

## MEDIA RELEASE

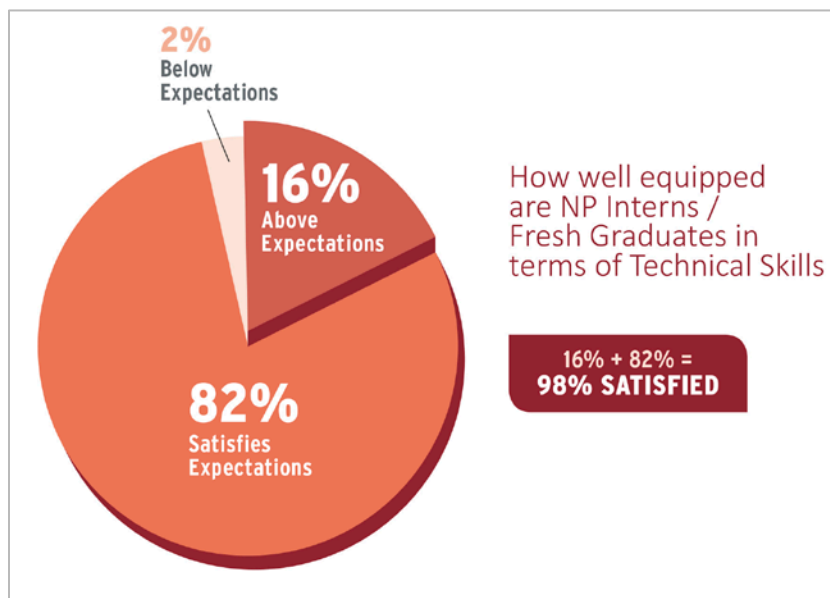
### **ALMOST 98% OF EMPLOYERS SATISFIED WITH TECHNICAL SKILLS OF NGEE ANN POLYTECHNIC INTERNS AND GRADUATES**

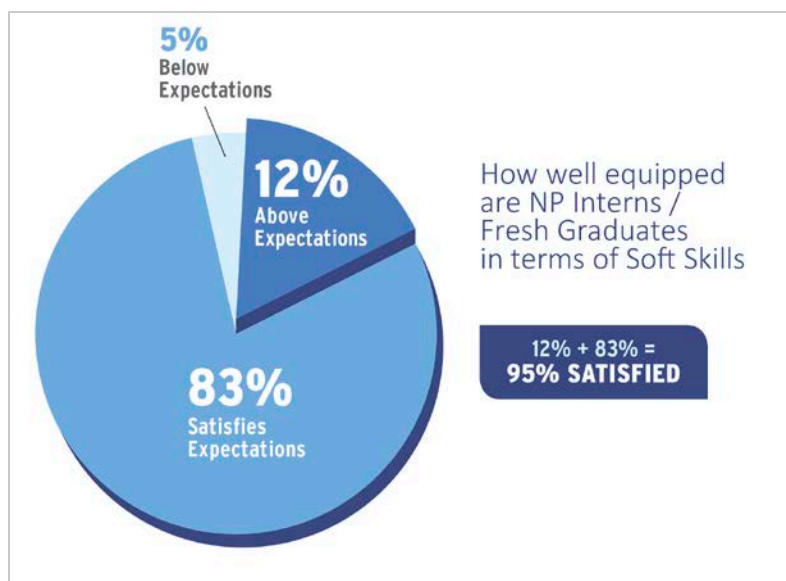
**Top skills employers want in poly interns and graduates: abilities to work in teams, take criticism positively and communicate verbally**

Singapore, 7 June 2017 – According to a survey jointly conducted by the Office of Internships & Careers at Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) and Glints, 98% of employers surveyed expressed satisfaction with the quality of technical skills NP interns or fresh graduates possess. In terms of soft skills, 95% were satisfied (see Table 1).

More than 1,000 employers across the various sectors such as government, non-profit, private entities or public-listed companies took part in this survey in the first quarter of 2017. The survey was administered online, with about 64% of the respondents having had experiences with NP interns.

Table 1: Technical Skills and Soft Skills of NP Interns/Fresh Graduates





### Most Valued Skills and Attributes

The respondents were also asked to rate the importance of a set of 14 skills and attributes<sup>1</sup> in interns or fresh graduates from the polytechnics. The top three sought-after skills are the abilities to **work in teams**, **accept and improve from constructive criticism**, and **communicate verbally** (see Table 2), while the top three sought-after attributes are **taking initiative**, having **strong work ethic** and **adaptability** (see Table 3).

