
A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Khuong Thi Hong Cam

B.A. (HCMC Uni. of Education), M.A. (HCMC Open Uni.)

School of Global Urban and Social Studies

College of Design and Social Context

RMIT University

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Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis/project is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Khuong Thi Hong Cam

15th January 2015
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEF</td>
<td>Common European Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBM</td>
<td>Education and Business Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFL</td>
<td>English as a Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDVT</td>
<td>General Department of Vocational Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GL</td>
<td>Guest Lecturer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>Grade Point Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSO</td>
<td>General Statistic Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDR</td>
<td>Higher Degree by Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS</td>
<td>International English Language Testing System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOET</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOLISA</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for the Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VET</td>
<td>Vocational Training Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIED</td>
<td>Vietnam International Education Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEIC</td>
<td>Test of English for International Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNWTO</td>
<td>United Nations World Tourism Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIL</td>
<td>Work-integrated Learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abstract

International tourism to Vietnam, under the impact of globalisation, has grown strongly – in 2013, the 7.5 million visitors came largely from China, South Korea, Japan and the USA. The tourism sector, however, lacks an adequate workforce of professionally skilled, globally literate and interculturally competent staff, particularly in the delivery of tour and travel services, to provide a satisfactory quality of service to international customers. The shortage of internationally qualified tourism personnel can be attributed to the tourism training programs in the wider context of Vietnam’s Higher Education (HE) and Vocational Education Training (VET) structures and processes. Paradoxically, despite the fact that work-integrated learning (WIL) and foreign language teaching were embedded in the HE and VET programs, the graduates from these programs still failed to satisfy the growing demands of the tourism industry in Vietnam. The literature showed that these two systems were beset by problems at both the macro- and micro-levels.

Despite some literature on the Vietnamese HE and VET sectors in general, there is an absence of research studies in evaluating tourism programs with the embedding of WIL and the teaching and learning of foreign languages. This study was thus carried out to bridge the gap by providing a systematic and multifaceted evaluation of the WIL processes and the foreign language teaching and learning in the tourism training programs in six selected colleges and universities in Vietnam. The appraisal was conducted from the perspectives of three key stakeholder groups: (a) academic staff; (b) tourism company managers and internship workplace mentors; and (c) current students and recent graduates. The aim was to see how well these programs prepared tourism students with employable skills to meet the needs of international tourists.

To achieve this main objective, the research design included both qualitative and quantitative approaches and utilised program case studies as the main research strategy. This included four methods of data collection: semi-structured interviews, document analysis, role-plays and questionnaire surveys. The data collected from these instruments were analysed via SPSS statistical analysis, content analysis and data triangulation.

The findings showed that the WIL processes and the internationalisation elements in most of the tourism programs under examination were evaluated as ineffective in producing employable graduates to satisfy the growing demand of international tourists. The WIL processes were not
wholly successful in terms of their design, implementation and assessment due to the lack of a close link between the WIL stakeholders (i.e. government, tourism training institutions, tourism companies and students) within Vietnam’s HE and VET context. The internationalisation of tourism education through inculcating global perspectives and proficiency in foreign languages in students was similarly not achieved, except for one non-public institution which delivered its programs in English. The outcomes of this research were then translated into a list of practical recommendations, calling for a closer liaison between the four main stakeholders, each of whom should be proactive in their specific roles for successful internationalised tourism programs with an effective design, implementation and assessment of WIL processes.
Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The trend of globalisation with the exponential growth of the international tourism industry not only brings opportunities to Vietnamese tourism but also challenges. There are inadequate human resources, particularly tour guides, tour operators and travel agents (Hong, 2011; Minh, 2014). They are reported to be lacking in professional and generic competencies, and especially skills in foreign languages (Hieu, 2012; Vi, 2010). They are therefore unable to meet the growing needs of international tourists. The current deficiencies in the workforce can be traced back to the quality of tourism training where programs are designed to prepare the workforce for tour and travel services, but do not really meet the needs of the sector (Hieu, 2012; Vi, 2010). All future references to tourism refer only to tour and travel services, and do not include other areas of tourism such as accommodation or food and beverage services etc.

1.1.1 The global travel and tourism industry

As one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world, the travel and tourism industry is also considered “a driver of economic recovery” within the context of the current global financial crisis (Juncan & Juncan, 2013, p. 81). According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2013), at $US6.8 trillion in 2013, travel and tourism’s total contribution to GDP represents nearly 9.3 per cent of global GDP. Comprising 8.8 per cent of global employment, this industry has become one of the leading job creators in the world. In 2013, 266 million jobs were globally sustained by the travel and tourism industry, which means one in eleven of all jobs in the world was in this industry.

Similarly, there was an upward trend in international tourism, which is considered to be a symbol of globalisation due to the “massive movement of people to virtually every corner of the world” (Wood, 1997, p. 2). Despite the global economic downturn, international tourism experienced the growth of tourist arrivals by 5 per cent, equivalent to an additional 52 million in 2013, reaching a record 1,087 million arrivals, according to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (World Tourism Organisation UNWTO, 2014). UNWTO forecast an increase in international arrivals by 4 to 4.5 per cent in 2014, higher than its long-term prospect of over 3.8 per cent per year between 2010 and 2020. In the Asia and Pacific region, international tourism in 2013 grew by over 6 per cent – the highest of any region in the world. This region welcomed an additional 14 million international tourists in 2013, reaching a total of 248 million. South-
East Asia was “the best performing sub-region” with over 10 per cent growth in international tourist arrivals, according to the World Tourism Organisation UNWTO (2014).

