THE FIRST TIME... You go to university

Of the 13,000 soon-to-be freshmen, some are worried about getting used to a new school culture, while others just cannot wait to hit the books again.

BY SHEIMaine WONG

A RECORD number of 13,000 freshmen will start university over the next few weeks. It is an exciting time, many of them told Youthink — but it is also a nervous period.

“I’m unsure if I can fit into my school’s culture and if I can find my way around the huge campus,” said 19-year-old Tai Xiao Fang.

The former national fencer will be doing a double degree in business and humanities at the Singapore Management University (SMU).

“The prospect of starting school is exciting, but the first few weeks definitely won’t be easy,” she said.

For others like 19-year-old Lucy Tao, going back to school means finally having a head start. But as long as they work consistently, they will be fine.”

Lucy, who will be reading social sciences, said: “This break has been working for the past half year as a sales assistant and I’m convinced that being a student is better.”

The SMU scholarship holder hopes to gain more than just academic knowledge when she goes to university — she wants to pick up people skills and learn to be more street-smart.

She said: “I’m slightly anxious about the prospect of university, but I’m mostly hopeful about the next four years of my undergraduate life.”

Then there are the boys, fresh out of national service. One of them, 23-year-old Joshua Yip, said: “I can finally continue with my studies — two years is a long break.”

He will be studying at the National University of Singapore’s (NUS) faculty of arts and social sciences.

Glenz Koh, a fourth-year NUS student, said: “University may seem daunting at first to guys because the girls from their batch have a two-year head start. But as long as they work consistently, they will be fine.”

For others like 19-year-old Sanny Chen, a third-year Nanyang Technological University student, has this piece of advice for Xiao Fang: Get your hallmates well, especially those from the same faculty.

They will give good advice as they have been there, done that, said Sanny. 20.

The communication and information studies undergraduate added: “You have to learn to say no. Especially if you stay in the hostel.

“Chances are, you will be tempted to hang out with your hallmates very often and your studies will suffer. You have to be focused and disciplined.”