

### Guide to Further Education After A-Levels

Dear students,

Congratulations on completing your A-Level journey! We hope that this handout provides you with some essential information as you plan for your next step forward. We wish you all the best in your future endeavours!

If your concern is ...	Refer to
What can I do to increase my chances of entering university?	Section A – Educational Pathways After A-Levels
I do not think I am able to enter the 6 local AUs. What are the alternatives to full-time degree programmes?	Section A – Educational Pathways After A-Levels
I failed General Paper. Can I still get a place in a local AU?	Section B – General Paper Requirement for Admission to Local AUs
Should I retake my A-Levels?	Section C – Factors to Consider Before Applying to Retake A-Levels
I am unsure which university/course to choose.	Section D – Factors to Consider When Selecting a University/Course
I am considering private education.	Section E – Private Education
Who can I speak to for advice?  I need some support on crafting impactful personal statements, quick-takes, resumes and interviews.	Section F – ECG Support
What are some resources I can refer to?	Section G - MySkillsFuture Student Portal  Section H – University Admissions Exercise  Section I – What else can I do while serving NS/waiting for the universities to reply?

## **Section A – Educational Pathways After A-Levels**

### **What can I do to increase my chances of entering university?**

#### **Step 1: Apply to all 6 local Autonomous Universities**

- Apply even if you are not confident of meeting the previous year's IGP (The cut-off varies each year).
- Ensure you have a combination of courses that include:
  - desired and 'safe' courses
  - a different course within the same university
  - a similar course at different universities
- Note that ranking of choices matters. For instance, NUS offers first choice bonus points scheme for A-Level graduates. You may refer to <https://www.nus.edu.sg/oam/undergraduate-programmes/1st-Choice> for more information.

#### **Step 2: Opt-in for Aptitude Based Admissions (ABA) for NTU, NUS, SIT, SMU, SUTD and SUSS's already practising ABA.**

*"MOE will further expand aptitude-based admission, which relies less on academic grades as a starting point when assessing students and more on other yardsticks of merit, so that a fuller range of an individual's aptitude and attributes can be taken into account. NUS, NTU, and SMU already do this today for a range of courses, to identify students who possess the relevant skills, competencies, and passion to do well in their courses."*

*To better recognise an individual's academic and non-academic aptitudes and strengths holistically alongside general academic grades, NUS, NTU and SMU will no longer offer the standalone Discretionary Admissions scheme from the AY2020 admissions exercise, and will instead expand their adoption of aptitude-based assessment in their admissions practices. This will take effect from the AY2020 admissions exercise. The remaining three AUs (SUTD, SIT and SUSS) already practice aptitude-based admission for all their students."*



<https://www.moe.gov.sg/news/press-releases/20200130-enhancing-pathways-in-the-higher-education-landscape-to-support-diverse-interests-and-aptitudes#:~:text=MOE%20will%20further%20expand%20aptitude,can%20be%20taken%20into%20account>

### **What are the alternatives to full-time degree programmes?**

#### **1: Consider taking up part-time degree programmes at SUSS**

Features of part-time degree programmes at SUSS:

- Lower admission criteria (two GCE A-Level passes).
- Similar to full-time courses in most aspects (core modules, fees, scholarships, financial assistance).
- 2 intakes a year.
- Course mates will include a wider mix of people.
- Possibility of graduating at the same time as compared to peers who are pursuing full-time courses.

Retrieved from SUSS's website (8 Feb 2024)

## Admission Criteria

You must be a Singapore citizen, permanent resident or a resident in Singapore. In addition, you will need to meet these minimum requirements:

- GCE 'A' Level with two passes (prior to 2006) or two H2 passes (from 2006); or local Polytechnic Diploma; or International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma; or NUS High School Diploma; or equivalent<sup>1</sup>
- Two years of full-time work experience, or currently employed on a full-time basis<sup>2</sup>
- At least 21 years old.

