



MEDIA RELEASE

SMU's 2019 fresh graduates see healthy employment rate and all-time high starting salaries in latest employment survey

92.3 per cent of graduates from the 2019 cohort who were in the labour force were employed within six months of completing their final examinations

Singapore, 28 February 2020 (Friday) – Graduates from Singapore Management University's (SMU) 16th cohort have registered healthy and stable overall employment¹, with 92.3% of them employed and commanding good starting salaries across all six of the university's degree programmes.

The results were revealed in the annual Joint Autonomous Universities Graduate Employment Survey (JAUGES), jointly conducted by SMU and the other Autonomous Universities.

77% or 1,419 of the 1,842 SMU alumni who graduated in 2019 took part in the survey.

The survey showed that 92.3% of SMU graduates in the labour force gained employment within six months of completing their final examinations. 69.2% were offered full-time permanent jobs before graduation, compared to 66.6% for the 2018 cohort. Among those who were on full-time permanent employment, 50.8% were offered employment through internships, which are compulsory for SMU undergraduates. 27.6% of those who were on full-time permanent employment accepted the offers from their internship employers.

Both the mean and median gross monthly salaries are at an all-time high. The mean gross monthly salary of SMU graduates in full-time permanent jobs is **\$4,121** in 2019, an increase over the previous year's salary of \$3,977. The median gross monthly salary of graduates in full-time permanent employment is **\$3,800** in 2019, up from \$3,600 in 2018.

Similar to previous years, the top three industries of employment for SMU graduates were "Financial and Insurance", "Information & Communication", and "Legal, Accounting and Auditing", with "Financial and Insurance" maintaining its position as the highest paid industry with an average gross monthly salary of \$4,940.

SMU Provost, Professor Timothy Clark said, "We are very proud to see that SMU graduates are in demand and have once again done so well in finding graduate-level jobs. This affirms the value of our holistic and multi-disciplinary academic curriculum, as well as a co-curricular programme that extends beyond the classroom so that our students develop a range of critical skills through global exposure, community service, campus life and internships. These give our students the opportunity to become well-rounded individuals and leaders who can contribute and make meaningful impact in Singapore and beyond."

¹ Employment refers to the number of graduates working in full-time permanent, part-time, temporary employment or freelancing, 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) as at 1 November 2019.

97% of 2019 graduates said they had experienced personal growth during their time at SMU. Having experienced our flexible broad-based programmes, 95% felt they had developed the ability to persevere and adapt in the face of challenges. Another 94% said they developed a greater ownership of their personal development while 91% felt that they had developed a keener sense of responsibility for individual and collective actions.

“These are skills and attributes that are critical given the ever-changing economy and very much valued in any workplace today,” added Prof Clark.

Career Services offered by Dato’ Kho Hui Meng Career Centre (DKHMCC)

The DKHMCC offers a range of comprehensive services, programmes, and resources for SMU students to chart their career directions, and also empowers them with the necessary skills to realise their potential and goals. More than 72% of the 2019 graduates surveyed agreed that the learning and knowledge gained from SMU’s Career Services was important for their job interviews and work performances thus far.

Each student is assigned a [career coach](#) upon matriculation to support him/her in career planning through his/her four-year journey at SMU. These certified coaches from 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 students’ interview skills.

In addition, DKHMCC offers career services workshops from the freshman year as part of SMU’s pioneering [Finishing Touch \(FT\) programme](#). The compulsory programme equips SMU undergraduates with career management skills and gears them towards employability and career readiness, by helping them develop and focus on their career goals progressively throughout their four-year course of study. Every year, DKHMCC organises more than 200 events such as 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 via DKHMCC, which works closely with industry to ensure successful placements in internships and jobs. The DKHMCC’s close and regular contact with employers is vital in helping SMU students be market-relevant and career-ready. Students also have access to a 24/7 web based portal (OnTRAC) to search for internships and career opportunities.

DKHMCC also continues to support graduates up to one year after their graduation, with continued access to the jobs portal, employability clinics and personalised assistance by individual career coaches, should they require further guidance.

Examples of 2019 Graduates who have benefited from the SMU educational experience

Kelvin Fan Shih Lei, a graduate of the Lee Kong Chian School of Business, did two internships, as he felt it was helpful to explore different industries and interests, as well as differences between working at an MNC and a boutique firm. The first was a consulting internship at a boutique firm, while the second was as a Summer Analyst at an investment bank. The internships sharpened his analytical skillset, communications skills and gave him a better understanding of the banking industry. He eventually took up an offer prior to graduation with Bain & Company, where he is currently employed as an Associate Consultant. He said, “My time in SMU was immensely exciting and fulfilling, and I am

thankful for all the opportunities which the University had offered to me so as to develop myself holistically. Through the leadership positions, real-world group projects, innovative and industry relevant coursework, as well as amazing network of people, I was not only able to develop my hard and heart skills, but also gained a better understanding of myself. This provided me with a clearer perspective of what is important to me and where I should be headed post-graduation.”

