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New multi-use smart card for NTU students to make payments, gain entry to facilities

By TOH EE MING



Year 3 students Leong Li Zhen (left) and Justin Wongso (right) holding up the NTU Smart Pass card. Photo: Toh Ee Ming/

SINGAPORE — Students at Nanyang Technological University (NTU) are getting new smart cards that will enable them to pay for their meals at canteens, book facilities such as sports venues and study rooms, for parking on campus, or to use it for public transport.

Set to replace the old matriculation card, the NTU Smart Pass will double up as the identity card for the 33,000 or so students, as well as for its staff members. The card comes with an embedded “contactless” identity chip, and has a Nets FlashPay function as part of a tie-up with payment solutions provider Nets.

As part of a vision to transform NTU into the “largest smart campus in Singapore”, the card was officially launched on Wednesday (Jan 10) by NTU’s new president, Professor Subra Suresh, at his first university town-hall meeting with staff and faculty members since he took over the reins from Jan 1.

It is ready for use at 80 per cent of the university’s canteens, with the rest coming on board in the next few months. The majority of the retail and food-and-beverage outlets on campus are already equipped with the Nets contactless payment system as well.

To ramp up safety and security at the university, the card will act as a personalised key for access to hall rooms, offices, laboratories and facilities, though it will take time for older halls to be equipped with the access system.

At the campus medical centre, students may also eventually use the card to register for health checks and consultations, while at residential halls,

NTU is working to put up vending machines with similar cash-free payment systems. Other mobile or cash-free payment solutions are being explored for the card.

Undergraduate Leong Li Zhen, 22, who received the card in September last year, found that it is smoother to use it to make payments. The third-year student from the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering added: “When I buy food, I don’t have to carry my whole wallet (while balancing it) with the tray... I can just carry one card.

As for its goal to be an eco-friendly campus, NTU hopes to achieve a 35 per cent reduction in energy, water and waste intensity by 2020. More than 95 per cent of buildings spread across the 200-hectare campus are now Green Mark Platinum-certified. The certification is part of the Building and Construction Authority's green rating system that evaluates buildings for their environmental impact and performance.