1.1.2 Vietnamese tourism industry: opportunities and challenges

The thriving status of travel and tourism in the world and in the Asian region has opened up a whole new world of opportunity for tourism development in Vietnam. Being endowed with numerous natural tourist attractions and being rich in culture and, less fortunately, with many battlefield sites, Vietnam is thus becoming an appealing destination for international tourists, particularly Chinese (25.2%), South Koreans (9.9%), Japanese (8%), Americans (5.7%), Taiwanese (5.3%) and Cambodians (4.5%), according to the General Statistics Office (GSO) in 2013. In the last decade, the number of international tourists choosing Vietnam for their vacation has been on the upward trend. In 2002, Vietnam welcomed approximately 2.6 million international visitors. This figure had nearly tripled to over seven million arrivals in 2013 (General Statistics Office, 2013). The specific statistics, including the total number of international tourists and the three largest groups of visitors to Vietnam by nation, are presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Numbers of International Tourists to Vietnam from 2002 to 2013 (General Statistics Office, 2013).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Total international tourists</th>
<th>The largest group</th>
<th>The second largest group</th>
<th>The third largest group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nation</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>2,628,000</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>723,000</td>
<td>Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>3,583,500</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>516,286</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>5,200,000</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>905,360</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>7,572,352</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>1,907,794</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responding to the growth in this industry, on 30th December 2011 the Vietnamese government made a formal decision (number 2473/QD-TTg) regarding “Strategies to Develop Vietnamese Tourism up to 2020: a Vision to 2030” (P. M. Nguyen, 2011). The document pointed out that in the lead-up to 2020, tourism will basically become the key industry in Vietnam requiring high professionalism, comprehensive and modern systems of technical facilities, and tourism products of good quality, variety, and competitiveness. Vietnam will attempt to possess a developed tourism industry by 2030. The specific goal is to grow the tourism industry aiming to achieve an average growth rate of 11.5-12 per cent per year in the period of 2011-2020. This is to be achieved by welcoming 10-10.5 million international visitors and 47-48 million domestic
tourists in 2020 with total revenue of approximately US$ 18-19 billion, contributing around 6.5-7 per cent of GDP growth and creating 3 million new jobs of which 870,000 people are to be directly employed in tourism. The financial aim is that by 2030 the total revenue will double that of 2020. These aims entail the following objectives in training and developing human resources for the tourism industry as follows:

- Develop enough qualified tourism employees to meet the requirements of tourism development and integration into the globalised world.
- Develop a strong network of tourism training institutions equipped with modern technical facilities and standardised quality of teaching staff and curricula.
- Standardise the workforce step by step, particularly managing staff and highly skilled employees, in accordance with regional and international standards.
- Vary the methods of training and encourage on-the-job-training and tailor-made training for the demands of tourism enterprises.

(P. M. Nguyen, 2011)

In line with the opportunities emerging in this era of globalisation and the impetus to achieve the targets set by the government, the Vietnamese tourism industry is confronted with various challenges, one of which is an urgent demand for an adequate number of qualified staff. In reality, the human resources in this industry are generally not only insufficient in quantity but also deficient in quality. Statistically, the country has over 1.3 million people directly and indirectly working in the tourism industry, accounting for 2.5 per cent of the workforce nationwide. Of these, only 42 per cent are trained in tourism, 38 per cent are trained in other disciplines and about 20 per cent are untrained (Hong, 2011). Although there are 284 tourism training institutions in the whole country, including programs in 62 universities, 80 colleges, 117 vocational schools, 2 training companies and 23 vocational centres (Hieu, 2010; Luong, 2010), about 50 per cent of graduates cannot find jobs in their specialisation because they are under-qualified for the job (Binh, 2011; Luan, 2009). A majority of the graduates employed from these institutions need to be retrained to meet the minimum requirements of their employers (Hanh, 2012; Hieu, 2012; Luan, 2009; Nga, 2013; Tran, 2014; Trang, 2011; Vinh, 2010).

The tour and travel services sector in particular has a deficiency in the number of qualified staff, especially international tourist guides competent in foreign languages, to meet the demand of the growing number of international tourists (Khanh 2012; Thao, 2012; Vi, 2010). According to a formal report in 2014 from the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, the total of
international tour guides in Vietnam numbered 6700, including 3699 speaking English, 1000 French, 961 Chinese, 431 Japanese, 375 German, 345 Russian, 117 Spanish and the rest speaking other languages (Linh, 2014b; Minh, 2014). These statistics indicate a severe shortage in the number of tour guides to serve approximately over 7.5 million international tourists visiting Vietnam as mentioned earlier. One of the causes for this shortage is the Tourism Law, which requires international tour guides to hold at least a four-year Bachelor degree and evidence of proficiency in a foreign language. This regulation limits the chances for graduates from colleges to work as international tour guides despite their eloquence in a foreign language. Another reason, which is considered primary, is the foreign language proficiency of graduates from the tourism institutions. A majority of graduates cannot produce appropriate language even in simple encounters (Linh, 2014a). An action that many travel companies are taking to resolve this problem is to illegally recruit people with competence in foreign languages from other educational backgrounds but without a legal working permit, and then providing them with several months of formal tourism training (Khanh, 2012; Linh, 2011; Nguyen, 2014). Or else they employ foreign tour guides without Vietnamese work permits irrespective of their lack of knowledge of Vietnamese culture and history (Thu, 2011; Linh, 2011; Ha, 2014). Consequently, such international tour guides with extremely limited tourism training backgrounds are causing problems for tourists and spreading “negative images” of Vietnam to the world, which in this sense means political contradictions (Huyen, 2013; Tam & Nhan, 2012; Thu, 2011).

