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## **ITE AND MICROSOFT SIGN EDUCATION ALLIANCE AGREEMENT**

***Partnership Encompasses Three Strategic Aims and Supports Growth of Information Economy in Singapore***

ITE will be the first institute of higher learning in Singapore to become an Open Prometric Testing Centre (PTC) for Microsoft certification. This is the result of the ITE- Microsoft Education Alliance Agreement (EAA), which was signed on 16 November 2009, at ITE Headquarters.

2 The PTC will be open to ITE students and the public to take the globally recognized Microsoft certification. The ITE-Microsoft EAA provides certification and training to build overall IT skills and capabilities for students looking to improve their employability and further their careers in fields such as software development, network management and systems engineering.

3 Mr Bruce Poh ITE, Director and CEO, ITE, said becoming a PTC offering Microsoft certification is a testimony of the strong academic partnership between ITE and Microsoft: "The centre is in line with our vision as a global education institution to prepare an internationally-competent workforce and contribute to the local community and industry. Our students will have the option of taking the Microsoft certified examinations. We also welcome non-ITE students who wish to use the facility," he added.

4 "We are very pleased to have the opportunity to partner with ITE. Together we will help support Singapore's standing as the IT hub of Asia and give our students the advantages of training, certification and technical know-how that will help them

succeed in tomorrow's technology-empowered job market," said Ms Jessica Tan, Managing Director for Microsoft Singapore. "For the last five years we have been working with ITE on IT training and skills improvement; but this is the most extensive engagement we've done so far. As an industry leader, Microsoft is constantly working to engage local institutions to enhance Singapore's competitive edge and ensure that our programs contribute to a vibrant local software economy."

5 The agreement created excitement among ITE students. "Many strive for a Microsoft Certification because it's globally-recognised. In today's competitive working environment, obtaining a Microsoft Certification will help me to excel in my future career. With the skills gained, it also provides me with the expertise to tackle specific technology-related problems," said first-year Network Security student Winnie Tan.

6 Three strategic aims underpin the alliance. They are:

***a. Transforming Education - Responsive and Diversity of Technology-Enriched Learning and Support***

ITE will be able to work directly with Microsoft through the Microsoft IT Academy Programme to select relevant, current curricula to provide skills on the latest Microsoft technologies. This will give ITE an edge to tap on the latest technologies to meet new learning trends among students. It would also create learning environments to support authentic and lifelong learning.

***b. Fostering Local Innovation - Community Learning and Innovation***

The objective of this initiative is to organise regular learning series for students, staff, and industrial people on Microsoft emerging technologies such as Windows 7, Windows Server 2008 R2, Exchange 2010, Silverlight and others.

With this alliance, ITE will be able to access Microsoft Academic Resources to be included into relevant courses. ITE will also jointly-organise a series of

competitions with Microsoft to spur innovation through community learning and collaboration. This will inculcate as well as enhance social and entrepreneur spirits among graduates.

Also in the pipeline, Microsoft plans to introduce their industry partners to ITE staff and students. The aim of this plan is to entice them to collaborate with ITE to deliver solutions and services, which are relevant to industry needs. This would also provide for authentic learning, application of skills and knowledge for the staff and students.

***c. Enabling Jobs and Opportunities - Enriching and Widening Employability Opportunities***

The ITE-Microsoft Education Alliance Agreement will update the existing ITE electives to provide new technology skills and international certification.

“Microsoft IT Academies prime the pipeline of skilled and IT-capable professionals coming onto the job market by helping students become more employable,” said Chris Pirie, general manager of Marketing and Sales, Microsoft Learning. “Our collaboration will enable ITE to offer courses that will help students gain the skills and credentials that can differentiate them in the job market.”

7 Under the ITE-Microsoft Education Alliance Agreement, Microsoft will also offer internship opportunities to eligible ITE students. By doing so, students would have the opportunity to turn their knowledge and skills into actual work for the industry.

8 For ITE Alumni with the passion for entrepreneurship, Microsoft under its Microsoft BizSpark programme would also provide software, support and visibility to help them start-up their business.

9 Dr Ricky Tam, Principal of ITE College East summed up the agreement with optimism: "The introduction of the Microsoft IT Academy programme into our

curricula ensures that our students and graduates have the access to a plethora of Microsoft's latest technologies. In addition, technology festivals, learning series as well as Microsoft's DreamSpark and BizSpark initiatives, will also bring out the best in ITE students. This partnership reaffirms the commitment of ITE and Microsoft in contributing to the Singapore workforce and is in line with the nation's iN2015 goals."

10 For further information and/or arrangements for interviews, please contact:

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**About Institute of Technical Education (ITE)**

The **Institute of Technical Education (ITE)**, Singapore, was established as a post-secondary education institution in 1992 under the Ministry of Education. ITE is a principal provider of career and technical education and key developer of national occupational skills certification and standards to enhance Singapore's workforce competitiveness. Under its "**One ITE System, Three Colleges**" Model of Education and Governance, ITE has three Colleges, comprising **ITE College Central, ITE College East** and **ITE College West**.

**About Microsoft**

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential.