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Headline: Tech grads in Singapore have no trouble finding a job — Survey

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IT and digital technology students who graduated in Singapore last year reported an extremely high full-time employment rate of **91.7 percent**.

The category of graduates also commanded the highest median salary at SG\$4,100 (US\$3,000). The figure is significantly higher than the overall median of SG\$3,500 (US\$2,500) according to the survey.

The 2018 Joint Graduate Employment Survey covered 11,200 fresh graduates from four universities – Nanyang Technological University (NTU), the National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore Management University (SMU), and Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS).

Universities **credited** internships and work attachments programmes as the principal reason for IT graduates securing employment quickly after graduation.

Internships are also a way for companies to recruit for short-term and pilot projects, and also allows companies to sift through profiles and work with students to really find the right fit for the long-term.

Further, the interim employment in an authentic work environment readies students better for the workforce.

NTU Associate Provost for undergraduate education Professor Tan Ooi Kiang claims that these experiences give students the upper hand.

“Employers expect more from job candidates, and internships can open the door to multiple job offers well before graduation,” Tan said.

Tan further commented that students that complete the short-term programme are far more driven and prepared for the global workplace.

Internships or work attachments for NTU students range from 10 to 30 weeks either locally or overseas. More than one-third of Business & Computing graduates were hired by their internship companies.

SUSS stated in a press release that work attachments are compulsory for full-time undergraduates. The university pointed out that work attachments make up at least 24 weeks of the students’ courses.

Some digital projects are only a matter of weeks or months. So, the format of such programme allows companies to fill the roles easily.

This will help companies ensure sufficient headcount for short-term digital projects as well as IT students in exploring different industries.

SMU graduate Tay Jing Ying said that her internship experience helped her gain exposure and expand opportunities.

“Apart from the technical knowledge gained, the curriculum also built my analytical thinking, resilience and interpersonal skills, which are crucial and relevant in the real world,” said Tay.

Moreover, companies could use the duration to assess the suitability of each candidate before converting them into a permanent headcount.

She is currently working as a technology analyst at Bank of America Merrill Lynch, one of the many companies she interned at.

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NUS graduate Celeste Ang interned at artificial intelligence start-up AppZen in the Silicon Valley. She joined the programme to help “develop [her] soft skills and an entrepreneurial mindset.”

Ang is currently working with Unilever as a data scientist.

Be it big data or quantum computing, the demand for digitization is soaring across all industries and markets. There are infinite possibilities for how technologies will shape tomorrow’s businesses.

Ultimately, technological breakthroughs rely on what’s being accomplished by talents in their respective fields.

Companies that open doors for more student internships and work attachments are not merely adding value to their own interests. Subsequently, the effort will drive the digital talent pool to be more innovative in keeping us all ahead with technology.