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COVER STORY

PolyU talents crowned



Smiling faces at the January camps of the Leadership and Competence for Success Programme.

Graduates from PolyU have been ranked “most preferred” by recruiters. They have also been recognized for offering the highest practical value among local graduates, according to a recent independent survey.

Commenting on these findings, University President Prof. Poon Chung-kwong said: “This is no doubt a great encouragement to the University. The survey results fully demonstrate the community’s appreciation of our staff and students’ progress and achievements, and for this we are truly grateful.”

In order to evaluate the University’s image in the eyes of public, an independent agency was commissioned by PolyU to conduct an image and identity survey through questionnaires and in-depth interviews among 700 respondents in late 2003. The respondents included employers, secondary school principals, teachers, students and their parents, community leaders, government officials, and PolyU alumni, staff and students. Two similar studies were conducted in 1994 and 1999.

Among the employers surveyed, 35 per cent ranked PolyU graduates as their first choice for recruitment, nearly doubling the percentage obtained from the 1999 survey.

'most preferred' by employers



The findings on some other strengths of PolyU remained relatively consistent with the previous two surveys. Prof. Poon said: "I am happy that PolyU was once again ranked first by employers in producing graduates of the highest practical value to them, similar to the results of past surveys." About 43 per cent of recruiter respondents regarded PolyU graduates as most practical.

In addition, the University attained the highest rating for its practicality of courses in relation to career development, with 77 per cent of respondents giving "excellent/very good" rating on a five-point scale to PolyU in this aspect.

Another encouraging finding was that PolyU emerged as one of the top three choices among secondary school students in their selection of tertiary institutions for further studies. About 17 per cent of the student respondents ranked PolyU as first choice, eight per cent second and 37 per cent third.

Furthermore, the employers surveyed highly praised our 'Preferred Graduate' Development Programme (PGDP) for helping equip graduates with practical working experience and understanding of the workplace.

Deputy President Mr Alexander Tzang, who masterminded this summer placement programme, was thrilled about such feedback. "The employers' preference for hiring PGDP participants as seen from the survey testifies to the value of the increased efforts we have devoted to student development in recent years."

Since PolyU's launch of the PGDP in 1997, more than 750 companies and organizations have joined as partners and about 3,800 students have benefited from the programme's summer placements both at home and abroad.

Mr Tzang added he was gratified to see PolyU's Leadership and Competence for Success Programme (LCSP), an intensive leadership training programme for students, was strongly commended by both PolyU staff and students for its practicality in the survey.

Some respondents, however, expressed a general concern over the standard of language proficiency, general knowledge, communication and critical thinking skills of local university graduates, including those from PolyU.

Mindful of the public's high expectations of PolyU, Prof. Poon remarked, "While we are deeply encouraged by the survey findings, we fully realize that this is no time for us to rest on our laurels. Instead, we are already stepping up our efforts to further develop our strengths, strive for improvements, and do our best to sharpen the competitiveness of our graduates."



President cites findings about PolyU's image:

- ★ Graduates most preferred by recruiters
- ★ Graduates offer the highest practical value to employers
- ★ Highest rating for practicality of courses

(See p.18-19 for more details)



PDGP offers eye-opening experience for electrical engineering student Chung Ching-Ngai, placed in CLP Holdings Ltd in Hong Kong, and civil engineering student Janice Fan King-chee, attached to DEKTRADE a.s. in Czech Republic.



Destination of 2003 batch of graduates

Graduates' Destination	First-degree	Sub-degree	Higher degree	Total
Engaged in job/Study	2,024 (97%)	1,475 (96.8%)	132 (75%)	3,631 (95.9%)
Employed/Self-employed	1,798 (86.2%)	840 (55.1%)	115 (65.3%)	2,753 (72.7%)
Engaged in temporary/part-time job	105 (5%)	76 (5%)	4 (2.3%)	185 (4.9%)
Full-time further study	121 (5.8%)	559 (36.7%)	13 (7.4%)	693 (18.3%)
Unemployed	50 (2.4%)	42 (2.8%)	9 (5.1%)	101 (2.7%)
Not seeking employment	10 (0.5%)	4 (0.3%)	2 (1.1%)	16 (0.4%)
Emigrated/Returned to country of origin /Others	2 (0.1%)	3 (0.2%)	33 (18.8%)	38 (1%)
Total no. of respondents	2,086	1,524	176	3,786

Good employment news

A reflection of the public's perception of PolyU graduates is perhaps best found in the latest employment statistics on the 2003 batch of PolyU graduates. With the beginning of a rebound in the SAR's economy, only 2.4 per cent of first-degree graduates from PolyU were still seeking employment by December 2003, down 0.1 per cent from that of the previous year. Among those employed graduates, 81.7 per cent secured their first job offer within three months after graduation.

These statistics were released in the recent Graduate Employment Survey conducted by the Student Affairs Office. It reviewed the employment status of PolyU full-time

graduates of all degree, sub-degree and postgraduate levels as of December 2003. Out of the 4,106 graduates in 2003, 3,786 valid responses were received, representing a response rate of 92.2 per cent.

It is worth noting that a substantial 18 per cent of respondents who had undertaken local placements under PGDP were employed by the same employers after graduation.

Statistics showed that PolyU graduates who had joined both PGDP and LCSP had an easier time in securing jobs. More than half of them were employed as soon as June 2003.