Another drawback in the quality of staff in tour and travel services is their lack of general knowledge of history, culture, and geography (Linh, 2014a; Nguyen, 2012). It is a common problem that many tour guides are not acquainted with the way to the allocated tourist sites or are ignorant of Vietnamese history, particularly some architectural features that represent Vietnamese culture (Thuan, 2012). At the world heritage sites, many presenters cannot transmit the best features of these sites to tourists because of their lack of knowledge (Loc, 2012).

Generic skills of graduates are also an issue taken up in the literature. Vietnamese personnel in general and human resources in the tourism industry in particular are deficient in “soft” skills such as presentation skills, team-work and the ability to work under pressure (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2014). Graduates from tourism programs are considered limited in professionalism, communication skills particularly with international tourists (Binh, 2014). Ms Pham Hai Yen, manager of a large tourism company in Vietnam, confirms that many tourism graduates lack confidence when applying for a job and many cannot sell a tour within six months due to their passiveness, lack of persuasion skills and ignorance about the tours they are selling (as cited in Nga, 2013).
The significant shortfall of qualified tour guides with sufficient knowledge, skills and foreign language proficiency to serve an increasing quantity of international tourists annually while a copious number of tourism training institutions are in operation is a paradox in the Vietnamese tourism training system. Apart from the Tourism Law that restricts the number of international tour guides and that is being reviewed due to the objection of tourism companies and tour guides (Lien, 2012), the situation of tourism training in Vietnamese institutions requires an investigation in order to eliminate the root of the problem. An emerging question is as to whether tourism training programs provide the learners with adequate opportunities to engage themselves in practical training and whether the foreign language teaching and learning is effective enough to create graduates with tourism specific knowledge and skills as well as foreign language and global competency. To date, there has been no research conducted to answer those questions. However, there is some literature on Vietnamese Higher Education (HE) and Vocational Education Training (VET) sectors within which the Vietnamese tourism training institutions are operating. The next section will present an overview of the Vietnamese education system in the literature.

1.1.3 Current situation in the Vietnamese education system

According to the literature, the HE and VET systems in Vietnam are being challenged by the issue of quality. Problems prevail in every aspect of the two systems, typically with regards to governmental and institutional management, quality of lectures and students, design and implementation of curriculum, in assessment and in foreign language teaching and learning.

1.1.3.1 Governance of tertiary education system

Two key governmental bodies in tertiary training are the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and the Ministry of Labour, Invalids, and Social affairs (MOLISA) (Dinh, Mishra, Binh, Pham, & Hang, 2014). MOET is responsible for HE institutions, including universities, colleges and technical secondary schools. The General Department of Vocational Training (GDVT) within MOLISA manages VET institutions, namely vocational colleges, secondary vocational schools and vocational training centres.

Although the Vietnamese economy is now market-oriented, there is a strong influence of the central command system in education and the institutions are not given sufficient autonomy (Hayden & Thiep, 2010; VietNamNet Bridge, 2014). The government is the source of all official authority in relation to higher education, even for the non-public sector, according to Article 14, Education Law, National Assembly, Law no. 38/2005/QH11, 14 June 2005. The
most influential state authority is MOET, which mainly has responsibilities across the system. MOET allocates enrollment quotas for a university or college in both the public and the non-public sectors. More importantly, MOET approves curriculum frameworks for all programs of different disciplines in the whole higher education system. These frameworks prescribe the target outcomes for each major, the minimum knowledge requirements, the components of the curriculum, and the allocations of time to the theoretical and practical parts and the internship experience (Hayden & Thiep, 2010). GDVT and MOLISA also join in the management of curriculum of vocational training (Dinh et al., 2014). This tight control over the curriculum has a strong influence on the autonomy of institutions.

Besides the two key players in academic quality assurance (i.e., MOET and MOLISA), universities and vocational colleges are also under tight control of line-management from other ministries (Hayden & Thiep, 2010). These institutions must report to the government through an authorised ministry, or through one or other of the provincial bodies. To be specific, of over 400 tertiary institutions, only approximately 60 government institutions are under the direct management of MOET; two national universities are managed by the government; about 260 other government institutions are governed by 13 ministries and provincial authorities; the 80 remaining non-public institutions are under the various responsibilities of MOET, authorised ministries and local authorities (Tong, 2013). The governance system in this way leads to overlapping responsibilities and inconsistent guidance, which causes confusion to the tertiary institutions.

