



Stenden
SouthAfrica

Hotel Management School

Alumni Survey 2018



Road to Le Petit Manoir in Franshoek, opened by Stenden Alumni JP Lombard & Frank Heyneke

Stenden South Africa

November 2018

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Method.....	3
3. Respondents.....	4
4. Results	5
4.1 Roles in Industry	5
4.2 Salary	7
4.3 Other Employment Benefits	9
4.4 The Curriculum & Industry Readiness	11
4.5 The Internship Experience	13
4.6 The Overall Education Experience	14
4.7 Executive Short Courses	14
5. Conclusions.....	15

1. Introduction

‘Your success is our success’ is a credo that is often heard at the Stenden South Africa graduation ceremony. At Stenden, we believe the ultimate measure of our effectiveness as a Hotel Management School is how our alumni look back at us and progress in their careers.

This report presents the results of the 2018 Stenden South Africa Hotel Management School alumni survey that was conducted over September 2018. The results of this survey are complemented and contextualized with the Stenden South Africa alumni database and earlier surveys of 2013 and 2015. The alumni database is a database that includes all 286 alumni from 13 cohorts of graduates that the Stenden South Africa Hotel Management School has graduated since its first graduation in 2006.

This year’s alumni survey additionally explored the specific interest of graduates in executive courses which will be reported on in isolation.

We consider the perspectives and performance of our alumni as the key indicators of our success as a Higher Education Institution and we take great pride in the results presented whilst simultaneously exploring how we can be better in what we do: Unleashing Potential.

2. Method

The alumni survey was electronically distributed over the month of September 2018. Alumni were invited with a link to SurveyMonkey.com to participate. This link was distributed directly to alumni only via the Stenden South Africa Alumni Facebook page, Facebook Messenger, and WhatsApp.

Participation was stimulated through the promise of a Stenden South Africa Hoodie for every 10th respondent and the sharing of results with all participants.

3. Respondents

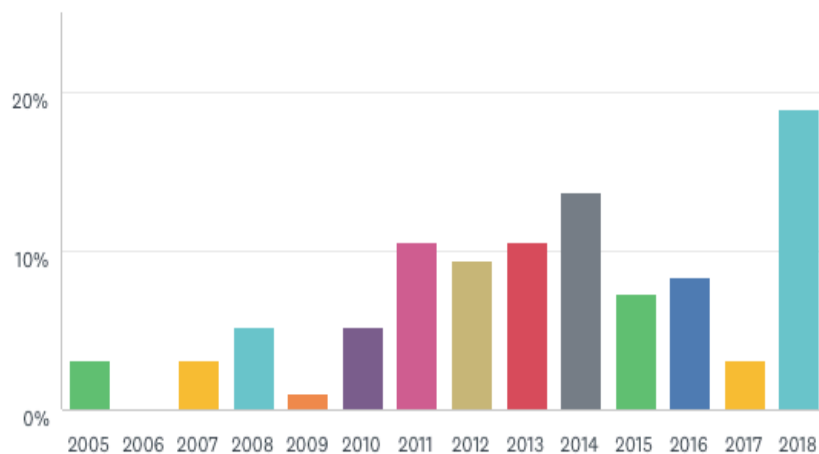
A total of 95 responses were received, the first one 12 September 2018 and the last one on 1 October 2018.

The response rate constituted $95 / 286 = 33\%$. Compared to previous years, this is a normal response (2013 was 44% and 2015 was 27%). Respondents were relatively well distributed over the years with a slight bias to the most recent year of graduation. This trend was visible in previous years as well. This is outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Graduation year of Respondents

In which year did you receive your degree?

Answered: 95 Skipped: 0



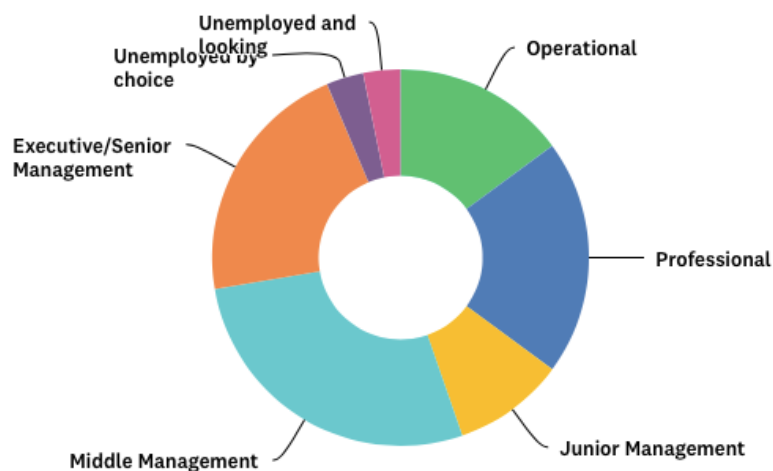
4. Results

4.1 Roles in Industry

A total of 94 respondents indicated their current position in industry. A total of 7 options were presented to choose from. The full sample overview is depicted in figure 2.

