He got into university via the poly route

I REFER to the letter by Mr See Chee Wee, “A, B, E but no place in the local universities” (ST, May 29).

I understand the anxiety and concern of Mr See for the well-being of his daughter. However, I would like to highlight the fact that admission to a local university is on a relative basis, rather than absolute. Therefore the limited places in the three local universities will be offered to students with higher achievements than his daughter, and meeting the criteria does not guarantee one a place in university.

Also, I see nothing wrong with a university looking out for A-star performers, academic or in specific fields, or pursuing the goal of improving the institution’s world ranking.

Instead of attributing the problem to the Government’s education policy and asking for solutions from the Ministry of Education, we could try to be more resilient in our approach to such setbacks.

Mr See could discuss alternatives with his daughter. These include enrolling in a private institution or the polytechnics that have specialised courses for A-level holders, or acquiring professional qualifications (e.g., ACCA). With his daughter’s grades and sports achievement, such alternatives would be abundant.

As Mr See mentioned, many young Singaporeans had their university dreams dashed, a common experience faced by many every year. I was one of those who were not accepted by a local university because of my A-level results. I went to a local polytechnic instead and managed to earn a place at the Singapore Management University with my polytechnic results. I will be graduating in July and will be starting work in a bank soon.

Hence, not entering a local university after the A levels is not the end of the road. After all, champions are not those that never lose, but those that never quit.

Tan Boon Han