Table 2: How employers rate the importance of these skills of Poly Interns/Fresh Graduates

	Government	Non-Profit	Privately-Held	Public	Grand Total
Ability to work in teams	4.63	4.41	4.35	4.21	4.35
Ability to accept and improve from constructive criticism	4.50	4.27	4.29	4.07	4.28
Ability to communicate verbally	4.25	4.34	4.26	4.16	4.26
Ability to plan, organise and prioritise work	4.25	4.13	4.20	4.04	4.19
Ability to relate well with others	4.25	4.21	4.15	4.00	4.15
Ability to solve problems	4.19	4.03	4.16	3.90	4.13
Ability to obtain, process and work with information	4.00	4.03	4.13	3.88	4.10
Ability to write for work	3.94	4.06	3.91	3.81	3.91
Ability to work in cross-cultural teams	4.13	4.00	3.80	3.78	3.81
Technical knowledge and skills related to the job	3.88	3.82	3.75	3.69	3.75
Ability to work with and analyse quantitative data	4.00	3.62	3.70	3.69	3.70
Proficiency with computer software programs	3.69	3.51	3.70	3.59	3.68
Ability to make decisions	3.81	3.70	3.67	3.74	3.68
Ability to persuade or influence others	3.75	3.66	3.54	3.53	3.55

\*Based on a 5-point scale where 1=Not Important at all, 2=Not Very Important, 3=Somewhat Important, 4=Very Important and 5=Extremely Important

<sup>1</sup> These skills and attributes were drawn from the National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE) Job Outlook 2016, World Economic Forum's (WEF) Future of Jobs report and Ministry of Education's (MOE) 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competencies.

All the skills surveyed have a mean importance score above 3.55 which can be inferred that employers recognise that all skills are important. One reason why soft skills rank highly in this survey could be that employers expect that polytechnic interns and graduates are already well-equipped with technical skills, hence they place more emphasis on soft skills when hiring polytechnic interns and graduates.

**Table 3: How employers rate the importance of these attributes of Poly Interns/Fresh Graduates**

	Government	Non-Profit	Privately-Held	Public	Grand Total
Has initiative	4.63	4.31	4.38	4.24	4.37
Has strong work ethic	4.63	4.18	4.26	4.06	4.25
Is adaptable	4.44	4.07	4.18	4.19	4.17
Has an eye for detail	4.06	3.96	4.09	3.85	4.07
Is actively looking for ways to help people	3.81	3.94	3.89	3.74	3.88
Is confident	3.94	3.76	3.88	3.85	3.87
Is creative	3.94	3.73	3.73	3.54	3.72
Has a strategic mindset	3.81	3.62	3.72	3.51	3.70
Is entrepreneurial and takes risk	3.31	3.20	3.30	3.24	3.29
Has prior work experience	3.25	3.23	3.16	3.03	3.16
Has good academic achievements	3.31	3.00	2.89	2.97	2.91
Has held leadership position in the polytechnic, secondary schools and/or with external organisations	3.06	3.10	2.89	2.78	2.90
Has participated in co-curricular or volunteer activities	2.81	3.24	2.82	2.79	2.85
Has embarked on overseas trips and/or programmes	2.56	2.72	2.52	2.62	2.54

\*Based on a 5-point scale where 1=Not Important at all, 2=Not Very Important, 3=Somewhat Important, 4=Very Important and 5=Extremely Important

The ranking of the attributes shows that employers – across all the sectors – hold the same high regard for attributes such as having initiative, strong work ethic and adaptability (mean scores of 4.37, 4.25 and 4.17 respectively). It is inferred that employers look beyond students' mere participation in co-curricular activities (CCA) and overseas programmes (mean scores of 2.85 and 2.54 respectively) and instead, look out for the skills and attributes honed from these activities and programmes. One implication from this finding is for interns or fresh graduates to flesh out the skills and attributes they have developed from their CCA and overseas exposure in their curriculum vitae, rather than just listing the activities they have participated in.

### Enhancing NP's Career Guidance Framework

The results of the skills survey affirm NP's focus on honing students' critical life skills and competencies. In response, Mr Clarence Ti, Principal of Ngee Ann Polytechnic, said: "We recognise the crucial role that soft skills play in our students' employability. Using the survey results as a starting point, we hope to bolster our career guidance framework and programmes to better equip our students with the skills and attributes valued by employers."

"The survey findings corroborate with our interactions with employers, who unanimously agree on the importance of soft skills, especially for interns and fresh graduates. With the takeaways from this survey, students can look forward to intentionally hone skills and attributes valued by

<sup>1</sup> These skills and attributes were drawn from the National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE) Job Outlook 2016, World Economic Forum's (WEF) Future of Jobs report and Ministry of Education's (MOE) 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competencies.

employers during their subsequent internships, which are available across diverse industries on NP@Glints,” said Glints’s Chief Operating Officer, Looi Qin En. NP@Glints is the career discovery platform developed by Glints in collaboration with NP, with more than half of the NP student population registered and over 1,000 applications sent since its inception in 2016.

