

Advertorial

AMRITA KAUR

**B**IOLOGY and the human anatomy are topics that have interested her since she was in her teens.

Unfortunately, the secondary school she was in offered only physics and chemistry for its science stream students.

She tried to take biology again when she entered junior college (JC), but was told she couldn't as she didn't take it for her O levels.

But that didn't stop Ms Arya Ajay from pursuing her interest.

"During my free time, I would always read medical journals, on-line biological books, watch videos of surgery being performed and much more," she said.

When she was in JC, she applied to attend a medical symposium organised by Hwa Chong Institution and the National University of Singapore's Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine.

Ms Arya, who was one of the 200 shortlisted students from Singapore, said she worked with other students on a project on cryopreservation (the process of cooling and storing cells, tissues or organs at very low temperatures to maintain their viability), which they then presented to accomplished doctors.

She also shadowed specialists in two hospitals to understand their responsibilities and see how certain procedures such as an intubation (the placement of a flexible plastic tube into the windpipe to maintain an open airway or to serve as a conduit through which to administer certain drugs) were done.

"The experience was an eye-opener. It made me realise that there is a research field in the biomedical line and it's not just about doctors and nurses. You can learn about the human body in many ways even as a researcher," said the 20-year-old, who decided then to pursue research in the biomedical science field.

When she graduated from JC in 2015, she made up her mind to do a degree in biomedical science.

She applied for the programme at Newcastle University, but just before accepting the offer, she found that the Management Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS) was offering the same course — Bachelor of Science (Hons) Biomedical Science, awarded by Northumbria University.

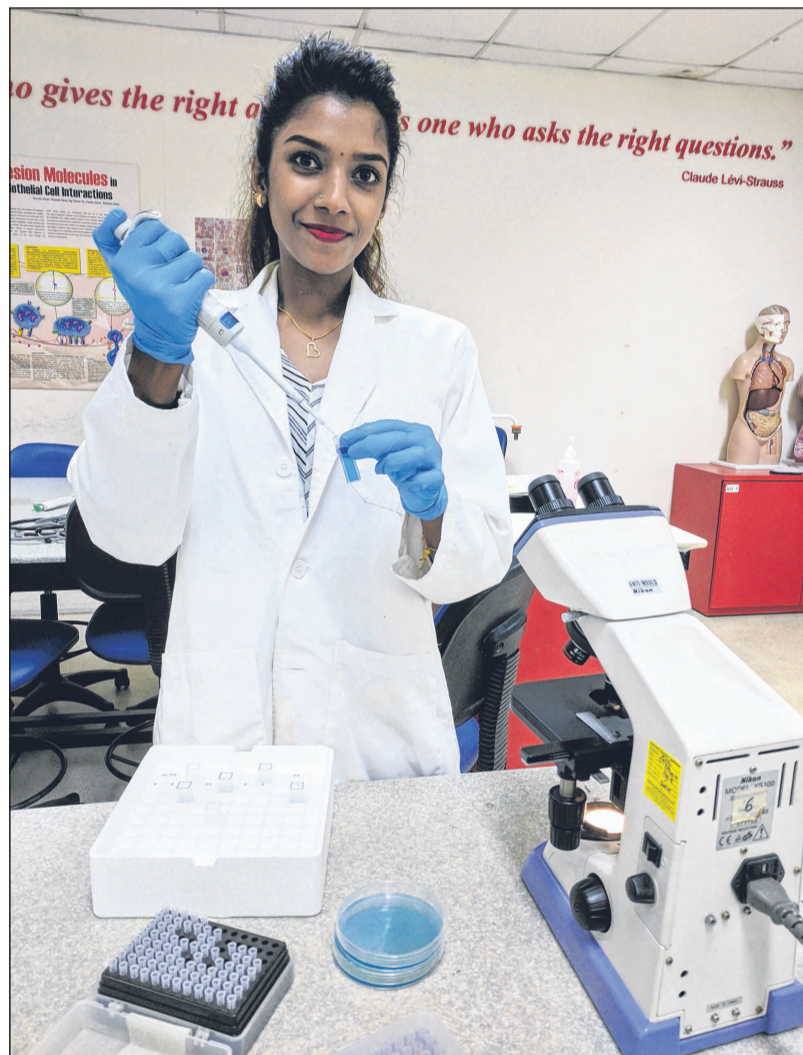
Said Ms Arya, a Singaporean: "I had some friends doing the course at MDIS and I heard positive reviews from them so I decided to go down to the institute to find out more about it. It is a very reputable institution and I liked the environment.

"One of the staff members also explained the curriculum to me very well because she was a former student in the same course."

So impressed was she with the curriculum that she decided to turn down the offer from Newcastle

# Determined to pursue her passion

Arya Ajay turned down an offer from an overseas university to do her degree in biomedical science at MDIS



University and applied to study at MDIS instead.

Eight months into the three-year course now, Ms Arya is learning subjects related to the human body such as anatomy, physiology, cell biology and pathology.

She needs to complete four modules each semester, comprising three-hour lectures, workshops and lab sessions.

One of the modules that stands out is Introduction to Pathological Science, where students are given clinical scenarios and told to apply and interpret the theoretical concepts they have learned.

Her favourite modules are Principles of Immunology and Applied Anatomy and Physiology.

She feels that it is interesting to learn how the principal defence system of the human body operates and about the anatomical structure and major physiological functions of the body.

She also enjoys the industrial visits organised by MDIS.

"The learning goes beyond the classroom because we get the opportunity to go to events like the cBIG symposium (a multi-institutional effort to enable big data analytics and integrative genomics) at the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*Star) and to the Innovative Diagnostics Lab (a private pathology provider).

"Studying here makes me feel like I have an all-rounded education where I do not just focus on studying and getting good grades," said Ms Arya, who is also a part-time dental assistant.

Another element that she enjoys at MDIS is the "guidance of highly distinguished lecturers".

"One of my lecturers is from A\*Star and almost all my lecturers are doctors. They are very down-to-earth and friendly so I don't feel intimidated asking them for help or advice."

When she graduates in 2020, she plans to get a few years of working experience as a researcher before doing her master's in biomedical science.

"For now, I find immunology very interesting. As I work on projects and assignments, I feel there are some areas that require more research. I want to delve into those and hopefully make a difference to the world," she said.

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## About the course

THE Bachelor of Science (Honours) Biomedical Science is awarded by Northumbria University, UK.

- The programme duration is 36 months (full-time).
- The course fees for local students is \$39,590 and for international students is \$41,730.
- Advance standing to the second year is possible for local polytechnic diploma holders in the related disciplines, subject to the university's approval.
- The next intake for the full-time course is in October 2017.



Where lifelong learning begins

For more information on MDIS and its full suite of courses, check out [www.mdis.edu.sg](http://www.mdis.edu.sg) or call 6247-9111/6372-1000.

**Ambitious... Ms Arya working in the science lab at MDIS.**  
PHOTO: AMRITA KAUR