



# Individual Attention for Individual Growth

Discover the key to unlocking great hospitality leadership potential with BSc Academic Dean Susanne Oswald of SHL Schweizerische Hotelfachschule Luzern.

SHL Luzern, an exclusive hospitality management institute, hosts around 1,000 enrolled students with just under 300 students on campus. Since 1909, an undivided emphasis on each student's personal development is among their core values. A characteristic personalized atmosphere and community spirit thus set SHL apart, allowing students to be recognized as individuals with specific talents rather than just a face in a hall. BSc Academic Dean Susanne Oswald elaborates how SHL is a melting pot of potential, where attention to individualized growth fosters phenomenal industry leaders in the making.

### Building better hospitality leaders

Studies prove that students receiving individual attention are more likely to achieve their goals and reach their potential. When people are treated as individuals, they feel seen, heard, and valued. This, in turn, boosts confidence, motivating them to pursue their dreams.

Historically, social skills have also been critical for a great hospitality leader. The hospitality industry

revolves around making people feel welcome and ensuring comfort. An advanced social skillset is crucial to achieving that goal. Hospitality leaders need to be able to build relationships with their customers and their team members, to communicate effectively, listen actively, and show empathy, building trust and respect. Furthermore, they have to be able to handle conflicts that arise, anticipate their customers' needs, provide exceptional customer experience and inspire a diverse team.

At SHL, through a three-layered approach of crafting belonging, community and flexibility, students flourish in environments catered to curated leadership mentoring.

### A sense of belonging

With a student-to-faculty ratio of 4.5 to 1, students receive abundant individual attention at SHL, affording a more engaging educational experience and increased opportunities for mentorship and guidance. "It is our mission to not only educate with personal dedication but to guide our students on their path towards becoming competent, success-oriented



“Common challenges and goals unite. A fact that we witness at SHL again and again.”

— Academic Dean Susanne Oswald on the culture of community at SHL

and passionate hospitality leaders,” says Susanne.

Additionally, in small educational institutions, students feel a sense of belonging and are less likely to feel lost or overlooked. “By knowing our students individually, it is easier for us to identify any problems and to support the students if need be,” adds Susanne.

### A tight-knit community

Fewer people on campus means that students, faculty, and staff can establish a deep sense of community and connection with one another in a shorter amount of time.

SHL even crafts opportunities for connection - students have ample time to enjoy their meals in SHL's training restaurant, can exchange ideas over lunch and dinner, get to know each other better and thus network and build friendships for life. Apart from common meal times and student get-togethers, SHL leaves nothing to chance when it comes to community building and teamwork. Numerous joint practical assignments, field excursions and group tasks - including a two-day team building workshop in the Swiss mountains, which is definitely a highlight in the eyes of Susanne - allow the students to recognise their colleagues' strengths alongside their own, growing stronger as a team.

### Flexibility and innovation

Another advantage of SHL's modest size is its flexibility and adaptability to change.

“We can experiment with new teaching methods and curriculums without facing the same bureaucratic obstacles of larger schools,” Susanne Oswald points out. At the moment, this is evident in SHL's ongoing shift to an even stronger focus on competence-oriented teaching. “SHL has been very practice-oriented since its beginning. Now we are taking this focus to a new level by introducing forward-looking teaching methods and redesigning curricula to an even more hands-on approach,” notes Susanne.

This orientation has always been among the primary reasons why SHL students and graduates have found great appeal in the market. They not only know a lot, but can also apply their knowledge practically.

With this three-tiered educational model, replete with tried and tested directions as well as perpetual innovation, SHL is the place to be for decoding the makings of a hospitality leader. “When our students return from their internships, we often hear from the industry that they showed exceptional social skills, which fills me with pride. I am convinced that besides the explicit programme content we put into place in this area, the trusted learning environment at SHL contributes significantly to the fostering and development of social skills,” says Susanne Oswald with conviction.

