



## Ahead with German engineering

by Melody Tan

Unlike many of his peers, Lee Poh Sein, 22, had no intention of furthering his studies after receiving a Diploma in Biomedical Science from Singapore Polytechnic (SP) in 2009.

During his National Service (NS), Poh Sein decided to begin working as soon as possible. The eldest child wanted to help his parents support his brother and sister, both of whom are still in school.

"Local universities require three to four years to complete a degree, which is too long," he explained. "For the sake of my family, I also wanted to switch to a field where I would have a chance of a higher income. One of my NS friends told me that he had studied chemical engineering, and I decided to take it up as well.

"Around the same time, I saw an advertisement for the Singapore Institute of Technology, which listed the German Institute of Science and Technology (TUM Asia) as one of the educational institutions offering a chemical engineering degree."

Poh Sein was drawn to the fact that TUM Asia's full-time Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering is only two-and-a-half years long. It also promised high academic standards and industry readiness, being awarded by the Technical University of Munich (TUM), one of

the top universities in Germany. He enrolled in the programme last year.

"My degree programme prepares students well for the workplace by instilling in us good academic knowledge, practical skills and an independent attitude, as our lecturers make us search for answers to our own questions instead of providing them directly."

In his last semester before graduation in 2014, Poh Sein will fly to Munich to study on TUM's home campus for four to six weeks. There, he will work in the laboratories alongside doctorate-level students and write his bachelor thesis. This is a compulsory requirement of his programme.

Afterwards, he hopes to get a job in a prominent multinational corporation such as ExxonMobil, or take up a Masters degree from TUM to enhance his marketability.

"When I go out to work, I believe my degree will be highly recognised in the industry, as Germany's achievements in the sciences have always been remarkable, especially in the areas of physics and chemistry. The inventor of the diesel engine, Rudolf Diesel, studied at TUM in the late 1800s. If you want to get an engineering degree, Germany is the best choice."

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