

120 vie for place in SMU wealth mgt programme

**It is one of two such
master's courses in
the world: director**

By Daniel Buenas

SINGAPORE Management University's (SMU) master of science degree programme in wealth management has received an overwhelming response for its inaugural batch of students, with over 120 applications received, the school said.

Prof Francis Koh, associate dean of SMU's School of Business and director of the Wealth Management Programme, said that more than one-third of the applications have come from overseas, and SMU has already offered places to about 30 students for its first class.

The programme is a collaboration between SMU, the Wealth Management Institute (WMI) and the Swiss Banking School.

"This programme wasn't created for Singaporeans alone, it was meant to be a regional programme," said Prof Koh. "Several students have been placed on the waiting list, while others have been offered places in next year's class."

According to him, SMU is one of two schools in the world which offers a master's degree in wealth management. It was launched amid expectations of a massive inflow of offshore wealth into Singapore's private banks, as well as increasing allocations of institutional funds to Asian equity markets.

Classes for the year-long

programme — which costs \$48,000 — will begin in July this year, and consist of five two-week modules, with one module conducted at the Swiss Banking School in Switzerland. The programme allows for intensive study while on campus, and routine work to continue outside of it.

"The programme was modelled after an executive MBA programme," said Prof Koh. "There will also be over 30 internship opportunities for students to work with global asset management companies or private banking organisations."

The average applicant for the programme is around 30 years of age and has worked in a related industry — such as asset management or private banking — for four or five years.

"The applicants should have an interest, a motivation and a passion to enter this business," said Prof Koh. "In fact, many of our applicants already have the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) part one or part two."

He added that about one-third of those who have been offered places are company sponsored, while another third have been offered open scholarship grants donated by various companies.

"We are very encouraged by the industry help we have received for the programme," said Prof Koh. "We have more than 10 private banking organisations and more than 20 asset management companies who have shown their support."