

**“TEACHING CREDENTIALS: MOE-registered’ does not mean ‘NIE-trained’”  
(Ken Tai Meng Kian, ST Forum, 6/3)**

I AM an owner of four tuition centres in Singapore. I read with interest the letter, 'MOE-certified'. What does it really mean?' (ST, March 1), by Mr John Tan Liang-Joo.

I fully understand the bafflement of the writer.

'MOE-registered' teachers, as the writer correctly pointed out, are only required to 'possess educational qualifications beyond the levels the school has proposed for them to teach', according to an extract from the Ministry of Education's website.

Any educational centre could register its staff and call them 'school teachers'. But in actual fact, they are private school-registered teachers, not government school teachers, as in the case of a National Institute of Education-trained teacher.

The strength of my centres is that we engage only NIE-trained school teachers, who are professionally trained to possess the necessary skills and qualification to deliver lessons in our government schools.

However, in my experience, many parents do not see the difference between 'MOE-registered' and 'NIE-trained'.

I fully understand and support the MOE for ensuring the quality of private schools in Singapore, as it 'gives private schools the right to operate when they have met basic statutory requirements', according to an extract from MOE's website.

However, I believe the public should also be aware that 'registration by MOE does not in any way represent an endorsement or accreditation of the quality of the schools, courses and teachers offered', also according to that website. The best way to ascertain the standard of an educational service is to visit the school premises, look at some of the materials and verify the qualification of the teachers.