

# Clear career path through Earn and Learn

ANG TIAN TIAN

In 2014, they were in the final stretch of national service (NS) but had no clear direction of the future.

Today, Mr Ong Jia Ming and Mr Tay Soon Boon, both 25, are software engineering analysts at major consulting firm Accenture after two promotions in three years.

They joined the firm under the SkillsFuture Earn and Learn Programme (ELP) in 2015 after a career talk by Accenture at their alma mater, Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP), sparked their interest.

Mr Ong said: "We joined the programme to gain exposure, which led us onto a clear career pathway."

Over 1,200 polytechnic and ITE graduates have enrolled in the ELP since it started in 2015.

The work-study programme pairs fresh graduates from polytechnics and the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) with an employer in a related field under a 12-to-18-month contract.

Participants also take a specialist diploma in the polytechnics while working. In May, undergraduate courses at the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) and Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) were introduced for the ELP.

Mr Ong and Mr Tay took up a specialist diploma in information systems development with NYP.

Mr Tay said: "The specialist knowledge and skills that we acquired provided us with a strong foundation so that we could transition into our jobs



Mr Tay Soon Boon and Mr Ong Jia Ming (in red) joined the SkillsFuture Earn and Learn Programme to gain exposure. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

smoothly."

Mr Ong and Mr Tay were also provided with on-the-job training by mentors in Accenture.

Accenture has hired 38 NYP graduates since 2015 under the ELP, of which 16 have been promoted.

Mr Sam Liew, managing director and Asean technology lead at Accenture, said: "ELP nurtures technology leaders of the future by preparing them for their careers, while boosting Singapore's position as a leading innovation hub."

To date, there are 62 ELPs in

28 sectors, and NYP is the lead sector coordinator for info-comm technology, design, media, biomedical science, healthcare, retail and food services.

Since 2015, it has partnered with over 100 companies to launch 20 ELPs, with more than 400 participants.

"The skills and working experience that our graduates gain from ELP will allow them to get a head start, and companies will find them very valuable," said an NYP spokesman.

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