Banking sector still popular among S’pore graduates

By SIOW LI SEN

[SINGAPORE] Bankers may not be universally popular, but the industry has lost none of its allure for many Singapore graduates.

Banks and the Big Four accounting firms are among the top employers of graduates of the National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University. Both universities are holding their career fairs this week.

According to NTU, of the 23 major employers of its graduates, four are banks. A major employer would have hired more than 100 NTU graduates over five consecutive years. The four banks are Citibank, Credit Suisse, OCBC Bank and United Overseas Bank.

Other major employers include ExxonMobil, Defence Science & Technology Agency, Keppel Offshore & Marine, and Singapore Press Holdings. ExxonMobil has hired over 150 NTU graduates in the last five years, NTU said.

Internship has been particularly helpful in landing NTU graduates their coveted jobs. Credit Suisse and ExxonMobil are two companies which have converted a high percentage of NTU interns to full time staff over the years, NTU said.

“At ExxonMobil, which hired over 150 NTU graduates in the last five years, about four out of 10 were employed through internship programmes, and a third was recruited through campus recruitment activities,” said NTU.

While some firms hire graduates from specific disciplines, such as engineering or accountancy, others recruit from a wide variety of disciplines.

NTU student Sarvesh Sudhir Nevata, 21, who is graduating with a degree in mechanical engineering, is one of those who have decided to go into an industry unrelated to his degree.

He is joining Credit Suisse’s investment banking division, after spending a two-month internship stint at the firm.

At NUS, which will have 10,000 graduates looking for jobs this year, banking/financial services, engineering/ manufacturing, consulting, airline/travel and academic research seem to be popular industries among graduating students, said a spokeswom.