



MEDIA RELEASE

SMU's 2016 Graduates match previous year's employment rate and see salary increases in latest employment survey

93.8 per cent of graduates from the 2016 cohort were employed within six months of completing their final examinations.

Singapore, 22 February 2017 (Wednesday) – Graduates from Singapore Management University's (SMU) 13th cohort have again registered a high and stable overall employment rate¹ of 93.8% and high starting salaries across all six of the university's degree programmes.

The results were revealed in an annual Joint Graduate Employment Survey (GES) conducted by Singapore's five autonomous universities, namely Nanyang Technological University, National University of Singapore, Singapore Management University, Singapore Institute of Technology, and the Singapore University of Technology and Design.

74.1% or 1,336 participants of the 1,803 SMU alumni who graduated in 2016 took part in the survey.

The survey showed that 93.8% of SMU graduates in the labour force gained employment within six months after completing their final examinations, with more than half being offered jobs before graduation. 51.3% of those in full-time employment received two or more job offers. Of those who received job offers, one in four landed full-time employment through internships, which are compulsory for SMU undergraduates. In addition more than 78.2% of SMU students did two or more internships.

The mean gross monthly salary of SMU graduates in full-time permanent jobs is **\$3,722** in 2016. This is an increase over the previous year's salary of **\$3,624**. The median gross monthly salary for graduates in full-time permanent employment is \$3,500 in 2016.

SMU Provost, Professor Lily Kong said, "Given that the economy is not as robust as it was, we are pleased with the survey results. This affirms that SMU prepares our students well for the job market, equipping them with the knowledge, experience and skills sought after by employers. We are able to achieve this through SMU's holistic educational experience involving both classroom and out-of-classroom learning aimed at making a meaningful impact on our students. Our small seminar-style classes with interactive teaching, experiential learning and technology-enabled education combined with vast opportunities for global exposure, community service, and internships prepare our students to become confident, independent thinkers and well-rounded individuals and leaders."

¹ The overall employment rate refers to the number of graduates working in full-time permanent, part-time and temporary employment, as a proportion of graduates in the labour force (i.e. those who are working, and those who are not working but are actively looking and available for work).

“The outcome of the SMU educational experience has been endorsed as being impactful by about 99% of our graduates in the survey. 91% of students indicated that SMU has prepared them well in the areas of oral communications and presentation skills, while 85% felt so in the areas of interpersonal effectiveness which makes them better at networking and team work. These are skills critical in today’s global workplace where effective communication, teamwork and collaboration are very much valued,” said the University’s chief academic officer.

Every student is assigned a career coach upon matriculation to support them in their career planning through the four-year journey at SMU. These certified coaches from the Dato’ Kho Hui Meng Career Centre (DKHMCC) come from diverse backgrounds and are in tune with industry developments and trends. They administer personality/career profiling tools, critique cover letters and resumes, facilitate job searches and hone interview skills of students.

In addition, DKHMCC also offers extraordinary career services workshops from freshman year as part of SMU’s pioneering Finishing Touch (FT) programme. The compulsory programme prepares SMU undergraduates in career management skills and gears them towards employability and career readiness by helping students develop and focus on their career goals progressively throughout their four-year course of study. Every year, DKHMCC organises more than 200 career and industry talks, employability clinics, career fairs, as well as networking events for our graduating students.

Recognising the importance and value of having real-world and career-relevant work experience for its students, SMU is the first university in Singapore to make internships compulsory for all students. Students are provided opportunities DKHMCC which works closely with industry to ensure successful placement of students in internships and jobs. The DKHMCC’s close and regular contact with employers is vital in helping SMU students be market relevant and business-ready. In fact, 71% of those who obtained full-time permanent positions used DKHMCC’s channels such as the OnTRAC (portal for career services) to search for jobs.

Here are a few examples of 2016 graduates who benefited from the SMU educational experience:

Joseph Tng, a graduate from the School of Accountancy, completed three internships that exposed him to a broader spectrum of options beyond the field of accounting. He is now doing Digital Marketing in an FMCG company. Apart from focusing on studies, he felt being actively involved in SMU events such as Patron’s Day enabled him to pick up valuable skills such as stakeholder management and marketing techniques, which have helped him in his current job.

