

Global education, international exposure

ESTHER TEO

ESSEC Business School alumna Valerie Chan, 28, had not intended to attend university in a non-English speaking country.

But when the idea was mooted during her scholarship interview at a statutory board, the then 18-year-old was inspired.

“I found it a very fascinating option. I don’t think students in Singapore then were exposed to such alternatives. I was determined to choose something novel, fun and most importantly, challenging,” the graduate of the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) programme recalls.

Upon being awarded a government scholarship, she left for Paris to pursue the four-year BBA programme at the top French business school.

The Global BBA has been offered in ESSEC’s campus in France for more than 40 years. Last year, it was ranked as the top four-year bachelor programme in France by French news magazines and media — Le Point, l’Etudiant and Challenge.

Professor Martine Bronner, dean of ESSEC Business School, Asia-Pacific, says the Global BBA prepares students for a successful international business career with ample international exposure, as well as rich academic and professional experiences with a multicultural faculty and student body.



Being well versed in both French and Chinese language and culture helps Ms Chan (left, pictured with Prof Bronner) build rapport in the workplace.

PHOTO: NURIA LING

Delivered in English, Global BBA students can choose to start the programme in Singapore or one of ESSEC’s other campuses in France, Mauritius or Morocco.

Espousing “learning by doing” as a pedagogy, the programme blends theory and practice through case studies, simulation games, professional talks, and work experience totalling one year by the end of the four-year programme.

There is also a compulsory student exchange programme in one of the school’s 132 partner universities worldwide.

Other tracks, such as the International Business Education Alliance (IBEA) programme, allows selected Global BBA students to study in each of ESSEC’s partner member schools — Mannheim Business School (Germany), Darla Moore School of Business (United States) and the Brazilian School of Public and Business Administration (Brazil).

After two years of studying in Paris, Ms Chan, wanted a taste of “the other extreme of culture, language, and geography”, and so chose to do a one-year exchange at Tsinghua University in Beijing.

After graduation, she went on to complete a master’s programme at Stanford University.

Now a consultant at global management consulting firm McKinsey & Company, Ms Chan says that her time at ESSEC imbued her with a global perspective and confidence.

She says: “The opportunity to study with top students in France and in China has set me apart because I have had my thinking validated, and I am not afraid to share my perspectives.”