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Are private schools a good option for Singaporean students?

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Gone are the days when Singapore's private schools are seen as second choice for school-leavers aiming to pursue tertiary education.

Recent developments have made private education an attractive path - and no longer the road less favoured.

Triggering off this switch in mindset were the government's move to mould Singapore into a global education hub and to raise the quality of private education through certification by the Council of Private Education (CPE). The first measure, in particular, drove foreign student numbers up. The second step helped to raise the bar for private school education, strengthening its credibility and stakeholder protection.

It is heartening to note that the Singapore Government may be considering to 'provide support' to students enrolled in private schools – another indication of the increasing acceptance of the role of private schools in producing the right talent to support nation-building and the continued growth of the Singapore economy.

While public/government support is welcome, private schools themselves have – over the years - made enormous strides in quality improvements on their own. The more established schools have [Bradford University](#), whose business school is ranked among the Top Ten in UK, and [Oklahoma City University \(OCU\)](#), ranked among the top 25 among US universities in the western region, have gained the confidence of students and their parents.

The acceptance and recognition of tertiary qualifications from private schools coupled with the mounting demand for lifelong learning and upgrading of knowledge and skills has fueled the surge in enrolment in private schools which hit 146,000 by mid-2011.

Out of this number, about a third or 33,000 are foreigners. The remaining 113,000 are Singaporeans, indicating that private schools are serving local needs and not just catering to international students pursuing higher education in Singapore.

A significant development to note is more private schools and well-established universities from the West are setting up campuses in Asia – further evidence of growing demand for private education in Singapore and the other Asian countries.

In conclusion, it pays for students to consider private schools as an attractive if not preferred option for higher education. Private schools with their collaborations with world-renowned universities offer students global education and degrees that are globally recognised – which are indeed very valuable today as we live and work in a globalised world.

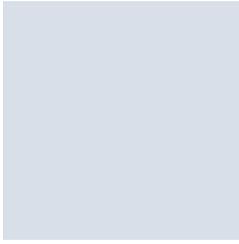
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