<sup>1</sup> Acceptable qualifications: Diploma from LASALLE College of the Arts; Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA); National Institute of Education; and ITE Work-Study Diploma. Other Diploma qualifications (e.g., Advanced Diploma, Specialist Diploma, Conversion Diploma) plus an acceptable SAT or ACT (with Writing) score may be considered for admission on a case-by-case basis. For SAT, we require a minimum total score of 1,000 with at least 500 each for Reading and Math. You may submit your SAT scores directly to SUSS (recommended) or through SAT. Our institution code for SAT is 7382. For more information on SAT, please visit <http://sat.collegeboard.org/home>. For ACT, a minimum composite score of 24 with at least 7 for Writing is required. For more information on ACT, please visit <http://www.act.org/>. All scores must be submitted to SUSS by 31 March (for July intake) or 30 September (for January intake) of the admission year.

Scores must be obtained within the last 5 years up to the programme application year for consideration. Applicants without the SAT or ACT score may be given a provisional offer to take courses under the SUSS Continuing Education and Training scheme on a case-by-case basis. They may then progress to the undergraduate programme if conditions of the provisional offer are met.

<sup>2</sup> Applicants who have fully completed National Service will be deemed to have fulfilled the work experience criterion. Part-time employment will not be considered as full-time work experience, if the employee works less than 35 hours a week under a service contract with an employer. Applicants who are self-employed may refer to [Guidelines for Self-Employment Supporting Documents](#).

Some programmes may have additional requirements. Please refer to the individual programme pages for details.

## Exemption from Age and Work Experience Criteria

You can be exempted from the age and work experience eligibility criteria if you are in one of the following categories:

- i. Applicant sponsored by his/her company for the [part-time undergraduate degree programme](#). Applicant must submit sponsorship letter from his/her company as required supporting document; OR
- ii. Applicant who is currently employed in a job role/sector related to the part-time undergraduate degree programme. Applicant must submit supporting document detailing his/her job description from the company illustrating relevance of current role to the programme he/she is applying for.

Notwithstanding these exemptions, National Service (NS)-liable applicants must have fully discharged their full-time NS liability before they can be admitted into SUSS.

Supporting document(s) must be submitted, together with the admission application, for assessment. SUSS reserves the right to determine if exemption would be granted and the University's decision will be final and binding.

## 2: Consider taking up a diploma at local polytechnics

- Since Academic Year (AY) 2019, eligible A-Level graduates can be admitted to polytechnics at the start of Year 1 Semester 2 in October, for around 110 diploma courses. The **reduction of one semester** allows A-Level graduates to complete their polytechnic studies **to 2.5 years**, from the usual 3 years.
- Starting Academic Year 2020, eligible A-Level graduates can be admitted directly to Semester 2 in October for 56 polytechnic courses, and now be **exempted from up to two semesters** of polytechnic studies. A-Level graduates will be able to enter polytechnic in the same year of A-Level results release and **obtain a polytechnic diploma in 2 years**, rather than 3 years. The polytechnics will continue to offer courses with one semester of module exemptions. In all, the polytechnics will offer **120 polytechnic courses** with some form of exemptions (one semester or two semesters of module exemptions).

Do check the websites of each polytechnic to find out which courses allow for a shortened duration for A-level graduates to obtain their diploma.

**3: Consider the Arts Institutions such as University of the Arts, LASALLE, NAFA as well similar art and design related courses at the 5 Polytechnics:**

All five polytechnics as well as the new University of the Arts (UAS), LASALLE and NAFA offer arts and design related diploma and degree programmes for A-Level holders. The closing dates for applications vary. Please refer to their individual websites for accurate information about programmes, entry requirements, fees and application deadlines.

Do bear in mind courses related to art and design are more suitable for those who have an aptitude in these areas. As part of their admission process, these Arts Institutions usually require applicants to submit a portfolio of their works.

