

**6 July 2025**

**Press release from SHL Schweizerische Hotelfachschule Luzern**

## **A Milestone Achieved: 64 Graduates Celebrate Their SHL Graduation**

On Thursday, 3 July 2025, the moment had come: 64 students from SHL Schweizerische Hotelfachschule Luzern received their advanced federal diplomas in Hospitality Management. The formal ceremony on the campus in Lucerne marked not only the conclusion of an intensive educational journey, but also the beginning of a new chapter in the world of hospitality.

### **Heartbeats and Cold Sweat**

For the first time in her new role, Esther Lüscher, President of the SHL Board of Trustees, addressed the graduating class – with a speech that was pointed, personal and rich in experience. Under the theme «Heartbeats and cold sweat», she reflected on the years of study and the challenging balance between building expertise, personal development and perseverance. She also acknowledged those who stood behind the students along the way: «I thank you for every heartbeat you felt when a new semester began or ended – and for every cold sweat when things didn't go so well.» As President of the Board, she encouraged the graduates to move forward with integrity and confidence: «Treat those around you with respect. Respect is not something you can buy – it must be earned and lived.»

### **Rising Together – The Power of the Pack**

With vivid imagery, humour and emotional depth, SHL Director Christa Augsburg addressed the audience. The theme «The Rising Wolves», chosen by the graduating class to represent their final semester, ran as a red thread through her speech. It symbolised a journey shaped by courage, curiosity and unity – and the search for one's own territory. Drawing on wolves from fairy tales, pop culture and literature, she painted a lively picture of learning, growth and transformation. «A lone wolf is strong – but a pack is unbeatable», she stated, highlighting the importance of teamwork, responsibility and the desire to explore new horizons. She concluded her address with heartfelt words of recognition: «You have led, supported, mediated, inspired. You have shown that a pack is more than the sum of its parts. I wish you never lose your inner sense of direction, your instinct. Stay bold, stay curious, stay wild – and never forget where you came from.»

### Voices from the Classes

With a blend of wit, sincerity and solidarity, class representatives Daphné Sägesser, Julian Weber, Cyrill Carter, Vincent Hunkeler and Alexander Mikhalchenko reflected on their time at SHL. Their speeches were personal and self-assured, with a touch of humour – but always marked by deep gratitude and pride: «There are moments in life that stay with you – and this is definitely one of them.» SHL, they said, had been more than just a school: it shaped them and laid the foundation for lifelong friendships. Vincent Hunkeler summed it up poignantly: «This is not a goodbye in the traditional sense. It's not the end – it's a new beginning. This chapter may be closing, but our story continues – on a new page, with new challenges, new goals, and with the knowledge and support we found here.»

### The big Moment

The ceremonial diploma presentation marked the emotional highlight of the evening – the moment everyone had been working toward. To loud applause, the graduates received their certificates and the symbolic keys to success – a visible tribute to their commitment, progress and perseverance. Special honours were given to the top-performing students: in the German-language programme, Yannick Schenkel (1st place), Andrea Russi (2nd place) and Sven André Meyer (3rd place); and in the English-language programme, Elena Dürr (1st place), Jonas Zindel (2nd place) and Alexander Mikhalchenko (3rd place). Their outstanding academic achievements were recognised with awards from Relais & Châteaux. The evening also struck a memorable note musically: singer Naeman accompanied the ceremony with his voice and acoustic guitar, adding a personal touch. As the sun set on a balmy summer evening, the traditional champagne entrance marked the celebratory toast to the stars of the night. The Dine Around on campus that followed offered culinary variety and ample opportunity to share memories – and to look forward with excitement to what comes next.

**Images** (original files in separate link)



Caption to image 'UFS 1':  
Diploma class 1



Caption to image 'UFS 2':  
Diploma class 2



Caption to image 'MNG 1':  
Diploma class of the English-language programme



Caption to image 'Speech Christa Augsburger':  
SHL Director Christa Augsburger presents the graduating classes with her congratulations.



Caption to image 'Speech Esther Lüscher':  
SHL Foundation Board President Esther Lüscher honours the diploma classes.



Caption to image 'Diploma Presentation 1':  
Newly graduated SHL alumna receives her diploma from Christa Augsburg.



Caption to image 'Diploma Presentation 2':  
Newly graduated SHL alumnus receives his diploma from Christa Augsburg.



Caption to image 'Top marks in German degree programme':  
Graduation with top marks (from left to right): Sven André Meyer (3rd place), Yannick Schenkel (1st place), Andrea Russi (2nd place)



Caption to image 'Top marks in English degree programme':  
Graduation with top grades (from left to right): Jonas Zindel (2nd place), Elena Dürr (1st place), Alexander Mikhalchenko (3rd place)



Symbol image



### **About SHL**

Since 1909, SHL Schweizerische Hotelfachschule Luzern in Lucerne, Switzerland, has been a practice-oriented and innovative institution that paves the way for ambitious students to enter the national and international hospitality industry. As one of only two original Swiss hotel management schools, SHL has played a key role in shaping hotel management education in Switzerland. SHL graduates hold leadership positions in hospitality and other service sectors – both in Switzerland and around the world.

[www.shl.ch](http://www.shl.ch)

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