A PANEL that advises the Government on tertiary education has endorsed preliminary recommendations by the Committee on University Education on new directions and models in university education beyond 2015.

The Committee, chaired by Minister of State for Defence and Education Lawrence Wong, proposed expanding the university sector by developing a new applied degree pathway, and enhancing continuing education and training opportunities at the degree level.

Drawing on their collective experiences from across Europe, North America and Asia, the IAAP members highlighted the risks of rapidly expanding regular, academically-oriented degrees, both in advanced and emerging economies. Expansion had, in some cases, resulted in the expansion of relevance to students' aptitudes and the needs of the economy, or without concomitant resourcing to ensure adequate resources and quality. The consequence of this: high attrition rates, reduced graduate employability and a dilution in the value of new university degrees.

The IAAP also supported the expansion of publicly-funded university places, and discussed proposals for more emphasis on Social Science and Humanities research in Singapore.