---

---

**Section B – General Paper Requirement for Admission to Local AUs**

Students can apply to local AUs even if he/she failed General Paper. For example, from SMU website:

**Can I gain admission if I fail the General Paper?** -

If you did not pass your GP, you can still apply. We will take into consideration your performance in the other A-Level subjects on a competitive and selective basis.

Source: <https://admissions.smu.edu.sg/faqs/admissions-and-applications>

Do check the websites of the respective AUs to verify this information.

---

---

**Section C – Factors to Consider Before Applying to Retake A-Levels**

If you are thinking of retaking your A-Levels, consider the following questions:

- Have I considered a part-time degree at SUSS?
- Have I considered a polytechnic diploma with a possible shorter duration (and subsequent entry into the local AUs)?
- Have I considered the Arts Institutions?
- Have I sought insights from parents, ECG counsellors, teachers, and/or school counsellors?
- Have I checked with the school on my eligibility to redo PU3 @ MI? What are my alternatives if I am not eligible to stay at MI?
- Have I considered Private Education?
- If your situation permits, consider re-sitting for the H1 paper instead of 3H2 + GP. It is good to have a chat with your teachers or ECG counsellor on this (only possible for students who sat for the A-level exams before 2025)
- What must I do differently to improve my performance?
- Concurrently, are you doing the following:
  - Have I applied to all 6 local AUs, making full use of the options available?
  - Have I appealed to all the AUs, all the way till the start of the academic year?

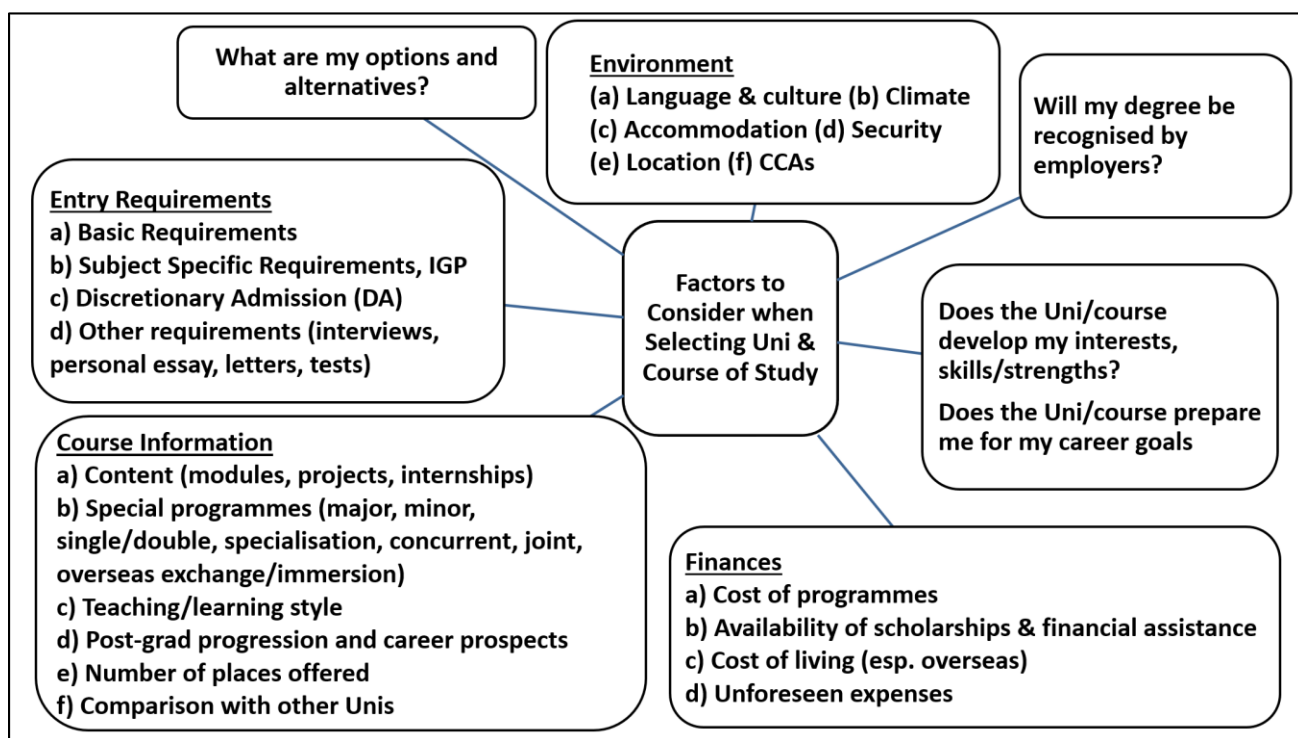
Do note that for admissions to local AUs, **3 H2 subjects and GP must be taken in one sitting**. For example, from NUS website:

