

MEDIA RELEASE

Republic Polytechnic unveils more skills deepening opportunities for students at Open House 2016

Students to benefit from new collaborations with industry players through enhanced internships, a new applied science facility and a new design-centric engineering diploma programme

Singapore, 7 January 2016 – In line with the SkillsFuture movement, Republic Polytechnic (RP) today unveiled new initiatives to foster stronger engagement with industry partners and provide more opportunities for students to deepen skills mastery at its annual Open House (7 – 9 January 2016). These included a sector-wide enhanced internship programme, a new design-centric engineering diploma programme, launch of a food formulation laboratory, and other industry-centric efforts to better prepare students for their transition to the workforce.

New Biomedical Sciences Enhanced Internship for Polytechnics and Institute of Technical Education (ITE)

RP announced details of the Biomedical Sciences Enhanced Internship Programme for polytechnic and ITE students at an event graced by Associate Prof Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education & Ministry of Social and Family Development.

In consultation with over 40 industry players, the Biomedical Sciences Sector Coordinator Team, led by RP and comprising all five polytechnics and the ITE, has enhanced several aspects of internships for all polytechnic and ITE students in this field. Biomedical Sciences graduates support a wide range of industries such as pharmaceutical manufacturing, health care, and biomedical research companies and institutes.

From April 2016, the duration of an internship programme for ITE and polytechnic students enrolled in Biomedical Sciences courses will be raised to a **minimum of 16 weeks and up to 24 weeks**, from the current baseline of eight weeks. Specific internship learning outcomes will be defined based on respective job profiles and tasks will be assigned to students to achieve the desired learning objectives, allowing them to deepen their mastery of industry-relevant skills.

An internship guidebook for company supervisors and students will be developed jointly by the institutions to support companies and guide students in getting the most out of an internship. Industry mentors will also be assigned to each student, allowing them to benefit from the experience and insights of industry practitioners, who will support them in achieving the desired learning outcomes from the internship.

In addition, the five polytechnics and ITE also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology (IMCB) to promote education and development activities such as the enhanced internship framework. Students will also benefit from closer collaboration with a world-class research institute through research, development and innovation.

New food formulation laboratory

During the Open House, RP launched a new food formulation lab, called Nu3Lab, to support the growing needs of the food manufacturing industry in addressing consumer demands and introducing new and improved products with health benefits. The new facility focuses on functional food formulation and comprises three specialised units: a Food Formulation unit equipped to support applied research, teaching, training and workshop sessions for students and F&B industry collaborators; a Sensory Evaluation unit, which provides a controlled environment for sensory analysis of food products; and a dedicated Food Processing unit, which is a clean environment facility and will house equipment such as ice-cream machines and ultra-heat treatment (UHT) systems for food processing.

RP Nu3Lab's specialised capabilities will provide hands-on learning experience for RP's applied science students as well as strengthen the capabilities of industry players. RP will be working closely with the Health Promotion Board (HPB) to ensure that new formulations meet the guidelines to achieve the Healthier Choice Symbol requirement. RP will also collaborate with the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) to provide consultancy services for food labelling and advertising for the food industry. F&B companies can leverage the facility to carry out extensive sensory evaluation tests and formulate healthier products, through collaborative projects.

Commenting on the new initiatives, Mr. Yeo Li Pheow, Principal/CEO, Republic Polytechnic said, "The importance of staying close to the needs of the industry, continually fostering closer ties and regular engagement, remains paramount. This year's Open House will mark our deeper industry collaborations and partnerships, as we continue to raise the bar on the learning experiences we provide to every RP student, equipping them with enhanced skills and industry relevance to excel in their future careers."

Design-centric engineering diploma with business for innovation-driven economy

Through regular industry engagement, RP has also noted increased industry demand for engineering professionals with multi-disciplinary skills. In response, the polytechnic will be rolling out a new Diploma in Engineering Design with Business (DEDDB) commencing in the new academic year (April 2016). With a design and user-centric approach adopted by the programme, students will be able to develop innovative engineering solutions and cultivate an entrepreneurial mind-set to contribute to the growth of high-value engineering in Singapore. RP will collaborate with the Action Community for Entrepreneurship (ACE) and Design Business Chamber Singapore (DBCS) to roll out internships, joint projects, company visits and seminars to encourage students' entrepreneurial pursuits.

Improving internship learning outcomes through technology and new partnerships for RP's School of Infocomm

Students from RP's School of Infocomm can look forward to a new internship mobile application, known as "MyInternshipBuddy@WORK" or "MIB@WORK" for short, which will serve as a one-stop resource companion during their internships. Developed in collaboration with the Infocomm Development Authority (IDA), the application, currently in its pilot phase, will allow lecturers and company supervisors to contribute content for more structured and deeper learning at the workplace. With its customisable interface and features such as a pre-

internship resource section to acquaint students with workplace guidelines and protocols to a weekly log for students to record their learning experiences for closer supervision, the application functions as a handy guide for students to navigate their first steps into the working world.

At an industry forum organised by the School of Infocomm on the second day of the RP Open House 2016, seven Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with healthcare providers Changi General Hospital and Eastern Health Alliance, and established industry players Element14, Integrated Health Information Systems, SAS Institute, SEC Consult, Spirent Communications and Vital.ORG will be inked. Through a range of programmes made available with the new partnerships, including internships, scholarships, collaborative projects, curriculum development, and more, RP's infocomm students can benefit from more industry-relevant training opportunities.

To date, Republic Polytechnic has signed over 300 MoUs and agreements with its 2,000 industry partners across diverse sectors, paving the way for its students to acquire work-ready skillsets and competencies to join the workforce upon graduation.

- Ends -

Note to Editors

Factsheets for the following are available as appendices:

- Enhanced Internship Programme for the Biomedical Sciences sector
- RP Nu3Lab
- Diploma in Engineering Design with Business (DEDDB)
- MyInternshipBuddy@WORK mobile application

About Republic Polytechnic Open House 2016

Prospective students and parents can look forward to find out more about the various events and existing courses at RP Open House that is happening from 7-9 January 2016. Factsheets providing more information are also appended.

For more about RP Open House 2016, please visit: <http://www.rp.edu.sg/openhouse2016/>

About Republic Polytechnic

The first educational institution in Singapore to leverage the Problem-based Learning approach for all its diploma programmes, Republic Polytechnic (RP) has seven schools and one academic centre offering forty-two diplomas in Applied Science, Engineering, Enterprise and Communication, Events and Hospitality, Infocomm, Sports, Health & Leisure, and Technology for the Arts.

Republic Polytechnic is committed to nurturing innovation and entrepreneurial learning in an environment that develops problem-solving skills and lifelong learning opportunities. Its holistic

and broad-based curriculum prepares students for an active and meaningful role in society as problem solvers, respected professionals and passionate citizens.

Republic Polytechnic strives for excellence by achieving various international and national accreditations, including ISO 9001, ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001, ISO 22301, Singapore Quality Class, People Developer, Innovation Class, and Service Class.

For more information, visit <http://www.rp.edu.sg>

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