Grace Foo Huan Ting, a graduate from the School of Information Systems (SIS), also did two internships. Her second one at Grab in 2018, which involved learning about how IT is being transformed at start-ups, eventually landed her a job there. She said, “During my internship, I learned a lot of new technical knowledge from my talented mentors and believe that internship/related work experience would be an important factor to recruiters in deciding whether you get the first job or not”. She added that at SMU, she has also learnt how to be resilient and not to give up easily when searching for answers. “This is especially important for SIS graduates as the pace of technology changes very fast and there is a need to continually update yourself with new knowledge.”

Mark Teoh Joo Pin, a graduate from the School of Accountancy, was given multiple overseas opportunities during his time in SMU. He participated in an exchange programme at the University of Bocconi in Italy and also went to Cambodia for an overseas community service project. Further, as part of his university curriculum, he attended a Business Study Mission in Scandinavia which exposed him to the Green Sector, Scandinavian businesses and their approaches to sustainability. Inspired by his overseas experiences, Mark seeks to be an accelerator of change and be a part of global decarbonisation efforts. This ultimately led him to his current job at Keppel Capital as an investment analyst. Whether it is investing in green energy assets like solar/wind farms or helping cities improve by helping fund the building of roads, Mark sees infrastructure as an important tool for shaping cities and communities. According to him, “the breadth of opportunities, commitment to innovation, and the push to have a global mindset at SMU have not only equipped me with the tools needed to effect change, but also made me realise the importance of making a positive impact on society.”

SMU’s 2019 graduates across all six Schools enjoyed competitive monthly salaries

Information Systems graduates earned the highest salary with a mean monthly salary of \$4,549, a 9 per cent increase over the 2018 cohort (\$4,160). The median gross monthly salary is \$4,300, up from \$4,000 in 2018. Those with *Cum Laude* or better earned a mean gross monthly salary of \$5,212, compared to 2018’s \$4,659 and a median gross salary of \$5,000.

Business Management graduates’ mean gross monthly salary of \$4,181, similar to last year’s \$4,133. The median gross monthly salary was \$3,750, similar to \$3,700 in 2018. Those with *Cum Laude* or better earned a higher mean gross monthly salary of \$4,614, up from last year’s \$4,544, while the median gross monthly salary was \$4,167.

Economics graduates earned a mean monthly salary of \$4,159, similar to that in 2018 (\$4,140). The median gross monthly salary was \$3,900, up from \$3,700 in 2018. Those with *Cum Laude* or better earned a mean gross monthly salary of \$4,520 as compared to last year’s \$4,721, while the median gross monthly salary was \$4,038.

Accountancy graduates earned a mean monthly salary of \$3,802, up from \$3,607 in 2018. The median gross monthly salary is \$3,050, similar to that of \$3,000 in 2018. Those with *Cum Laude* or better earned a mean gross monthly salary of \$4,431, close to last year’s \$4,439, while the median gross monthly salary was \$3,600.

Social Sciences graduates earned a mean monthly salary of \$3,629, up from \$3,409 in 2018. The median gross monthly salary is \$3,500, an increase as compared to \$3,210 last year. Those with *Cum Laude* or better earned a mean gross monthly salary of \$3,742 (last year's was \$3,880) while the median gross monthly salary was \$3,500.

Please refer to Annex for the detailed figures.

The follow-up survey² on SMU **Law** graduates showed that 99.1% 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 \$5,064 and \$4,900 respectively. Those who attained a *Cum Laude* and above had a mean gross monthly salary of \$5,324 and median gross salary of \$5,550.

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.

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.

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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² SMU's **Law** graduates in 2018 were excluded from the 2018 survey results as they were undergoing pupillage in the first six months of their graduation. They have since started employment and are therefore included in the follow-up survey of JAUGES 2019.

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 to produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU's education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative and project-based approach to learning.

Home to over 10,000 students across undergraduate, postgraduate professional and post-graduate research programmes, SMU, is comprised of 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 bachelors, masters and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with the six schools, as well as in multidisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU emphasises rigorous, high-impact, multi- and interdisciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities around the world, as well as with partners in the business community and public sector. SMU's city campus is a modern facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community. www.smu.edu.sg