c. For admission consideration, we will consider your grades for GP/KI and 3 H2 subjects attained at one *sitting* of the A-level examination. Only the H1 content-based subject, H1 Project Work (PW) and H1 Mother-Tongue Language (MTL) subject can be of a different *sitting* (if this is presented, we will use the grades of these 3 H1 subjects attained at the earlier A-level examination). If you decide to retake one or all of the H1 content-based subjects, H1 PW and H1 MTL, the best H1 content-based subject, H1 PW and H1 MTL grade will be taken into consideration for university admission.

[https://www.askadmissions.nus.edu.sg/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/12/kw/combining%20results%20sitting](https://www.askadmissions.nus.edu.sg/app/answers/detail/a_id/12/kw/combining%20results%20sitting)

Do check the websites of the respective AUs for more information on combining results from separate sittings of the A-Level examination.

**Section D – Factors to Consider When Selecting a University/Course**



It will be good to seek additional insights from seniors, teachers, ECG counsellors, school counsellors and family members.

## Section E – Private Education

Before considering private education, do consider the following questions:

- Have I done the necessary things to increase my chances of entering local AUs? (see section A)
- Have I applied to all 6 local AUs, making full use of the options available?
- Have I appealed to all the AUs, all the way till the start of the academic year?
- Have I considered a part-time degree at SUSS?
- Have I considered a polytechnic diploma with a possible shorter duration (and subsequent entry into the local AUs)?
- Have I considered the Arts Institutions?
- Have I checked the cost of Private Education as well as the Financial Aid available? You may want to know that some programmes actually cost less than the AUs, and the same study loans offered at the AUs are available with Private Education. In addition, some degree programmes can be completed in a slightly shorter duration as compared to the 6 AUs.
- Have I sought insights from parents, ECG counsellors, teachers, and/or school counsellors?

For private education,

- Students should liaise directly with the respective institutions to find out more about the courses and assess the merit of pursuing a private education programme before deciding.
- Refer to the infographics below on some factors for consideration when deciding on private education options.
- For more information on whether to pursue private education, please refer to SkillsFuture’s website (<https://www.skillsfuture.gov.sg/pei>)

### Before You Consider Private Education: 3Rs For You To Think About (<https://www.skillsfuture.gov.sg/initiatives/students/3Rs>)



# 8 Things You Should Know Before You Enrol In A Private School

## School Registration

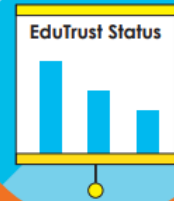


CPE Registered	
GH Academy	✓
JKL School	✓
MN Institute	✓
OPD Centre	✓
RST Academy	✓

Ensure the school is registered with CPE. Review the school's registration period, expiry date and its overall registration track record.

## EduTrust Certification Scheme

Is the school EduTrust-certified\*? Under the scheme, private schools are assessed for their performance in areas such as school management and provision of student support services.



*\*Schools are required to obtain EduTrust certification in order to offer external degree programmes*

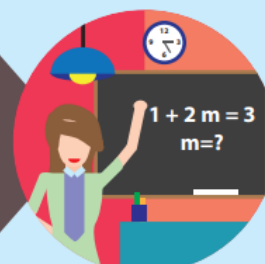
## Fee Protection



Ask if there is any course fee protection so that you will be able to recover unconsumed course fees should the school close down.

