

Press Release

SMU is first university globally to partner with Proxor for its software developer assessment system

- *System enables companies to assess the software development skills and abilities of current staff and potential employees*
- *SMU information systems students will be able to test their skills and knowledge in a realistic setting; part of ongoing effort to nurture job-ready graduates*

Singapore, 17 February 2015 (Tuesday) - The SMU School of Information Systems (SIS) has entered into an agreement with Proxor, a Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) spin-off, to enable SIS students to take the Proxor Software Developer Examination (SDE).

The assessment system is based on an approach called Authentic Examination™ that traces back to efforts initiated thirty years ago at CMU for use in their own education and training of software programmers. **Proxor's Authentic Examination™ assessment system accurately measures the test-takers' ability to create realistic software solutions in a professional programming environment, thereby enabling companies to confidently hire and retain competent software developers.**

SMU SIS students who take up this examination will be put in the role of professional software developers and have an opportunity to demonstrate skills by building solutions to tasks defined in the context of real software projects. In a typical examination, candidates will need to write code, debug code, and work in a professional programming environment for six hours. This provides assessors with insight into the programming ability of the candidates.

Professor Steven Miller, SMU's Vice Provost (Research) and Dean (School of Information Systems) said, "SMU is proud to be the first educational institution in the world to enter into partnership of this nature with Proxor. The performance-based assessment system developed and commercialized by Proxor is proving to be very useful to software development companies to assess the skills and abilities of current staff and potential employees."

Professor Miller continued, "By incorporating the Proxor assessment into our undergraduate BSc (IS Management) programme, **SIS students will be able to test their skills and knowledge in a realistic setting. This allows them to discover their strengths and weaknesses, further hone their skills, and better prepare them for their job search. This is part of the ongoing effort by SIS to nurture job-ready graduates.**"

Mr. Barrington Hill, CEO of Proxor, said "When we first piloted our examination at SMU in June of 2014, we were extremely impressed with the faculty's dedication to practical programming skills, as revealed in the performance of their students. Their approach is tailor-made for the requirements of high-tech industry in the 21st century, and we're glad we can help them maintain their very high standards."

Under the terms of the agreement, SIS undergraduate students from Year 1 to 4 will be able to take the Proxor examination at SMU. Proxor will score the examination and make the results available to the candidates online. Proxor will also provide certificates and verification of score service to candidates who have performed well. SIS is now working out how to integrate the Proxor assessment examination into their curriculum. They are looking at having all students take the examination at the end of Year 1 to establish an initial benchmark of capability, and then re-taking it again at the end of Year 3, enabling each student to see how far they have progressed.

SMU's School of Information Systems has established formal ties with CMU in both academic programmes and research.

In January 2003, SMU and CMU forged a four-year strategic partnership to leverage the experience and expertise of CMU faculty to assist SMU in establishing an innovative School of Information Systems that would offer undergraduates a business-oriented IT education. In the four years that followed, the partnership exceeded its initial objectives. In recognition of that success, and to realise the potential for even deeper collaboration, SMU and CMU agreed in May 2007 to extend their partnership for an additional four years.

In March 2011, SIS and CMU jointly established the Living Analytics Research Centre (LARC) at SMU in Singapore and at CMU in Pittsburgh. LARC's purpose was to develop new techniques to acquire data on consumer and social behaviour, with emphasis on integrating analytics with iterative experimentation, and with an application focus on network-centric phenomenon.

Since 2007, SIS and CMU have had a special dual-degree fast-track programme which allows SIS students to graduate within four to four and half years with both a Bachelor of Science (Information Systems Management) degree from SMU and a master's degree in IT from CMU. Scholars selected for this programme spend two years at SMU and another two to two and a half years at CMU. This programme was created to support Singapore's national strategy to attract top pre-university student talent into the area of information technology.

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About Singapore Management University

A premier university in Asia, the Singapore Management University (SMU) is internationally recognised for innovative research and teaching in the areas of Management, Social Sciences, Analytics and Computing, and for interdisciplinary work across these areas. SMU educational programmes are known for their highly interactive and technologically enabled pedagogy in small class sizes.

Home to over 8,300 undergraduate and postgraduate students, 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, offering a wide range of bachelors', masters' and PhD degree programmes in various disciplines.

With an emphasis on generating rigorous, high-impact, multi-disciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance, SMU faculty members 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 and centres. SMU's city campus is a state-of-the art facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with the business and wider community. For more information, please visit www.smu.edu.sg.

About Proxor

Proxor Ltd. was formed in 2013 to apply Authentic Examination™ to the problem of assessing professional software developers and job seekers. Proxor's premier assessment product, the Software Developer Examination (SDE), was developed at Carnegie Mellon University by a team of educational and testing professionals led by Proxor's founder, Dr. Philip Miller. Piloted worldwide by software companies of all sizes and supported by governments, the SDE is quickly becoming the premier software developer examination.