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Abstract (Article Summary)

This paper evaluates the career experiences and perceptions of graduates from the School of Hotel and Tourism Management at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the School of Hospitality, Tourism and Marketing at Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia towards the programmes that they undertook. The two cohorts of graduates exhibited broadly similar career histories and expressed similar attitudes towards the quality, strengths and weaknesses of their respective programmes. In both cases, female students dominate the graduate cohort and about half of the respondents were found to have left the tourism or hospitality field within 3-5 years after graduation. Graduates believe that their general business and general education subjects play a stronger role in acquiring their first and current jobs than specialist tourism, hotel management and food service subjects. The findings highlight the challenge facing the university sector in attempting to balance the desire to provide a broadly grounded liberal education with the student desire for practical training. [PUBLICATION ABSTRACT]

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