By SANDRA DAVIE
SENIOR EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT
SINGAPORE’S sixth university, SIM University (UniSIM), will open applications for its three full-time degree programmes next Wednesday. But to secure one of the 200 places in accountancy, marketing or finance, applicants will need more than good grades.

Students will be selected based on not just academic results, but also other attributes such as social consciousness and commitment and creativity.

UniSIM provost Tsui Kai Chong said about 400 applicants will be shortlisted for the four-step selection process. The courses are targeted at fresh A-level holders and polytechnic upgraders.

“Just going by the fact that some 5,000 enrol in SIM global education arm every year gives an indication of how popular business-related courses are,” he said.

“In the past, our admissions have been on a first-come, first-served basis. But this year, we want to take a more selective approach,” he said. The university now offers over 50 part-time degree courses, from counselling to aviation management, with a total enrolment of about 16,000 students, mostly working adults.

Separately, its global education arm runs degree programmes with overseas university partners, such as the University of London and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. Over 80 per cent of students are Singaporeans.

Full-time national serviceman Bertram Tan, 21, said that despite the rigorous selection process, he will still apply for the finance degree course.

“The polytechnic graduate, who holds a business diploma, said: “I like the fact that the degree route will be flexible and allow me to do more internships.”

Flexibility will be a defining feature of UniSIM’s new full-time courses when they start in August.

Four-step selection process for its three full-time degree courses

First interview: View a video online at home. Interview question will be related to video.

Group interview

Cognitive abilities test: 15-minute test assesses reasoning and problem-solving abilities.

Individual interviews before a panel.

More than good grades needed for a place at UniSIM

flexibility will be a key feature of the full-time courses. Students can crank a four-year course into three years by taking more modules during a semester, even via evening class.

And if students land a job during their course, they have the option of switching to part-time studies and taking up to six years to earn their degree.

The other emphasis will be on getting students “job-ready.” They will be required to do longer and more substantial work attachments, where they will take on job titles other employees typically hold.

UniSIM’s admissions will close in April, to accommodate A-level students who will be receiving their results in March.

Rigorous process

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Students will be selected based on not just academic results, but also other attributes such as social consciousness and commitment and creativity.

UniSIM provost Tsui Kai Chong said about 400 applicants will be shortlisted for the four-step selection process. First, the students will be asked to view a video online at home before turning up at UniSIM. They will then sit a 15-minute cognitive abilities test that assesses reasoning and problem-solving abilities. This will be followed by individual interviews before a panel.

The courses are targeted at fresh A-level holders and polytechnic upgraders. Professor Tsui admits that the selection, which will take half a day, is rigorous. But he said the university is serious about looking for students with the five Cs—commitment, consciousness, cognition, creativity and communication.

Although UniSIM is offering full-time degree programmes for the first time, he expects a good number of applications to come in as the three courses are popular with those heading to university.

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