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Singapore's first batch of *Advanced Diploma in Data Protection* students graduate

1,500 business professionals have successfully completed data protection training offered by SMU Academy and Straits Interactive in 2019

Singapore, 13 December 2019 (Friday) - Singapore Management University (SMU) and Straits Interactive (SI) today announced that a total of 1,500 professionals have been trained this year at SMU Academy, the University's professional training arm, through 15 data protection related courses. This is a 50 per cent increase from 2018. The announcement was made in conjunction with the graduation of its first batch of 12 *Advanced Diploma in Data Protection* graduates, which was held this evening at SMU. The graduates began their journey in July 2018.

The *Advanced Diploma in Data Protection* is awarded to participants who have successfully completed both the *Advanced Certificate in Data Protection Operational Excellence* and *Advanced Certificate in Data Protection Principles* (11 course modules in total). These two Advanced Certificate programmes, which cover data protection principles and operational requirements of data protection laws in the ASEAN region, Greater China and the European Union, can be accumulated via a credit system, leading to an *Advanced Diploma in Data Protection*. Launched in July 2018, the curriculum is targeted at both legal and non-legal professionals interested in data privacy and protection, and is the first of its kind in the ASEAN region.

Aside from the 12 *Advanced Diploma in Data Protection* students who graduated today, 51 *Advanced Certificate in Data Protection Operational Excellence* students and 17 *Advanced Certificate in Data Protection Principles* students also received their graduation certificates. These participants come from varied backgrounds, including legal professionals, DPOs, compliance as well as information security professionals.

Dr Lim Lai Cheng, Executive Director, SMU Academy, said, "At the SMU Academy, we have seen a significant rise in interest level and enquiries regarding our data protection courses. This illustrates the heightened awareness of the need to properly manage personal data in compliance with the Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA), and the consequent increase in demand for such expertise among companies in Singapore."

Congratulating the first batch of graduates who have successfully attained the *Advanced Diploma*, she added, "Being the first to have completed our unique practice-based and application-oriented data protection curriculum, I am confident that this group of data protection specialists will become an invaluable asset to their respective organisations. The knowledge that they have gained will also bode well for their future careers in this field."

Besides the advanced certificate modules, in 2019, more than 800 course participants, including data protection officers (DPO), attended certification training such as the *Practitioner Certificate in Data Protection* conducted by the Personal Data Protection Commission (PDPC), as well as international certification courses conducted by the *International Association of the Privacy Professionals* (IAPP).

Kevin Shepherdson, CEO, Straits Interactive, highlighted, "We are seeing an upward trend towards both local and international data protection-related certification courses, especially in developing and

implementing a data protection management programme (DPMP). This trend will likely continue due to the shortage of data protection officers (DPO) and new laws being introduced in the region requiring the appointment of a DPO and the emphasis on data protection in the government sector.”

The IAPP had estimated in 2016 that there would be a worldwide shortage of 75,000 DPOs due to the impact of the European Union's new General Data Protection Regulation. The DPEX centre had also forecasted in the same period that Singapore would need more than 10,000 skilled data protection professionals locally by 2020.

Information about the range of data protection courses offered by SMU Academy can be found at <https://academy.smu.edu.sg> as well as at www.dpexcentre.com

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About Straits Interactive

Straits Interactive delivers end-to-end governance, risk and compliance solutions that enable trusted business and responsible marketing, especially in the area of data privacy and protection. Recently voted one of the Top 25 Compliance Solutions Providers in the Asia Pacific by Asia Pacific CIO Outlook magazine, we help businesses achieve operational compliance and manage risks through a combination of cloud technology and professional services. Our software-as-a-service solutions include DPOinBox and Governance, Risk & Compliance System (GRACIAS), all of which are supported by professional services that include advisory services, audits, and training. More information about the company can be found on www.straitsinteractive.com.

About Singapore Management University

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

About SMU Academy

Launched in April 2017, SMU Academy is the professional training arm of the Singapore Management University. With its pillars of Financial Services; Human Capital Management & Leadership; Technology & Intelligent Systems; and Service, Operations & Business Improvement; the Academy leverages SMU's reputation and linkages to prepare our workforce with the competencies, skills upgrading and career resilience required for the future economy. <http://academy.smu.edu.sg>

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