In addition, Ho Yan Yan and Sharmaine Ng, both graduates of the Lee Kong Chian School of Business, also did three internships each as they felt it was important to experience different work environments and saw that real-world experience would be essential in helping them decide on their career path. As a result of these internships, both landed their first full time job even before they graduated. Yan Yan does industry development for the Consumer Businesses sector at Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB) while Sharmaine does innovation consulting at Nielsen Singapore.

Sharmaine says, “The SMU experience has been an incredibly impactful one. Through internships, community service projects, and business study missions which provided global exposure, I had many opportunities to venture out of my comfort zone and broaden my mind, which were integral in preparing me for the working world.”

Echoing similar sentiments, Yan Yan said, “SMU’s strong focus on preparing students for the workplace, be it through encouraging us to embark on internships or to work on real-life industry projects, helped me transition smoothly to working life.”

SMU’s 2016 graduates continue to do well across the six Schools.

The most significant increase in salary was recorded for SMU’s **Information Systems (IS)** graduates. The survey showed that 2016 IS graduates achieved a 6.5 per cent increase over the 2015 cohort, receiving \$3,897 as the mean gross monthly salary. The median gross monthly salary is \$3,600. Those with *Cum Laude* or better also saw a higher mean gross monthly salary of \$4,603 compared to last year’s \$3,834.

The **Business Management** graduates’ mean gross monthly salary of \$3,831 increased by 6.1 per cent higher from last year. The median gross monthly salary is \$3,500. Those with *Cum Laude* or better were paid a higher mean gross monthly salary of \$4,234, compared to last year’s \$4,130.

SMU’s **Accountancy** graduates garnered a mean monthly salary of \$3,455, comparable to last year’s \$3,427. The median gross monthly salary is \$3,000. Those with *Cum Laude* or better achieved a higher mean gross monthly salary of \$3,943, 6.5 per cent higher than last year’s \$3,701.

The mean gross monthly salary of **Economics** graduates is \$3,906 while median gross monthly salary is \$3,700. Those with *Cum Laude* or better earned a higher average monthly salary of \$4,425 compared to last year’s \$4,380.

The **Social Sciences** graduates earned \$3,311 as the mean gross monthly salary and \$3,145 as the median gross monthly salary. Those with *Cum Laude* or better earned a mean gross salary of \$3,548.

Please refer to Annex for the detailed figures.

The follow-up survey² on SMU **Law** graduates showed that 95.8% per cent of the respondents who were in the labour force were employed. The mean and median gross monthly salaries of Law graduates in full-time permanent employment were \$4,915 and \$4,850 respectively. Those who attained a *Cum Laude* and above had a mean gross monthly salary of \$ 5,095.

Explanatory Note: *Cum Laude* and Merit Awards

SMU uses the cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) criteria to identify degree candidates with academic excellence in the following award categories: *Summa Cum Laude*, *Magna Cum Laude* and *Cum Laude*. These are Latin awards adopted from the American system, and can be translated as with Highest Distinction, with High Distinction and with Distinction, respectively. All *Cum Laude* awards are highly selective.

They do not equate to the various classes of degree honours conferred by universities that follow the British system of academic honours. A graduate needs a GPA of at least 3.40 out of 4.00 to be awarded *Cum Laude*. All SMU bachelor degrees are four-year full-time programmes.

² SMU’s **Law** graduates in 2015 were excluded from the 2015 survey as they were undergoing pupillage in the first six months of their graduation. They have since started employment and have been included in the follow-up survey of GES 2016.

Cumulative GPA	Awards
≥ 3.80	Summa Cum Laude
3.60 to 3.79	Magna Cum Laude
3.40 to 3.59	Cum Laude
3.20 to 3.39	High Merit
3.00 to 3.19	Merit

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About Singapore Management University (SMU)

A premier university in Asia, the Singapore Management University (SMU) is internationally recognised for its world class research and distinguished teaching. Established in 2000, SMU's mission is to generate leading-edge research with global impact and produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. It is known for its interactive and technologically-enabled pedagogy of seminar-style teaching in small class sizes.

Home to around 10,000 undergraduates and postgraduates, SMU comprises six schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Information Systems, School of Law and School of Social Sciences. SMU offers a wide range of bachelor's, master's and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with the six schools, as well as in interdisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU has an emphasis on generating rigorous, high impact, and relevant multi-disciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance, SMU faculty collaborate with leading international researchers and universities from USA, Europe, China and India as well as with partners in the business community and public sector, through its research institutes, centres and labs. SMU's city campus is a state-of-the art facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community. www.smu.edu.sg