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# Gold star for three training centres

They are the first to be given  
'national' status for offering  
quality training for adult workers

■ BY AARON LOW

THREE training centres for adult workers have been given the "gold star" rating by the Government for delivering quality training for workers in their respective industries.

The three are At-Sunrice Global Chef Academy, the Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology (CUGE), and the Tourism Management Institute of Singapore.

They are the first Continuing Education and Training (CET) centres to be conferred the status of National CET Institutes.

At an award ceremony yesterday, Acting Manpower Minister Gan Kim Yong said CET centres play a key role in retraining Singapore workers to make the local workforce a mobile one.

There are now 46 CET centres which have trained some 200,000 workers since the CET network was first launched in 2006, he noted.

Their work is especially critical now as the centres equip workers with skills to get new jobs, or to hold on to their current jobs in the downturn, he said. "The CET is important not only during the downturn, but also in building our future so that Singapore can emerge from this recession with new skills and new capabilities to seize emerging opportunities," he added.

The Government's declaration of the three institutes as national centres was the equivalent of their being conferred the "gold standard" and being acknowledged as the best in their class, he said.

"It means these centres have demonstrated high quality delivery and commitment to support workforce development programmes."

CET centres are assessed annually by the Workforce Development Agency (WDA).

If they make the grade based on criteria such as organisational excellence and the provision of WDA-approved training, they will be given the "national" status, which will be valid for three years.

National CET Institutes will, among other things, provide the full range of services for workers interested in a particular sector - from training to job-matching. They are also expected to employ cutting-edge training methods.

"I hope that their achievements will inspire other CET training providers to strive towards equally high standards of training excellence," said Mr Gan.

The CUGE at the Botanical Gardens, which trains workers in landscaping and gardening, said it plans to roll out even better programmes now that it has attained "national" status.

Mr P. Teva Raj, its director, said the centre would offer a whole range of services for job seekers so that they can not only find a job but also develop careers in landscaping and horticulture.

"We make it a point to identify gaps in the industry which need to be filled by workers and we have to place about 80 to 100 of them a month," he said.

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