New NTU fine arts courses expand students’ skills

Bachelor programmes include compulsory internship and interdisciplinary module

Nanyang Technological University (NTU) will launch two new bachelor of fine arts programmes this August for the School of Art, Design and Media (ADM).

The Bachelor of Fine Arts in Design Art consolidates existing specialisations in interactive media, product design and visual communication. And the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Media Art consolidates specialisations in digital animation, digital film making, and photography and digital imaging.

Under the revised curricula, students can select their major at the end of their first semester instead of at the start of their second year. They will also undergo a compulsory 10-week internship that will supplement their knowledge with industry exposure. An interdisciplinary seminar module will also be introduced that involves talks by practising artists and designers.

ADM students can now also choose up to two electives from the university’s College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences to fulfil the requirements of their major. The changes were sparked by the need to equip students for the evolving needs of the art and design industry.

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE, 26, a final-year student majoring in photography and digital imaging, enrolled after she moved back to Singapore from Hawaii in 2012.

She pursued a minor in creative writing at the university, which helped her to incorporate her photography into a book for her final year project. "My end goal is to be able to tell stories no matter what the medium," she said.

Though she is not eligible for the new programmes, she felt changes to the BFA programmes would help fine arts students find more employment opportunities by showing how their skills can be applied to other disciplines. Mr Kamaludin, who graduated from NTU’s Bachelor of Fine Arts in Media Art in 2012, agreed that the new programmes would make graduates more marketable. "It’s much better because it gives students a larger spectrum of skills," he said.

He pursued a minor in art history, which not only catered to his deep passion for the subject but also helped him gain practical experience from curatorial internships at the National Gallery.

Mr Jeanne Tay, managing director of United Kingdom-based independent brand design agency Design Bridge Singapore, said the firm hires many NTU fine arts graduates. The students’ interdisciplinary education helps them, she said.