1.1.3.2 Quality of lecturers

The credentials of lecturers play a crucial role in the quality of training. In general, both HE and VET institutions are facing a shortage of staff and, more importantly, unsatisfactory quality of lecturers (Hong, 2011; Minh, 2014; Tran, 2014). Several reasons for the poor standard of lecturing quality were detected in the literature.

According to the latest statistics of MOET (2013) on its website, the total number of universities and colleges is 421, of students 2,177,299 and of lecturers 87,682. The academic staff-student ratio is approximately 25 to one. In comparison with the average lecturer-student ratio in universities in developed countries, e.g. Australia, which is around twenty to one (Ross, 2013), that number seems ideal. However, according to Professor Nguyen Minh Thuyet, a cadre of the Congress, and Bui Van Ca, Vice Minister of MOET, the ratio in reality is much higher, since institutions “borrow” lecturers from other institutions for the sake of statistical reports in order to avoid being restricted from enrolling students due to the lack of academic staff (as cited in
Tho, 2014). This provides a misleading interpretation of the quality of Vietnamese education. It also reveals a poor level of management of governmental bodies, which in this case is MOET.

The insufficiency of lecturing staff obviously results in undesirable quality when the lecturers have to undertake excessive work. In addition, the bulky curriculum framework also results in heavy workloads of the lecturers (Hayden & Thiep, 2010). According to Decision no. 43/2007/QD-BGDDT dated 15 August 2007, a four-year degree program is typically prescribed with a number of core and elective subjects that need to be successfully completed. Students are required to accumulate two to four credit points for each subject. One credit point is equal to 15 periods (1 study period is equal to 45 minutes) of lecture classes, or 30–35 periods of laboratory work, or 45–90 hours of internship; or 45–60 hours of assignment, minor-thesis, project or graduation thesis. The lecturers, hence, are also required to conduct face-to-face training and to “cover the syllabus during classes” (Hayden & Thiep, 2010, p. 27). Due to the lack of staff and lecturers’ responsibilities to cover the large number of teaching periods, not to mention additional time spent for the preparation for their lectures, the lecturers are suffering a great burden of teaching workloads, which makes them fail to maintain expected quality.

The situation is even worse when the lecturers have to take additional employment after working hours to supplement their income due to “unrealistically low” salary scales for civil servants, including academics at public universities (Hayden & Thiep, 2010, p. 26). Consequently, this extra job adds to their existing excessive workloads and discourage them from upgrading their qualifications or engaging in professional development to improve the quality of their teaching (Thanh, 2011a).

Furthermore, heavy teaching workloads also prevent lectures from engaging in research activities. Lecturers in Vietnam, thus, are evaluated to be weak in research skills, in comparison with those in other countries in the Asian region (Hayden & Thiep, 2010; Tong, 2013). There are also other factors contributing to this situation. After 1975 when Vietnam followed the socialist system, the Vietnamese education system was strongly impacted by the Soviet education model in which research activities were separated from teaching activities. As a result, lecturers in training institutions focus on teaching only and assume the research work is the job of research institutes (Dao & Hayden, 2010; Hayden & Lam, 2010). On the other hand, the researchers in research institutions have few opportunities to get involved in lecturing activities. The students cannot gain access to updated knowledge transmitted by excellent researchers (Tong, 2013).

Lecturers’ methods of teaching are another concern (Hayden & Thiep, 2010; Thanh, 2011b;
Tran, 2014). The lecturers are still affected by the legacy of Confucianism which considers teachers as “gurus”, there to spoon-feed learners with knowledge (Thanh, 2011b; Tran, 2014). Institutions are aware of encouraging lecturers to reform their teaching methods by integrating technology in their lectures. However, with the huge amount of work, it is a demanding question for the lecturers since this reform requires them to spend more time for preparation. Many lectures apply cooperative learning, which requires learners to work in groups, but these apparently reformative teaching methods turn out to help review and memorise what has been taught rather than to seek new knowledge (Thanh, 2011b).

1.1.3.3 Quality of students

Students’ attitudes and learning habits have been addressed by several scholars. Thanh (2011b) is critical of Asian learners in general and Vietnamese learners in particular, stating that they are not at ease for questioning, evaluating, and generating knowledge. Hong (2011) explained that Vietnamese learners’ passive learning habits are actually reinforced in their secondary schools where they are used to being spoon-fed by their teachers. Therefore, the transition from high school, where they are strictly disciplined, to tertiary level, where they lack guidance and discipline from family and parents and they have to familiarise themselves with being autonomous, is hard for many of them to cope with, according to Tran (2014). This scholar added that many of the learners have the misconception that learning at tertiary level is relaxing since they are released from being controlled by both parents and teachers. The poor preparation for the transition to the tertiary level in either way causes poor learning habits, which hinder them from meeting expected academic requirements. A common learning habit, as a result, is being exam-oriented. The students only learn for the sake of grading rather than for knowledge or improving their skills. According to a study conducted by students of Ho Chi Minh City University of Social Science and Humanity on students in several universities in Ho Chi Minh City, as cited in Quyen and Anh (2014), 60 per cent of the students attend the class for grades, 10 per cent do not care about their study, and only 30 per cent have actual study purposes.