Figure 2 Current Position in Industry (Full Sample)

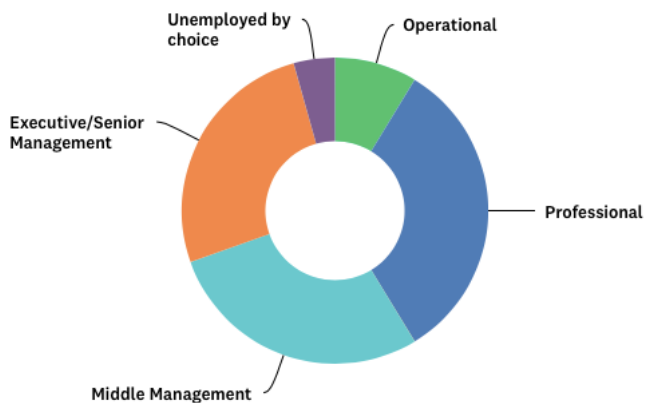
..



From figure 2 it can be seen that most graduates report to be in Middle Management positions (28%). The second largest group reports being in Senior Management positions or to own a business. The third largest group reports to be employed in professional roles. Three percent of respondents indicate to be unemployed and looking for employment.

As the sample had a relatively high percentage of respondents who had only recently graduated, the data was filtered further to include only graduates who have graduated more than 5 years ago (2013 and before). This data shows some interesting differences from the full data set and is outlined in figure 3.

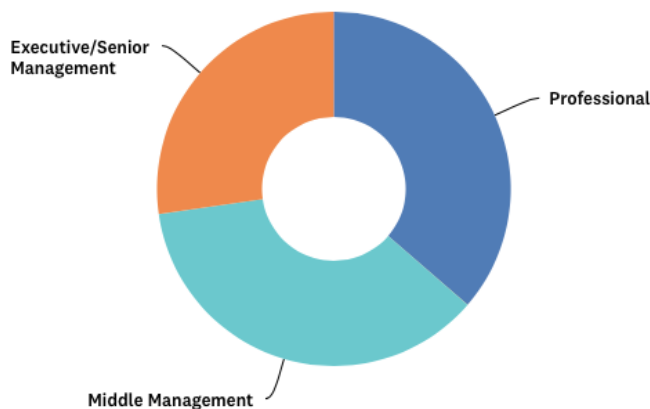
Figure 3 *Current Position in Industry (Graduated > 5 years ago)*



From figure 3 it can be seen that alumni who graduated more than 5 years ago are in fewer operational positions (9% against 15% in the full set) and are no longer in junior management roles or unemployed against their will. They more frequently occupy professional and senior management roles.

Figure 4 outlines the roles of alumni who graduated 10 or more years ago.

Figure 4 *Current Position in Industry (Graduated > 10 years ago)*



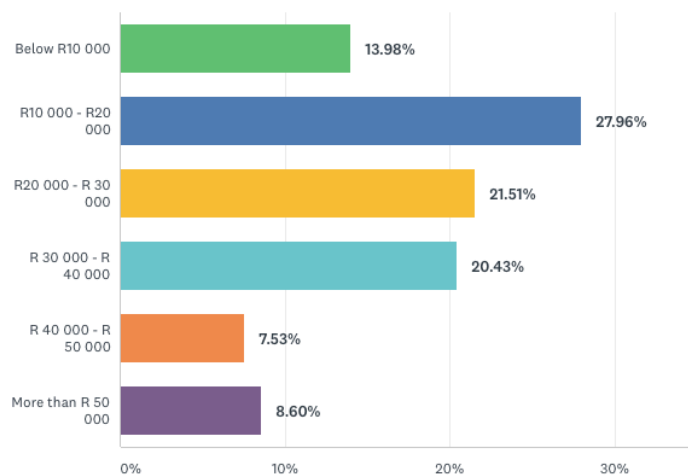
From figure 4 it can be seen that 10 or more years after graduations, alumni roles consolidate in professional (36%), middle management (36%), and executive roles (27%).

Our alumni database confirms that the majority (59%) of graduates is currently in the Hospitality Industry. The other 41% is widely spread over different sectors of what can generally be described as the service economy.

