

Is this the end of the road for tourism course?

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by **Teo Xuanwei**

SINGAPORE - The fate of Temasek Polytechnic's popular diploma course in hospitality and tourism business is hanging in the balance.

The two-year, full-time course, which started in 2005, could be discontinued after the Tourism Academy @ Sentosa campus shifts back to TP's Tampines grounds in October next year - when its lease on the island property expires.

Responding to MediaCorp's queries, a TP spokesperson said the course is currently being reviewed. She added: "We are currently looking into offering a similar course at our main campus and will announce the details once it is finalised."

The school's website, however, states that it has stopped recruiting any students for the hospitality and tourism business diploma course. All 260 students currently enrolled in the course will not be affected by the move and will be able to complete their studies, said the TP spokesperson. "Any period of studies not completed in Sentosa will continue in Temasek Polytechnic," she added.

TP is planning for new facilities that will be needed at its Tampines campus when these students move back. After the move, students will still be sent to Sentosa for internships, training and event operations, she added.

The annual intake for the course, which is popular with international students is about 130. Junior college student Grace Chew, who was thinking of enrolling in the diploma course, was disappointed to learn the news. The 16-year-old said: "I was hoping to get some practical experience in the tourism sector through the course before going on to further my studies in university."

According to a Sentosa Development Corporation spokesperson, the 50,000-sq-m plot of land, which the Tourism Academy sits on now, has been "designated for the development of leisure, F&B, retail and lifestyle offerings". She added that SDC is still mulling how the site - which is close to the coach parking bay, Palawan Beach, the Merlion and Resorts World at Sentosa - will be developed. Teo Xuanwei

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