Students in demand

Mid-east MNCs headhunt SMU undergrads

NG JING YNG
jingyng@mediacorp.com.sg

FOR the first time, undergraduates from the Singapore Management University (SMU) may receive job offers in Kuwait or elsewhere in the Middle East before graduation, as the region’s multinationals headhunt them even before they step out of school.

At least seven business undergraduates from the SMU have been short-listed by Alghanim Industries — one of the largest private companies in the Gulf region.

Two other Middle Eastern multinational companies — Dubai Industrial City and Fullerston Financial Holdings Dubai — are looking at SMU undergraduates for the first time.

While these MNCs do recruit from other overseas universities, they usually look for Master of Business Administration (MBA) students, according to the SMU.

Last week, Alghanim Industries flew seven SMU students to Kuwait for interviews for analyst positions in areas such as finance, branding and business management.

According to Mr Zafar Momin, executive vice-president of Alghanim Industries, the company’s interview panel told him that the quality of Singapore students is very high.

Compared to their counterparts from universities in the United States and Europe, students here are “all-rounded with strong involvement in extracurricular activities” as well as having “a good international perspective”.

He was also impressed with the many resumes submitted by the students, and was surprised at both their knowledge of, and interest in, the Middle East.

Final-year business management undergraduate Ng Shun Hao, 24, has applied for a position in finance at Alghanim Industries.

Mr Ng said it would be good for him “to be exposed to other cultures and understand how other places are developing”.

According to Mr Zafar, the company has also short-listed MBA students from the National University of Singapore and will be looking at the Nanyang Technological University in the coming year as Alghanim Industries plans to expand its businesses into South-east Asia.