## Teachers

Check if the teachers are qualified to teach the course.





## Partner Institution



Research on the partner institution conferring the diploma or degree, and whether the qualification is recognised by the industry.

## School Premises

Head down to the campus ground to check the facilities and support services. Observe the study environment too.



## Beyond Course fees



Find out about the course syllabus and materials, graduation rates and employment prospects. Approach the alumni to find out what they think of the school.

## Internship

If industry attachment is included, find out which organisation you will be attached to, the period of attachment and the alternative arrangement should the attachment become unavailable. Verify the information with the organisation as well.







Visit the Committee for Private Education website [www.cpe.gov.sg](http://www.cpe.gov.sg) for more information

[https://www.skillsfuture.gov.sg/docs/default-source/initiatives/8-things\\_pdf.pdf](https://www.skillsfuture.gov.sg/docs/default-source/initiatives/8-things_pdf.pdf)



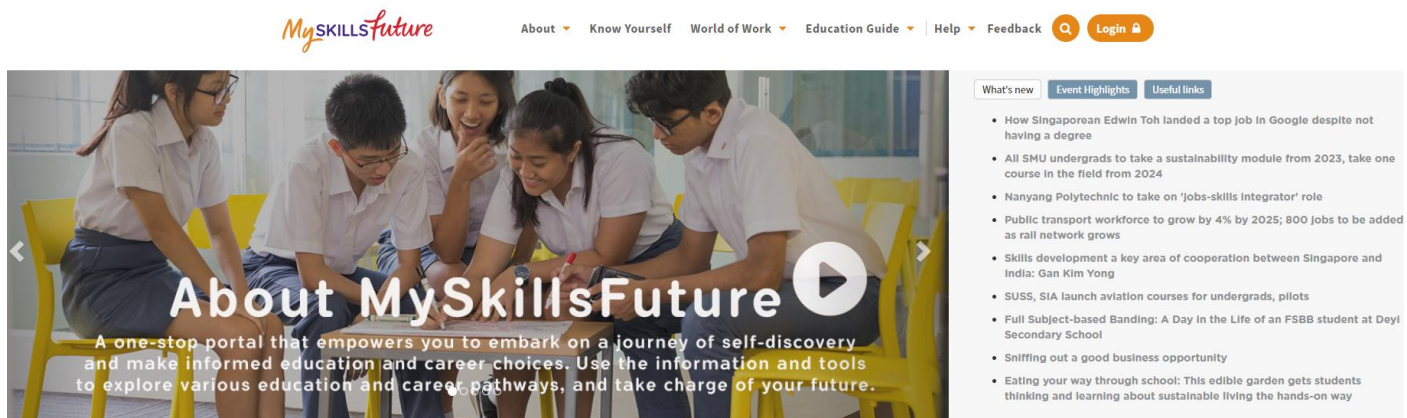
**Section F – ECG Support**

<p><b>Workshop by ECG Counsellor, Mr Tan Chia Boon</b></p> <p>This workshop will cover the basics of crafting impactful responses to personal statements, quick-takes or interviews needed during university admission.</p> <p><b>In addition, some quick tips:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use the <b>STAR method</b> to answer (longer) questions for both personal statements and interviews. Simply Google “STAR method to answer questions”.</li> <li>2. Use the <b>XYZ formula</b> for (shorter) responses for resumes and quick-takes. Simply Google “XYZ formula for resumes”.</li> </ol>	<p>Sign up here:</p>  <p><a href="https://go.gov.sg/miecg-post-a-levels-support">https://go.gov.sg/miecg-post-a-levels-support</a></p>
<p><b>ECG Counselling with Mr Tan Chia Boon</b></p> <p>Mr Tan will be available on the afternoon of results release at <b>LR1</b>.</p>	<p>Make an appointment here:</p>  <p><a href="https://wa.me/message/BDITLGDE6WWXO1">https://wa.me/message/BDITLGDE6WWXO1</a></p>
<p><b>ECG Counselling at ECG Centre @ MOE (Grange Road)</b></p> <p>ECG counselling service is also available at ECG Centre @ MOE (Grange Road). You can also contact them via email at <a href="mailto:MOE_ECG@moe.gov.sg">MOE_ECG@moe.gov.sg</a> or via their hotline at 6831 1420.</p>	<p>Make an appointment here:</p>  <p><a href="https://go.gov.sg/moe-ecg-centre">https://go.gov.sg/moe-ecg-centre</a></p>
<p><b>ECG Pamphlet from MOE Guidance Branch</b></p> <p>What is My Next Step Forward After My GCE A-Level?</p> <p><a href="https://www.myskillsfuture.gov.sg/content/dam/student/userguide/2022Whats%20Next%20Level.pdf">https://www.myskillsfuture.gov.sg/content/dam/student/userguide/2022Whats%20Next%20Level.pdf</a></p>	