Starting from the class of 2019, all NP students will graduate with a digital portfolio. These portfolios will document their skills and personal attributes in digital mediums, such as video, slides, photos and blogs, preparing them for a future economy where employers will look beyond their certificates and qualifications when hiring them.

Moving on, NP’s Office of Internships & Careers will also incorporate the skills and attributes valued by employers into a career self-efficacy inventory to help interns and graduates assess their work readiness before they enter the workforce. It will also provide guidance to students to help them improve key skills and attributes. These will, in turn, enhance their employment prospects.

### Hiring Outlook 2017

The survey also sought employers’ feedback on their hiring outlook for 2017. In all, the general hiring outlook remained the same for the class of 2017, compared to 2016. The private sector and non-profit organisations seemed more optimistic than government organisations. In terms of sectors, the energy, medical technology, and electronics industries were more optimistic over other industry sectors (see Table 4).

**Table 4: Hiring Outlook for 2017 by Industries & Types of Organisations**

Industry Classification	Number of Respondents	% of Total	Mean Hiring Outlook Score
Clean Energy	2	0.2%	4.00
Energy	11	1.1%	3.36
Medical Technology	14	1.3%	3.14
Electronics	32	3.1%	3.13
Infocomm Products	34	3.3%	3.09
International Non-Profit Organizations	24	2.3%	3.08
Precision Engineering	14	1.3%	3.07
Cities, Infrastructure & Industrial Solutions	31	3.0%	3.06
Consumer Business	152	14.5%	2.97
Professional Services	317	30.3%	2.97
Infocomm Services	68	6.5%	2.97
Healthcare	61	5.8%	2.95
Logistics and Supply Chain Management	51	4.9%	2.94
Others	49	4.7%	2.86
Marine and Offshore Engineering	21	2.0%	2.81
Content and Media	110	10.5%	2.78
Pharmaceuticals and Biotechnology	17	1.6%	2.76
Aerospace Engineering	10	1.0%	2.70
Environment and Water	15	1.4%	2.60
Chemicals	13	1.2%	2.46
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,046</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2.99</b>

Organisation Type	Number of Respondents	% of Total	Mean Hiring Outlook Score
Privately-Held	891	85.2%	3.11
Non-Profit	71	6.8%	2.77
Public	68	6.5%	2.85
Government	16	1.5%	2.35
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,046</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2.99</b>

*\*5-point scale, where 1=Much Worse, 2=Worse, 3=Unchanged, 4=Better and 5=Much Better*

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<sup>1</sup> These skills and attributes were drawn from the National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE) Job Outlook 2016, World Economic Forum’s (WEF) Future of Jobs report and Ministry of Education’s (MOE) 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competencies.

## **About Ngee Ann Polytechnic**

Inaugurated in 1963 as Ngee Ann College with only 116 students, Ngee Ann Polytechnic is today one of Singapore's leading institutions of higher learning with about 15,000 full-time students, 2,000 part-time students and an alumni community of over 130,000.

The polytechnic offers 49 full-time courses through its nine academic schools - School of Business & Accountancy, School of Design & Environment, School of Engineering, School of Film & Media Studies, School of Health Sciences, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, School of InfoComm Technology, School of Interdisciplinary Studies, and School of Life Sciences & Chemical Technology. Ngee Ann supports Continuing Education and Training (CET) through its CET Academy which offers a wide range of part-time programmes. The Polytechnic has also established two Centres of Innovation - in Environmental & Water Technology and Marine & Offshore Technology - to work on collaborative research and technology projects.

Learning takes place amid a caring and conducive environment with top-notch facilities ranging from broadcast, multimedia and animation studios to research laboratories as well as simulation and technology centres. With our emphasis on a broad-based education, coupled with our signature Service-Learning pedagogy and global exposure, Ngee Ann Polytechnic's vision is to prepare graduates with a passion for learning, values for life and competencies to thrive in a global workplace.

For more information, please visit [www.np.edu.sg](http://www.np.edu.sg).

## **About Glints**

Glints' is a career discovery and development platform that helps young people discover their passions and develop the relevant career skills, while empowering employers to attract the right talent more effectively. With more than 200,000+ talent, Glints has one of the most active young talent network in Singapore, with more than 8,000 employers including DBS, Adidas, Coach, IDA, GrabTaxi, RedMart and Great Eastern. The startup is founded by three 24-year-old Singaporeans and backed by prominent investors including Singapore Press Holdings (SPH), SG Innovate, and East Ventures.

You can find out more about Glints at [www.glints.com](http://www.glints.com)

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