4.2 Salary

A total of 93 respondents indicated their current gross salary based on 6 pre-structured options. The results are outlined in figure 5.

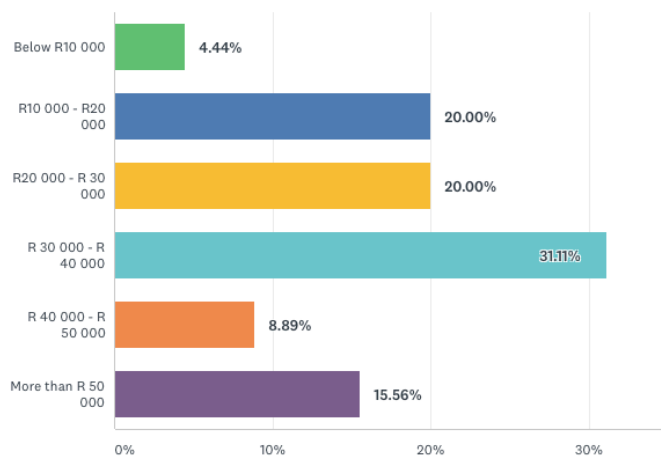
Figure 5 Gross Monthly Salary (Full Sample)



From figure 5 it can be seen that 14% of respondents earns less than R 10k, 28% earns R 10k to 20k, 22% earns R 20k to R 30k, and 37% earns more than R 30k.

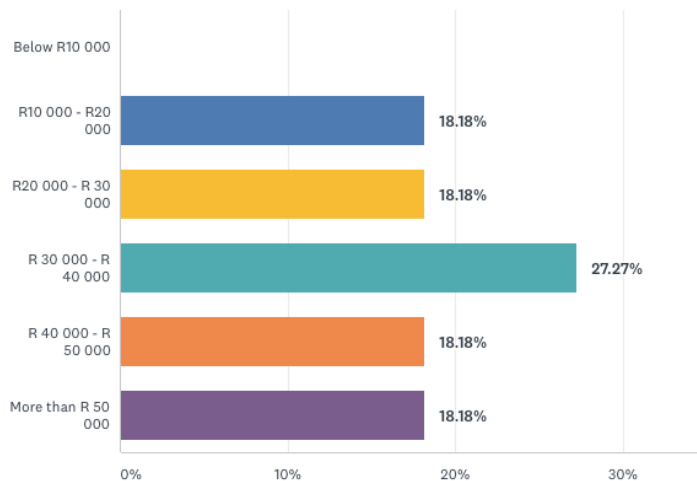
Also, salaries appear to improve substantially over time. Figure 6 outlines the salaries reported by graduates who graduated more than 5 years ago.

Figure 6 Gross Monthly Salary (Graduated > 5 years ago)



Five years after graduation, the largest group (31%) reports to earn between R 30k and R 40k monthly and the percentage of students reporting salaries over R 30k has grown with almost 20% to 56%. This trend continues as students make a further career. Figure 7 outlines salaries for alumni who are in industry for 10 years or more.

Figure 6 Gross Monthly Salary (Graduated > 10 years ago)



From Figure 6 it can be seen that ten years or more after graduations, salaries continue to increase with no graduates reporting salaries below R 10k and 64% of graduates reporting a salary of over R 30k per month.

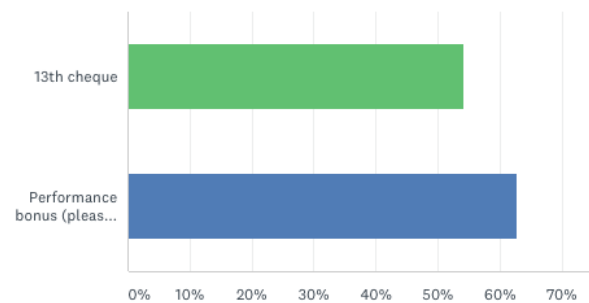
4.3 Other Employment Benefits

Alumni were also asked about other benefits with pre-formulated benefits. One question enquired into other financial benefits that they receive. The results from all respondents are presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7 Other Financial Benefits (Full Sample)

Do you receive any other financial bonuses?

