

An ideal place to study

Mongolian teenager Battsetseg Batmunkh furthers her education in Singapore because it is an English-speaking country and costs are affordable

By DAPHNE LEE

HER name, Battsetseg, is a tongue-twister. She makes it easy for you. "Just call me Betsy," she says.

Her schoolmates at the Marketing Institute of Singapore (MIS) also know 19-year-old Battsetseg Batmunkh from Mongolia as Betsy, she adds.

She came to Singapore three years ago to study. "After I finished my high school in Mongolia, I chose to further my studies in Singapore because this is an English-speaking country, and I wanted to pick up English," she explains. The other reason for choosing Singapore, she adds, is that the course fees and living expenses are cheaper compared to the United States or the United Kingdom.

According to her, the entire cost of her education in Singapore adds up to about \$22,000 for three years of course fees, and she spends up to \$900 per month for her living expenses, including accommodation.

The eldest of four girls in the family, her parents — who own a car and vehicle-parts business in Mongolia — were supportive of her decision to study here.

When she first arrived here in 2003, Ms Batmunkh did not enrol in any English language course. Instead, she decided to learn the language on her own by listening to tapes, reading books and conversing in English with her friends. In a year, she felt sufficiently confident in the language.

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MISS BATSETSEG BATMUNKH, 19
STUDENT FROM MONGOLIA
STUDYING IN SINGAPORE

At the same time, she did a full-time foundation course, diploma and higher diploma in marketing from MIS first, followed by a Northumbria University Bachelor of Arts (honours) in Marketing Management, offered through MIS.

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She also relishes the fact that she gets to interact with schoolmates from Vietnam, Korea and China. Despite being the youngest in class, she does not feel intimidated or afraid to contribute to class discussions and projects.

"Even though some of my classmates are 24 years old, I hardly feel the difference because I treat them as my peers and we do projects together."

She spends up to nine hours a week on lectures and the rest of the time reading and completing her class assignments, projects and dissertation. When she graduates next year, she will be one year ahead of her peers in Mongolia.



PHOTO: JAMIE KOH

The Sunday Times Knowledge Quest
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Marketing Management

25 February 2007