

Rosy job prospects for SIT graduates

Salaries comparable with those of peers from other unis: Poll

By Sandra Davie

THE Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) is hitting the target in its aim to nurture "best-in-class specialists" – graduates with deep knowledge and skills.

Results of the first graduate employment survey released by the six-year-old university on Oct 15 showed that its graduates enjoyed job prospects that are comparable with those of other university graduates here. Most of them are also hired for positions in the areas that they were trained for.

Almost 92 per cent of its graduates secured jobs within six months of completing their degree courses.

This is higher than the 90 per cent employment rate for graduates from the older universities, which released their yearly survey results in February.

The gross median salary of SIT graduates working in full-time jobs was \$3,000 – \$200 lower than the figure reported by the National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and Singapore Management University.

SIT said the starting salaries of its graduates differ across industries. For instance, interior design and culinary arts graduates have slightly lower starting salaries than the others. However, as they accumulate years of work experience, they will be able to catch up with their peers in terms of salaries, it added.

But the university noted that the salaries of its graduates in specific fields are comparable with those of their peers from the other universities.

For example, its nursing graduates earn a gross median monthly salary of about \$3,500, similar to that of nursing graduates from NUS, and its mechanical engineering graduates' gross median monthly salary of \$3,200 is

close to that of their peers with the same qualifications from NTU.

The survey also showed that the majority of SIT graduates – a high 87 per cent – go on to work in jobs related to their fields of study. Almost 100 per cent of those with IT and health and social sciences-related degrees took on jobs in the industries they were trained for.

Of the 1,212 SIT students who graduated last year, 1,006 took part in the survey from March to May. The students surveyed had graduated with degrees from SIT's overseas partners, which include the Technical University of Munich, the DigiPen Institute of Technology and the Culinary Institute of America.

SIT said it did not have a large number of graduates in previous years to carry out such a survey. It has to do its survey later in the year than the other universities as its final examination dates differ from theirs.

SIT, which opened in 2009 to offer degree pathways to polytechnic graduates, started its own degree programmes last year. This year, it added more of its own degrees and increased its total intake to 2,080.

During the National Day Rally in August, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced that the university, which now runs its courses at its satellite campuses in the five polytechnics, will increase its yearly intake to 3,500 by 2020 and have a centralised campus in Punggol.

SIT president Tan Thiam Soon said the high employment rate, competitive salaries and the fact that the large majority of SIT graduates are employed



PHOTO: SIT

SIT president Tan Thiam Soon says its students are "well prepared for the jobs in the industries they are aiming for".

in relevant jobs, are attributable to the university's strong symbiotic relationship with the industries.

He said: "Our students are well prepared for the jobs in the industries they are aiming for. And there is huge demand for skilled graduates in many of these industries, such as allied health services and some engineering fields such as power engineering."

Occupational therapy graduate Karishma Kishore Wagle, 23, can vouch for that.

Just weeks after she completed her degree offered by Trinity College Dublin through SIT, she had two job offers to choose from.

"I applied for only two jobs and received offers for both," said Miss Karishma, who chose to work as an occupational therapist with SPD, the voluntary welfare group that works with people with disabilities.

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The text of this story first appeared in The Straits Times on Oct 16, 2015.