1.1.3.4 Curriculum and issues of practical training

As earlier mentioned, curriculum development is rigidly controlled by MOET and GDVT in MOLISA (Dinh, et al., 2014; Hayden & Thiep, 2010). The authorised ministries prescribe for the training programs in both educational systems in Vietnam “the necessary objectives, minimum knowledge requirements, structural curriculum components and necessary allocations of time to theory, practice and internship experience” (Hayden & Thiep, 2010, p. 26). The
Curriculum frameworks corresponding to a particular area of study is developed and accredited by relevant technical committees, which also recommend textbooks for the designed programs. The institutions, therefore have to adopt these frameworks with only minor modifications (Hong, 2011; Tran, 2014). Therefore, many problems emerge with this centrally designed curriculum framework or standard framework (Hayden & Thiep, 2010; Hong, 2011; Tran, 2014).

Curricula in general are appraised as cumbersome and overloaded with a large amount of knowledge (Thanh, 2011b; Tran, 2014). Vietnamese curricula, similar to other curricula in Asian countries, according to Biggs (1995), are designed to cover almost everything since any topic is regarded as equally important. Hayden and Thiep (2010) describe that a curriculum framework for most undergraduate awards is divided into two phases. In the first two years of a four-year undergraduate program, students are compelled to acquire general knowledge across six areas, including social sciences, humanities, natural science, mathematics, foreign languages, and a combination of physical education and military training. In the second phase, students are provided with professional knowledge in the specific area of the training program, including the internship. The time allocated for the second part of the curriculum is thought to be inadequate while many subjects in the first component of the curriculum are regarded as unnecessary and irrelevant to the specialisation (Luan, 2009; Nguyen, 2010). Consequently, such broad coverage results in a lack of time to deeply explore each topic for students’ profound understanding or to expand any topics outside the curricula (Thanh, 2011b). Both the lecturers and students end up teaching and learning respectively for the sake of passing the exams (ibid.).

Furthermore, since curriculum frameworks are designed and accredited by a group of “experienced academic staff” (Hayden & Thiep, 2010, p. 26), they are evaluated as being divorced from the needs of the industry (Hanh, 2012; Hieu, 2010; Nha, 2009; Trang, 2011). These senior lecturers are not engaged in the industry, so they are not updated with the information of the constantly changing world. Therefore, they design curriculum with more theory than practice (Hong, 2011).

Even though the curriculum consists of a work placement, it is not easy for the activity to take place effectively due to the lack of cooperation and communication between training institutions and companies. Companies are not interested in cooperating with institutions in training for two reasons (Nha, 2009). Companies are for profit organisations, so they are more concerned about their profits than spending time and money to cooperate with institutions for no practical return. In this sense, they almost refuse to take training as part of their responsibility towards society. Additionally, companies do not have a specific human resources plan because they are not able
to locate the vacancies for each position despite their awareness of human resources, according to a survey from The University of Economics, Hanoi National University (2008).

Despite the fact that many students wish to have a workplace experience during their initial training, many companies only reluctantly agree to recruit these interns for fear that they will affect the quality of their service delivery (Ngo, 2011). The apprentices are merely assigned to run some errands during the placement instead of being given tasks related to their specialisation (Ngo, 2010; Tran, 2014; Women of Ho Chi Minh City, 2010). One reason is that it would be a waste of time to train those who do not work for the company for long (Tran, 2014). Many students work as tour guides in their second year of study but when they apply for an internship, they must pay as much as tourists to go on the tour. They even have to find a work placement themselves where the training institutions do not organise this for them (Women of Ho Chi Minh City, 2010). Moreover, the internships of all tourism students are normally implemented at the same time. Therefore, the intern overload in many tourism organisations creates difficulties for students to find a workplace for practice (Ngo, 2010). Being aware of this scarcity, many travel agencies simultaneously charge students and exploit them to work as their tour guides (Women of Ho Chi Minh City, 2010).

1.1.3.5 Facilities and materials

A survey conducted by the Department of Facilities, School Equipment and Toys within MOET (as cited in Ha & Huynh, 2010), reveals that facilities in 50 per cent of Vietnamese public universities and colleges are below the standard. The useable floor area in general is only 3.6m² per student, while the standard ratio for university space in Vietnam is 6m² per student and in developed countries is 9-15m² per student. Dormitories accommodate only 19.50 per cent of the students. There is limited space for extra-curricular activities for students and a severe shortage of public amenities in the universities and colleges, according to the survey. Of the total 172 traditional libraries of the nearly 200 universities and colleges in the survey, only 38.9 per cent of libraries comply with the standards for a library in Vietnam or in the world. 39.3 per cent of the institutions surveyed have an electronic library but most of them do not meet needs for access. The average computer and student ratio is one to 175, and the documents to student ratio is also low.

Other sources in the literature also confirm that materials are generally in short supply at a majority of Vietnamese education institutions (Hong, 2011; Thanh, 2011b). Almost all Vietnamese universities have hitherto used text books as the sole information resource, according to Thanh (2011b). This researcher points out two consequences of the lack of
materials which makes students become “rote and surface learners” (p. 8). Firstly, students are told exactly what to read and they are supposed to memorise particular information since they will likely find it in exams. Secondly, limited reading makes the students become passive learners without the need to ask questions since they have been given exactly what they need. This leads to Vietnamese students resorting to simple memorisation of texts and lecture notes rather than trying to question material or express their point of view.

