Try and try again

SINGAPORE'S education system allows the hardworking to excel. It is systematic and sieves out the best. Those who do not excel academically are given chances to hone their technical skills.

Yet the merits of the Singapore education system is not without its drawbacks. Singaporeans become too caught up with the system. The route is rigid and pre-planned – primary, secondary, post-secondary and then university. Parents want their children to do well and take the path that guarantees success.

But the world does not end just because one is deprived of a university education.

The solution is not to tweak the system so that everyone gets a place. The way to win is to work on the X-factor. And that is what sets you apart.

Ephraim Loy, 24, earned a place at the Singapore Management University after applying for three years. He is currently a first-year social science student there.