

Some NUS master's programmes to be fully self-funded

Some master's degrees at the National University of Singapore (NUS) will soon be fully self-funded, and will not receive government subsidies, said its president Tan Eng Chye on Wednesday.

Speaking during a panel discussion at an event held at NUS' University Town in Kent Ridge, he said this means that for these courses, the university would be able to charge tuition fees comparable to those billed by overseas institutions, and this would then be a revenue source.

He was responding to a question by Times Higher Education's chief knowledge officer Phil Baty about how universities maintain financial stability and diversify their incomes.

Professor Tan said: "Capitalising on NUS' brand, in the last few years, instead of having the Ministry of Education sponsor our master's courses, we have actually made all these master's courses in-

to a self-funding model. So basically, we are not getting any subsidy for master's programmes and we are doing it on a self-sustaining basis."

He was referring to coursework-based programmes, which are designed for university graduates who want to advance their knowledge in chosen specialisations through courses and electives.

In response to queries, an NUS spokesman said: "The majority of master's degree (coursework) programmes at NUS are currently on a self-funded model. The move towards a self-funded model began in 2020, and will be completed by 2024. Selected programmes will continue to receive subsidies."

Prof Tan added that the Government also encourages universities to raise funds through building endowments, by providing matching grants to all six autonomous universities here.

The panel discussion, which fo-



cused on challenges and takeaways from the Covid-19 pandemic, also featured Professor Mohd Hamdi Abd Shukor, vice-chancellor of University of Malaya, and Professor Banchong Mahaisavariya, pres-

ident of Thailand's Mahidol University.

Speaking to the media on the sidelines of the event, Prof Hamdi said that with the economic downturn brought on by the pandemic,

the government in Malaysia had to channel funding to other areas such as healthcare and social services in the past three years.

"With the challenges, we had to get more creative. We all have to do

The National University of Singapore will be able to charge tuition fees comparable to those billed by overseas institutions for its self-funded master's courses, and this would then be a revenue source for the university.
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more income-generation work, go out there to raise more donations and endowments, be more prudent in spending," he added.

The two-day event, organised by Times Higher Education and hosted by NUS, brought together nearly 300 delegates from around the world to discuss issues such as innovation in the higher education sector.

On Wednesday, the first day of the event, Prof Tan said that in the next three years, NUS will be converting face-to-face lectures for large courses with 100 or more students into online lectures.

As part of this exercise, which will involve about 800 courses, students will watch online videos that could be 15 minutes long, interspersed with online assessments.

Physical tutorials will remain in groups of not more than 25 students, Prof Tan said.

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