

Special-needs students trained to work in cleaning industry

SINGAPORE – Special-needs students are being trained to work in the cleaning industry. They will be receiving Workforce Skills Qualifications, or WSQ Training to equip them with the necessary skills.

The programme is in collaboration with NTUC Learning Hub.

To start off, seven students from Delta Senior School are currently undergoing training under the Environmental Cleaning WSQ programme, a necessary certification for the cleaning industry.

One of them is 17-year-old Ahmad Farique Zulkifli. He will be taught basic cleaning skills for four days. He is then assessed and given a Statement of Attainment for the module. Over the next year or so, he will need to complete five other modules, in order to qualify for the certification.

NTUC LearningHub's trainer Richard Ng says, with the exception of an extra four

hours of training so that they can get more practice, the students go through the same curriculum as other able-bodied trainees.

MP for Jalan Besar GRC Denise Phua says local companies are very open to hiring those with special needs.

"I think Singapore is not short of kind employers who want to hire people with special needs. And so what is happening here today is fantastic, because NTUC LearningHub has the content, the industry standards and the skill set to run the curriculum."

She hopes the programme will integrate those with special needs into the workforce.

"People with special needs are not to be seen as just replacements or automatic substitutes for foreign cleaners in our country. The job has to be dignified, maybe sometimes redesigned. Just like in Japan, these jobs are dignified, they are respected, and I would like to see that in Singapore." MONICA KOTWANI