Answered: 59 Skipped: 36

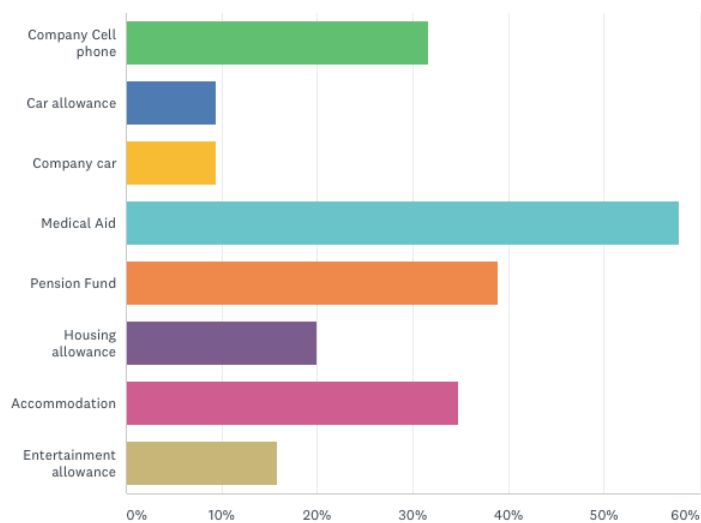


From figure 7 it can be seen that 54% of respondents indicate to receive a 13th check and 63% receives a performance bonus. Figure 8 outlines other benefits reported by respondents.

Figure 8 Other Benefits (Full Sample)

Please indicate any other benefits that you receive at your work

Answered: 95 Skipped: 0



From Figure 8 it can be seen that 32% of alumni receive a company cell phone. In terms of transport, 9% receives a car allowance and 9% a company car. In terms of welfare, 58% of alumni reports to receive medical aid and 39% a pension fund. In terms of housing 55% receives a benefit; 20% in the form of a housing allowance, and 35% receives company accommodation. 16% indicates to receive an entertainment allowance.

The additional benefits do not change substantially when isolating graduates that graduated 5 or 10 years ago. These results are also relatively stable when compared over the last two alumni surveys of 2013 and 2015. The key data is compared in table 1.

Table 1: Comparison of benefits 2013, 2015 and 2018 Alumni Survey

Other Benefits	Survey 2013	Survey 2015	Survey 2018
Medical Aid	41%	58%	58%
Pension Fund	41%	40%	39%
Entertainment Allowance	37%	22%	16%
Company Car / Car Allowance	22%	38%	18%
Cell Phone	36%	33%	32%
Housing Allowance / Accommodation	40%	29%	55%

From table 1 it can be seen that compared to previous years, fewer alumni report receiving a car or car allowance and more report receiving a housing allowance or company accommodation.

4.4 The Curriculum & Industry Readiness

Students were asked about their readiness with a very direct question: *“How would you rate your entry level of your professional competencies in the industry?”* to which alumni could answer: *“Below / Equal to / Better Than those of graduates from other hotel schools that I have worked with”*. As in previous years, most (55%) respondents rate their skills as better those of graduates from other hotel schools that they have worked with.

Table 2 Comparison of Self-Assessment of Competencies upon entering the industry

	2013	2015	2018
Lower than	0%	4%	6%
Equal to	43%	36%	40%
Better than	57%	60%	55%

In terms of what alumni feel has benefitted them most of their Stenden Education, seven characteristics of their Stenden education were presented for students to identify to have had an impact on their current capabilities. Table 3 outlines the % of students that felt that this item had a strong or very strong influence on their capabilities compared to the surveys of 2013 and 2015.

Table 3 Comparison of Performance Drivers

Feature	Survey	Survey	Survey
	2013	2015	2018
Problem Based Learning	79%	91%	80%
Work Based Learning	65%	63%	67%
Group Work in assignments	71%	69%	64%
Curriculum Content	74%	76%	73%
Career Development Mentoring	36%	33%	40%
Campus Culture	41%	56%	62%
Extra-curricular Activities (e.g. SRC / Sports, etc.)	26%	33%	39%

Though the results are very similar to the 2013 and 2015 survey, it is interesting to see that more alumni mention campus culture and extra-curricular activities as having had a strong or very strong influence on their capabilities in relation to previous years.

Alumni were asked which subject they now feel have been under- or overrepresented in the curriculum. Figure 9 presents a word cloud on what subjects alumni reported (open question) to be underrepresented in the curriculum.

Figure 9 Word Cloud on Underrepresented Subjects



From figure 9 it can be seen that Accounting, Marketing and Revenue are the most frequently mentioned items. Figure 10 outlines the subjects that alumni mentioned have been overrepresented.

Figure 10 Word Cloud on Over-Represented Subjects



From figure 10 it can be seen that specifically Statistics and Spanish are mentioned as subjects that alumni report to have found little use for in their daily work. This is similar with previous years' surveys and as a consequence the second foreign language Spanish has been removed with effect from the 2016 academic year and replaced by a minor specialisation option.