## Section G – MySkillsFuture Student Portal

Log on to <https://www.myskillsfuture.gov.sg/content/student/en/preu.html>.

Your userID is your NRIC. If you have forgotten your password, you can reset your password by clicking on “Forgot your password?” on the login window. If you are still unable to do so, you can email [studentportal@myskillsfuture.sg](mailto:studentportal@myskillsfuture.sg) or call 6684 9020.



## Section H – University Admissions Exercise

### Application Platform

With the implementation of a flexible and differentiated university admissions system, applicants seeking admission to any one of the universities are required to complete **separate** online application forms which have been customised to each university's requirements. Applicants can access each university's application forms through their respective websites. See the following page for the relevant web addresses. Separate processing of applications by each university will allow students to receive competitive offers for admission from these universities. An application fee may be payable depending on the university. Please refer to the respective university websites for the application period.

### Minimum Requirements and New Courses

Please refer to the respective university website pages for information on minimum requirements and any new courses.

### Indicative Grade Profiles and Programme Places for A-Level Applicants

Eligibility for admission is an important factor when students decide on which programme to study. Applicants need to be aware that the admission criteria may vary from programme to programme. For the popular programmes with small intake, competition is expected to be keener with more stringent grade requirements.

Visit the respective local autonomous universities' websites for the most updated information.

### Tuition fees

All universities charge a cohort-based fee system. Students will pay the same amounts for their entire candidature. For annual tuition fees, please refer to the respective local autonomous universities' websites for the most updated information.

### Scholarships and Financial Aid

All the local autonomous universities offer a wide range of scholarships and financial aids for students to apply. Please refer to the respective local autonomous universities' websites for more information.

## Section I – What else can I do while serving NS and/or waiting for the universities to reply?

- Working (temporary, part-time, internships, attachments, serving NS etc.). It does not have to be directly related to the university course of interest. More importantly, it is about learning from the experience(s) and explaining how the experience(s) has helped you grow as a person, which in turn may improve your chances of securing a place in the university.
  - <https://www.mycareersfuture.gov.sg/>
  - Google “short term employment Singapore” or similar queries
- Volunteering:
  - <https://www.volunteer.gov.sg/>
  - <https://giving.sg>
  - <https://www.sg/sgcares>

- Attending courses, workshops, talks etc., (Google “free courses Singapore” or similar). Like working, it is about learning from the experience(s).
- Picking up new skills (e.g., a sport, a hobby, coding/programming, transferrable skills useful for work).
- If you intend to re-sit for the A-level exams, SAT, ACT or any other tests, this is a good time to do it.
- Consider applying for a course at polytechnics, SUSS part-time degree programmes or private education. If not, at least consider doing some research.
- Those serving NS, you have 2 additional opportunities to apply to the AUs. Make use of the time to improve your situation (refer to points mentioned above)
- Widening network of contacts while doing some of the above suggestions.
- Having a conversation with our ECG counsellor Mr. Tan <https://wa.me/message/BDITLGDE6WWXO1>.