1.1.3.6 Assessment methods

A majority of tertiary institutions employ examinations, popularly conducted in written form, to assess students’ academic progress and achievement (Quyen & Anh, 2014). The assessment method is criticised for focusing on grades rather than on actual knowledge absorption, according to Dr Nguyen Tien Dung, Manager of the Department of Strategic Management in Ho Chi Minh City University of Technical Education (as cited in Quyen & Anh, 2014). Examinations are designed to recheck the knowledge that has been taught, which help the students achieve high marks if they take careful notes, memorise those notes and reproduce what has been taught (Hong, 2011; Tran, 2014). As a consequence, the students easily forget everything they have learned after the examinations, and will not be able to apply the knowledge or skills after graduation (Quyen & Anh, 2014).

1.1.3.7 Foreign language teaching and learning

The Minister of MOET, Pham Vu Luan (as cited in Lan, 2014) asserts that foreign language training in Vietnam is “exotic” in comparison with other countries in the world. Students and graduates cannot make themselves understandable when they communicate in a foreign language. In agreement with the Minister, Associate Professor Do Van Dung, Rector of Ho Chi Minh City University of Technical Education (as cited in Huy, 2014) admits that students in general, and in his university in particular, have a low level of English proficiency.

The current situation can be explained by various factors in which students themselves are the main factor. Findings from a survey by the Institute of Education and Business Management (EBM) on universities and colleges in Ho Chi Minh City and Dong Nai province (2013), as cited in Tu (2013), show that only 65 per cent of non-major students of foreign languages are aware of the importance of English learning. The rest do not consider English important in study. Dr Le Hong Minh, leader of EBM, blamed students’ lack of motivation and interest in learning English (as cited in Tu, 2013). He maintains that students think that only major subjects are the key to employment success, so they learn English in a tokenistic manner. They always
“cling” to Vietnamese resources, rather than using foreign language materials for their reference. Most of them learn English for examinations and then totally forget it. In the final year, they make all attempts for a certificate in English to meet the requirements for graduation, even in an illegal way. Dr Dung (as cited in Huy, 2014) holds that the students’ poor quality of English can be attributed to the low quality of students on entry. The annual results of foreign language in entrance examinations into university show that only approximately 25 per cent of candidates achieve TOEIC points of 250 or more and the rest obtain much lower points. In the meanwhile, the time allocated for English is not adequate to equip the students. In four years of a university program, foreign language learning accounts for only 8 credits (equivalent to 120 study periods). Vice Rector of Ho Chi Minh City University of Natural Sciences, Dr. Nguyen Kim Quang (as cited in Huy, 2014) traces the quality of teaching and learning of foreign languages back to the secondary level where only reading and writing skills are given emphasis and the remaining two skills of listening and speaking are almost neglected. Therefore, it is not feasible for the students to achieve a TOEIC score of 450 required for output standard, according to Dr. Quang and Dr. Dung.

Lecturers also play a role here. As mentioned earlier, the secondary level is regarded as a background for the students but 90 per cent of foreign language teachers at this level are evaluated to be at a much lower proficiency level than the required, according to the findings of the project “Foreign Languages 2020”, over the period of 2011-2013, organised by MOET (as cited in Tu, 2013). At the tertiary level, the lecturers’ proficiency level of foreign language is also problematic. Professor Nguyen Canh Hue of Ho Chi Minh City University of Pedagogy (as cited in Huy, 2014), states the majority of senior lecturers with high qualifications and positions have graduated from Soviet universities or other communist countries in Eastern Europe where they learned in Russian and other languages rather than English. The young lecturers, however, are taught English systematically but do not have enough expertise in the specialist discipline to be confident in their teaching. Regarding the teaching methods, lecturers rarely require students to read materials written in foreign languages and fail to create an environment for students to learn and use English, according to Dr Le Hong Minh (as cited in Tu, 2013). There is a lack of opportunity to practise using English in real-life experience through extra-curricular activities (Binh, 2014). As a result, students are unfamiliar with seminars or workshops in their majors and barely socialise with people coming from different countries (Tu, 2013).
1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The literature review reveals that institutions in Vietnam offer foreign languages in their curriculum and embed work-integrated learning (WIL) through internships although the term WIL is not transparently used. The practice of WIL and foreign language teaching and learning in the institutions in general do not result in effectiveness. However, the literature only shows current issues around foreign language training and WIL processes in programs of HE and VET in general, while there is a severe shortage of research on tourism programs, particularly travel and tour guiding. This is an impetus to a systematic and multifaceted evaluation of the effectiveness of the foreign language teaching and the current process of WIL that is intended to equip graduates for employment in the tourism industry.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research will bridge this gap by addressing the main question as formulated below:

From the perspectives of the key stakeholders, how well has the work-integrated learning (WIL) process and foreign language teaching in selected tertiary tourism programs in Vietnam been designed, implemented and assessed to provide employable students to meet the needs of international tourists?