Lastly, students were asked which subjects (if any) had given them an extra 'edge' in the workplace. Figure 11 presents the Word Cloud of their open answers.

Figure 11 Word Cloud on Subjects that Alumni feel have given them an 'edge'



From the word cloud, it can be seen that especially the more analytical subjects such as Financial Management, Revenue Management, and Strategic Management are mentioned in having given alumni an 'edge' in industry.

Also, PBL (Problem Based Learning) and CBL (Case Based Learning), are mentioned. Though these are technically educational methods, they are reported to develop skills that alumni recognise as beneficial in their daily work.

4.5 The Internship Experience

The internship experience can be seen as a vital part of the curriculum as it allows students to apply many of their skills in a Real-World environment and in many cases, results in immediate employment upon graduation. Alumni were asked to rate their overall internship experience and indicate areas of improvement. The overall mark for the internship given by alumni is a 7.4. This is in line with the marks recorded in the 2013 and 2015 which were 7.1 and 7.6.

The key areas of improvement mentioned were follow up, communication, guidance and support during the internship that a number of respondents mention.

4.6 The Overall Education Experience

The overall education experience was measured with two questions. Firstly, the question ‘How do you rate the quality of your education at Stenden?’ was asked. **The average score given was an 8.35** which is substantially higher than in the 2013 and 2015 survey when this score was 7.91 and 7.71 respectively.

The second question asked was: “Would you employ a Stenden alumnus in your organisation?”. Almost all (97%) alumni answered this question with yes. Following this question, alumni were asked to share any ideas on how we can improve our relation with our alumni. Many different ideas were presented with most of them revolving around social events and networking structures as well as opportunities for short courses.

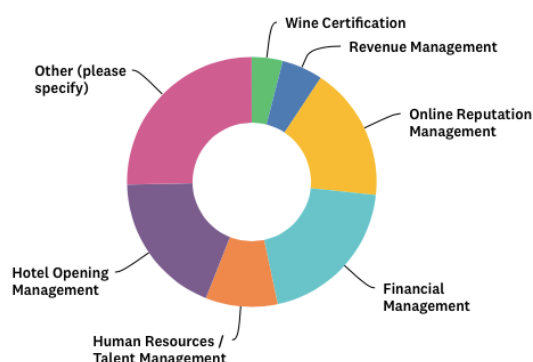
4.7 Executive Short Courses

The survey also explored the potential interest in Stenden South Africa offering Executive Short courses to alumni and other interested parties in order to facilitate their lifelong learning and serve a larger part of the hospitality industry. To the question ‘Would you be interested in participating in Executive Short Courses’ a majority of 73% answered yes and 27% answered no. To the question what subjects they would be interested in, a wide variety of subjects was selected and added as an ‘other’ option as outlined in figure 12.

Figure 12 Interest Areas for Executive Short Courses

Which Short Courses would you be interested in?

Answered: 75 Skipped: 20



5. Conclusions

From the survey, we can conclude that alumni from the Stenden South Africa's Hotel Management School do very well in industry and are overall very happy with the quality of education that they have received at Stenden.

We find that graduates start out in many different roles, but consolidate into three main roles 10 years or more after graduation: Professional, Middle Management, and Senior Management. Our alumni database indicates that 58% is working in the Hospitality Industry.

We note a clear progress in alumni roles as they spend more time in industry and that their salary follows this progression. Ten years or more after graduation, 64% of graduates reports a salary of over R 30k per month and 36% over R 40k per month. Secondary benefits seem to not change so much over time.

The curriculum presents graduates overall well for their career. 40% of graduates rates their skills as equal to those of graduates from other Hotel Management Schools they have work with since graduation and most (55%) respondents rate their skills as better. Graduates feel that the more analytical subjects such as Financial Management, Revenue Management, and Strategic Management are mentioned in having given them an 'edge' in industry and also mention the methods of Problem Based Learning and Case Based Learning as highly beneficial. Subjects that they feel have not served them well include mostly statistics and Spanish language. Graduates would further like to see more Revenue Management, Accounting, Marketing and HR in the curriculum.

Frequent contact and guidance remains very important for a successful internship experience as is the buy-in from partner organisations in providing opportunities and mentorship to our students. Our graduates look back at us and are overall very happy with their overall education experience which they rate with an 8.36. A significant majority of 73% is interested to continue their education through Executive Short Courses. Subjects that they are mostly interested in include Hotel Opening Management, Financial Management, and Online Reputation Management.