Among first-degree graduates, two disciplines recorded a sharp rise in graduates' average monthly salary: nursing graduates were fully employed and their salary rose by 14.1 per cent to \$20,366; and the average salary for the hospitality and tourism sector also increased by 11 per cent to \$10,276 per month. The average monthly salary of all employed first-degree graduates was \$9,644.

According to Mrs Dorinda Fung, Director of Student Affairs, PolyU students can expect to enjoy better prospect in their job hunt this year, as employers regain confidence and resume recruitment plans after the SARS outbreak is over. This year, more than 7,200 job vacancies have been advertised by late March 2004 to PolyU students, up 43.4 per cent when compared with the same period in 2003. The areas of job openings range from art and design to banking and finance, accounting, computing, teaching, marketing, merchandising and engineering.

With so many employers casting their vote of confidence in PolyU, the future for PolyU graduates certainly looks bright. ❖

Our student of the year

"The University is where my personal values and ambitions have come into reality", said Vinci Li, Most Outstanding PolyU Student and the Outstanding Student of the Faculty of Communication. A graduating student from the Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies, Vinci made some of her most crucial choices in life at PolyU. She learned Japanese and phonetics, got her first summer job and went to England on scholarship in her second year. When asked how to be an outstanding student, Vinci said: "I think time management, proper prioritization of tasks and knowing what oneself likes are all important." Vinci was first in class in both Year One and Year Two and has been actively involved in various activities and community services including the Hong Kong Student Ambassador Programme. ❖



僱主首選——理大畢業生

根 據最新的一項獨立調查顯示，在全港芸芸大學之中，僱主以理大畢業生為首選聘用對象，並認同理大的畢業生最具實用價值。

校長潘宗光教授表示：「本校對是次調查結果感到十分鼓舞，有關數據顯示公眾人士認同理大教職員與同學的成就。對社會各界的支持，我們十分感激。」

本校於二零零三年底委託一所獨立公司進行全面的大學形象調查，以評估理大在大眾心中的形象。受訪者約七百名，包括僱主、中學校長、教師、學生及家長、社會領袖、政府官員、以及理大校友、教職員及學生。在此之前，理大分別於一九九四年及九九年進行了兩項類似的調查。

最新的調查顯示，超過百分之三十五僱主以理大畢業生為首選聘用對象，此結果較一九九九年調查結果高出近一倍。

調查並發現理大其他幾項優勝之處仍與前兩次調查所得同樣廣獲認同。潘校長稱：「我很高興今次的調查再次顯示僱主認同理大培訓出同儕之中最高實用價值的畢業生。」此外，逾七成受訪者認為理大提供的實用課程最能切合開展事業的需要。另受訪的中學生更選理大為升學的首選三大院校之一。

在調查中受訪僱主也特別高度讚揚理大為學生安排暑假在職實習的「首選畢業生」培育計劃，稱能增加同學實際工作經驗和對工作環境的基本認識。

策動該實習計劃的常務副校長曾慶忠先生表示：「是次調查結果發現僱主特別喜歡聘用曾參加此計劃的畢業生，這證明我們近年投放在學生全面發展上的努力並沒有白費。」

自從「首選畢業生」培育計劃自一九九七年成立以來，夥伴機構的數目已有七百五十多家，共三千八百多名學生經此計劃獲安排在港或海外實習。

曾先生又欣然指出理大專為培育學生領袖才能而設的「青雲路計劃」，在調查中



獲理大師生大力表揚其實用價值。

有部分受訪者亦表示關注本地各大學，包括理大畢業生的語文水平、常識、溝通技巧及批判思考能力。

此外，潘校長又特別強調理大絕不會因外界對理大有良好的觀感便沾沾自喜：「我們已銳意鞭策自己加緊努力發展既有專長，同時在多方面力求改進。」

(形象調查詳情另見十八至十九頁。)

畢業生就業情況理想

綜觀理大最新的二零零三年畢業生就業統計數字，便可反映外界對理大畢業生的觀感。隨著香港經濟在「沙士」疫症過後反彈，在二零零三年年底，只有百分之二點四理大學士學位畢業生仍未就業，相比去年下降百分之零點一。在受僱畢業生中，百分之八十一點七於畢業後三個月內即找到首份工作。

有關的「畢業生就業問卷調查」由學生事務處進行，以反映於二零零三年畢業之四千一百零六名學位、非學位及深造課程全日制畢業生，在零三年十二月的就業情況。調查共接到三千七百八十份回覆，回

覆率高達百分之九十二點二。

值得一提的是，有百分之十八曾參加本地「首選畢業生」培育計劃的畢業生獲實習的機構聘用。調查數據又顯示曾參加「首選畢業生」培育計劃及「青雲路計劃」的畢業生較容易找到工作，他們當中超過一半早於二零零三年六月已有僱主錄用。

在學士學位畢業生中，護理學和旅遊業管理兩項課程的畢業生不單全體就業，薪酬方面亦有顯著增幅：護理課程畢業生平均月薪為二萬零三百六十六元，比二零零二年上升百分之十四點一；而在酒店及旅遊業界別就職的畢業生平均月薪為一萬零二百七十六元，上升百分之十一。同年畢業的學士學位畢業生整體平均月薪則為九千六百四十四元。

學生事務總監馮陳敏慈女士表示，由於今年在「沙士」過後僱主漸重拾信心恢復招聘人才，預期今年的理大畢業生亦將有更樂觀的就業前景。截至今年三月底，便有超過七千二百個職位空缺可供理大準畢業生申請，較去年同期上升百分之四十三點四。

既有眾多僱主對理大培育的專才滿懷信心，理大畢業生的前景自然一片光明。 ☀