SIM University (UniSIM) will be setting up a dedicated career office to source for work attachment opportunities for its students, said Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam yesterday.

Speaking at a convocation ceremony at UniSIM, the former education minister said the programme aimed to incorporate industry experience into the university's full-time programmes through modules that are conducted by public and private-sector industry partners. The new programme will also recognise in-company training towards graduation credits. "UniSIM would be able to build on its existing partnerships in this regard," he said.

UniSIM, which has offered only part-time degree courses for working adults, will soon have publicly funded, full-time degree programmes.

One of the university's strengths is its close ties with industry. As UniSIM gears up for its full-time programmes, it is in talks with industry partners – including industry associations and statutory boards – to provide internships as part-time programmes.

Mr Tharman said UniSIM's strong tie to industry will provide relevant, workplace-integrated full and part-time programmes that will provide students with practical, real-world education.

He also emphasised the need for students to acquire specialist knowledge in more than one discipline. "This will help graduates to develop a broad skill set that will enhance their chances for a workplace where versatility is a growing premium for graduates," he said.

UniSIM, which has offered part-time degrees for working adults, will also have full-time programmes.

By 2020, one in two students from each cohort is expected to get either a full-time or a part-time government-subsidised degree. This translates to additional university places being made available at the Singapore Institute of Technology and UniSIM, which will be Singapore's fifth and sixth universities respectively.