The sub-questions to be addressed are:

1. What is the current state-of-play of WIL in selected representative universities and colleges in Vietnam from the perspective of teaching staff?
2. What are the attitudes of managers of tourism companies and internship mentors towards (i) tourism education programs, (ii) the internship and (iii) the tourism specific attributes, and generic competencies of the graduates?
3. How do current students and recent graduates evaluate the tourism education programs and the WIL initiatives in the selected tourism training institutions?
4. How well are English and French sequences designed and taught in tourism training institutions from the perspectives of the stakeholders?
5. How well do the recent tourism graduates use English in communication based on the appraisal of an English native speaker?
1.4 RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The central aim of this thesis is thus to examine the effectiveness of the WIL process and foreign language training in tertiary tourism programs in selected universities and colleges in Vietnam in providing employable students to meet the needs of international tourists from the perspectives of (a) lecturing staff; (b) managers in tourism companies and internship mentors; and (c) current students and recent graduates.

This study specifically aims to:

1. examine the current state-of-play of WIL in selected representative universities and colleges in Vietnam from the perspective of teaching staff.
2. examine the attitudes of managers of tourism companies and internship mentors towards (i) tourism education programs, (ii) the internship and (iii) the tourism specific attributes, and generic competencies of the graduates.
3. examine the appraisal of current students and recent graduates of the tourism education programs and the WIL initiatives in the selected tourism training institutions.
4. examine how well English and French sequences are designed and taught in tourism training institutions from the perspectives of the stakeholders.
5. examine the appraisal of an English native speaker about the recent tourism graduates’ English proficiency.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

This research addresses the needs of three groups of stakeholders: (1) curriculum designers, related authorised ministries and leaders of tourism colleges or universities, (2) internship mentors and lecturers in tourism institutions together with their students, and (3) employers along with their international customers. The significance for policy lies in the formal development of WIL curricula for tourism programs. This research will be a guide for curriculum designers to develop WIL curricula more tailored to the real demands of the tourism industry and for the authorised ministries to develop more effective management strategies. The renovation of the WIL process derived from the evaluation in this research will encourage tertiary education leaders to enhance the reputation of their institutions towards potential students and attract more cooperation from tourism enterprises. Such curriculum innovation should also assist workplace mentors, lecturers and students with the internship process, and motivate students to acquire practically oriented learning strategies for their future career. Finally, this research will be valuable to the tourism employers who will have a greater pool of
more qualified staff, and to international customers, who will benefit from better service from those employees.

Furthermore, this study will be of significant value due to its originality. Some research on the cooperation between universities and employing organisations has been done to develop the quality of personnel resources in Vietnam (Nha, 2009; Phung, 2009; Trinh, 2008). These studies merely suggest several types of cooperation and their benefits in general (Phung, 2009; Trinh, 2008), or put forward a model of cooperative education between companies and institutions, but only from the perspective of business cooperation in which companies are customers and institutions are training service providers (Nha, 2009). This study will provide a comprehensive view of the tourism and foreign language training in both HE and VET sectors.

1.6 THESIS ORGANISATION

The thesis consists of nine chapters. This chapter has detailed the research background, statement of problem, research questions, research objectives, and the significance of this study. Chapter 2 elaborates upon the theory, principles and implications of the work-integrated learning concept. Chapter 3 presents the research methodology and philosophy. In Chapters 4 and 5, six case studies are described and then analysed respectively, highlighting the WIL initiatives in the selected tourism training institutions from the perspectives of the teaching staff. Chapter 6 shows the WIL components from the perspectives of HR managers and internship mentors in tourism companies. Chapter 7 details the recent graduates and current students’ perspectives towards the WIL initiatives in their universities and colleges. Chapter 8 focuses on the investigation of the foreign language teaching and learning in the selected tourism institutions from the perspectives of the stakeholders. Chapter 9 summarises and discusses the findings of the study, acknowledges some limitations of the research, and proposes recommendations for future studies.
Chapter 2: Work-Integrated Learning: Theory, Principles and Implications in Tourism Training

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the fast changing world of business in general and tourism in particular, with high demand and employment competitiveness, people need to acquire new competencies to adapt accordingly. However, there seems to be a sizeable gap between what is required in the tourism industry and what can be provided by tourism training institutions (Barrie, 2006; Hearns, Devine, & Baum, 2007; Kember & Leung, 2005; Zehrer & Mössenlechner, 2009). Around the world, tourism employers are expecting graduates to be work-ready, and to possess a range of competencies and qualities (Yorke & Harvey, 2005). They are typically recruiting individuals with not only specific academic skills and knowledge, but also with proactive attitudes and the capability to perceive and react to problems creatively and autonomously (Fallows & Steven, 2000). Education providers, it seems, are not preparing graduates adequately however, and students are graduating with unrealistic expectations of an industry where operational competence is highly emphasised (Barrows & Johan, 2008; Wang, 2008). This has led to discussions focusing on work-integrated learning (WIL) processes in vocational education in general and in tourism training in particular. These processes aim to equip graduates with knowledge of specific disciplines, as well as employability skills and competencies to meet the growing demands of the tourism industry in the globalised world (Bell, Crebert, Patrick, Bates, & Cragnolini, 2003; Fleming, Zinn, & Ferkin, 2008; Spowart, 2011; Yorke, 2006; Zegrer & Mössenlechner, 2009). This chapter will elaborate upon a theoretical framework of WIL, on which this evaluation of the WIL processes in the Vietnamese tourism programs is grounded. It will examine the concept of WIL, its stakeholders, its outcomes and the strategies to maximise the effectiveness of WIL in three main stages: design, implementation and assessment.

