

Press Release

16 October 2013

East Meets West with Two of the Best Hospitality Schools in the World Signing a Student Exchange Programme

The School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) and Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL) in Switzerland have recently entered into an agreement on launching a student exchange programme dedicated to the development of students, particularly in the areas of global outlook and cultural appreciation.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Professor Kaye Chon, Dean and Chair Professor of the SHTM, and Professor Michel Rochat, General Director of EHL, today (16 October) at the SHTM premises in Hong Kong. The signing ceremony was witnessed by important officials from Switzerland, senior management executives of the EHL and guests from the hotel industry. Among them were Mrs Rita Hämmerli-Weschke, Consul General of Switzerland in Hong Kong and Macau, Mr André Witschi, President of the EHL Board of Governors, Mr Calvin Mak, Founder and CEO, Rhombus International Hotels Group Incorporation, as well as EHL Alumni Mr Felix M. Bieger, Adviser, The Hong Kong & Shanghai Hotels Ltd., and Mr Fritz Sommerau, General Manager, Gateway Hotel.

Both institutions saw this agreement as the first step towards further collaboration. Under the MoU, each institution agrees to exchange students for a period from one semester up to one academic year. It is expected that the SHTM will receive 15 students from the EHL and send a similar number of students to study at the EHL during the same period.

Professor Rochat said the MoU was an important step to promote stronger links between the two institutions and provide added value for the students. “We hope to assist our students in their careers, fostering their development and employability. Enthusiastic and talented, our students are the school’s greatest asset. Enabling them to acquire experience, and especially to gain exposure to the Eastern market, is key to their career development.”

Only students with a solid academic performance and a good level of English will be selected to participate in the programme.

Professor Kaye Chon believed that the School’s colleagues share the same commitment to nurturing the next generations. “Our students’ outlook is very important,” he said. “We help them to be reflective, appreciative of diverse cultures and to acquire a global outlook. We are committed to providing students with the best educational experience during their time in our School.”

SHTM’s intellectual and stimulating environment encourages a robust research culture, allowing its students to make positive contributions to the growth and enhancement of hospitality and tourism education and research. With the School’s advancement as a global leader in hospitality education, its graduates are sought after by academic and research institutes, both locally and overseas. Dr Yong Chen, a Ph.D. graduate of the SHTM, will join Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne in January 2014 as Assistant Professor.

Professor Chon remarked, “We are proud to be associated with the EHL, the origin of hospitality education on a global basis, and to be producing future leaders for global hospitality education.”

In addition, Dr Stéphanie Pougnet, Assistant Professor at the EHL, has already inaugurated the “visiting scholars” programme between the two institutions. In that context, from 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2014, she will teach two courses per semester at the SHTM and will take part in SHTM research projects. Based on her experience and feedback, the EHL would like to renew the experience in 2014 with one or two other professors.

About Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne

Rooted in the Swiss sense of hospitality Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL) has, since 1893, been a pioneer in education that has inspired the world of hospitality and created a unique professional community of 25,000 global industry executives who share the same values based on EHL’s distinctive heritage.

As the world’s premier reference in hospitality management, EHL offers university-level studies to talented and ambitious students who are aiming for top careers in the international hospitality industry. Three programmes are offered:

- Diploma in Hotel and Restaurant Management
- Bachelor of Science in International Hospitality Management
- Executive MBA in Hospitality Administration

Today, EHL provides an enriching environment with world-class Faculty and ultra-modern campus facilities to some 2,000 passionate students from close to 90 countries.

EHL website: www.ehl.edu

About PolyU School of Hotel and Tourism Management

PolyU’s School of Hotel and Tourism Management is a world-leading provider of hospitality and tourism education. It was ranked No. 2 internationally among hotel and tourism schools based on research and scholarship, according to a study published in the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research* in November 2009.

With 65 academic staff drawing from 20 countries and regions, the School offers programmes at levels ranging from Higher Diploma to Ph.D. Currently a member of the UNWTO Knowledge Network, the School was bestowed the McCool Breakthrough Award in 2012 by the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (I-CHRIE) recognising its breakthrough in the form of its teaching and research hotel – Hotel ICON – the heart of the School’s innovative approach to hospitality and tourism education.

SHTM website: www.polyu.edu.hk/htm



Professor Kaye Chon, Dean and Chair Professor of SHTM (left) and Professor Michel Rochat, General Director of EHL signed the Memorandum of Understanding on launching a student exchange programme dedicated to the development of students.



The MoU signing ceremony was witnessed by important officials from Switzerland, senior management executives of EHL, SHTM, Hotel ICON and guests from the hotel industry.

Press contacts:

Mrs Anouck Weiss, Director of Communications

Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne

Telephone : +41 (0) 21 785 13 54

E-mail : anouck.weiss@ehl.ch

Ms Pascale Stehlin, Press Officer

Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne

Telephone : +41 (0) 21 785 13 49

E-mail : pascale.stehlin@ehl.ch

Ms Pauline Ngan, Senior Marketing Manager

School of Hotel and Tourism Management, PolyU

Telephone : (852) 3400 2634

E-mail : pauline.ngan@polyu.edu.hk