the SIM Group. The other entities are SIM GE, SIM Professional Development and Platform E, which is SIM's entrepreneurship eco-system to nurture start-ups in Singapore.

Heading the new international school is Balamurugan Krishnasamy, an education veteran who was formerly the principal of Pasir Ris Crest Secondary and Tampines Secondary.

With SIM GE having built up a strong reputation among foreign students in the region over the years, he said the "next logical step" would be to bring these students in to the SIM family at a younger age.

The international school's students will each pay S\$25,000 a year in tuition fees. Classes will be taught at SIM's Clementi Road campus, and the target is to reach a steady state of about 600 students.

The academy is busy promoting itself in key markets in South-east Asia such as Vietnam and Indonesia, as

well as further afield in China and South Korea. "We hope to be able to develop in these young Asians a social enterprise mindset, giving them opportunities to interact with peers from other cultures at a younger age," said Mr Balamurugan in a recent interview with *The Business Times*. "In time to come, they can become the business community of the future that is able to work across cultures, contribute meaningfully and make a positive impact to the Asian community."

He noted that foreign system schools in Singapore tend to be more western in its orientation. Asian parents, however, are increasingly on the lookout for an international curriculum with an Asian focus and this is where the SIM International Academy intends to operate as a vi-

able alternative. "By providing a good quality international education with a strong focus on the Asian perspective and values, we hope to develop in our students a love for Asia and help them appreciate Asia's vast potential," he said.

The "campus within a campus" concept is a plus as students and faculty can benefit from shared resources and facilities at SIM's Clementi campus. The academy will have dedicated classrooms, laboratories and a canteen. Retrofitting works are being done and will be completed by the end of July.

Mr Balamurugan said the academy has an arrangement with Nanyang Girls' Boarding School in Linden Drive – a roughly 3km drive away from the campus – to offer boarding facilities



"We hope to be able to develop in these young Asians a social enterprise mindset," says Mr Balamurugan. PHOTO: SIM

for both male and female students.

Non-Singapore citizens, whether they reside here or elsewhere, are eligible to apply for a place at SIM International Academy, and the deadline for the first cohort is July 15.