2.2 THE CONCEPT OF WIL

The term WIL was actually coined on account of the rising diversity in the modes of vocational learning (Reeders, 2000). Different terms are used in the literature to refer to WIL, including experience-based learning, professional learning (Lawson, Fallshaw, Papadopoulos, Taylor, & Zankó, 2011); cooperative education, work-based learning (Groenewald, 2004); practice-based learning (Hodge, 2008); work placements, internships, field work, sandwich year degrees, and job shadowing (Von Treuer, Sturre, Keele, & McLeod, 2010). Internships or placements taken
off-campus are considered “ubiquitous” (Gardner & Bartkus, 2014, p. 46) and “the most widely reported and accepted form” of WIL (Rowe, Winchester-Seeto, & Mackaway, 2012, p. 246). Therefore, WIL is still often mistaken for a simple internship or work placement. However, tertiary institutions are using the term WIL in a broader sense than just internships or placements to accommodate a wide range of activities which have a strong focus on industry partnerships (Macdonald, Cameron, Brimble, Freudenberg, & English, 2014). In this sense, WIL is used interchangeably with professional learning, which is conceptualised as “the development of professional capabilities through teaching and learning experiences and activities that integrate academic, discipline-specific and industry-referenced knowledge, skills and attitudes (Lawson et al., 2011, p. 63). A diversity of approaches other than the internships include project work, simulations, student visits to industry, invitation of industry speakers and co-operation with industry on specific projects (Atchison, Pollock, Reeders, & Rizzetti, 2002; Patrick et al., 2008).

Table 2.1. Typology of WIL (Lawson et al., 2011, pp. 64-65).

| Industry simulation | Reality-based, experiential learning-centred approaches engaging students in real-time analysis and decision making in real-world situations within the safety of an educational environment. |
| Industry practitioner delivery | Industry practitioners engage in the teaching program to deliver specialized lectures, present in seminar series, conduct professional development workshops or participate in assessment of student projects and presentations. |
| Industry mentoring | Matching students with a professional role model to enhance skills (instrumental) and attributes (developmental); investigating career options (transition and pathways); increasing understanding of the benefits of coursework (knowing and doing); and exposure to different thinking and learning methods. |
| Industry study tour | Includes field trips, site visits and more lengthy tours. Industry study tours aim to create opportunities by travelling to industry-related places and situations, allowing students to apply theory, see theory in practice, ask questions of professionals in situ, compare and contrast different sites of work, and connect curriculum and learning to professional practice. |
| Industry placement | Immerses students in a workplace related to their discipline or career goals. Ideally, industry placement combines both class-based learning and structured and supported workplace activity with opportunities to reflect on learning and seek timely feedback on performance. |
| Industry competition | Industry competitions involve individual businesses organizing, judging, sponsoring or in some other way encouraging students (often in teams) to compete against each other to achieve a business-oriented goal in a short timeframe. Industry competitions include marketing strategies, management plans, business start-up ideas and online business games. Recognition and rewards are an important incentive in this category. |
| Industry project | Industry projects include a broad range of activities and typically involve the sort of work undertaken in the workplace. Industry projects include the production of a workplace artefact (for example management plan, business report, market research) and management activities. As well as providing a forum to apply theory to a real-world work issue, projects develop students’ project management skills, team skills, communication skills and problem-solving skills. |
Lawson et al. (2011) generated a typology of WIL, which is summarised in Table 2.1, to cover all activities which have industry involvement. In this research, although internship is the main type of WIL to be examined, other WIL activities that involve partnership with industry will also be addressed.

### 2.3 IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS OF WIL: BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES

A stakeholder in the context of this research is defined as “any individual or organisation that participates in or impacts on WIL” (Patrick et al., 2008, p. 10). Typically involved in a WIL process are at least three key parties: (1) students; (2) lecturers and their training institutions; and (3) employers and workplace supervisors (Patrick et al., 2008; Shirley et al., 2006). For each party, WIL brings both opportunities and challenges.

Students who have WIL experience or a skill-development component during their study programs are more likely to have a positive reflection on their university life and to be employed within their discipline after graduation (Weisz & Chapman, 2005). These benefits can be achieved because they have had opportunities to develop both professional and personal attributes. In academic terms, when students are exposed to authentic learning with real contexts and activities and have opportunities to experience various roles, to work collaboratively and reflectively in the construction of knowledge and to apply theory to solve real problems, they can reinforce and consolidate their university learning (Franz, 2008, p. 166). Their real world learning will enable them to understand the culture and the discourse of the profession and help them to develop the necessary skills and competencies for their employment and a better appreciation of the world of work (Gamble, Patrick, & Peach, 2010; Wilton, 2012). Through an understanding of their employer’s business, students gain an appreciation of operational practices and the wider business environment within which the tourism industry functions. The student’s career prospects, hence, are enhanced by having established a range of contacts and having undertaken industry related work experience (ibid.). Personal attributes such as self-esteem, self-confidence, maturity and responsibility can be well developed after a work placement thanks to the transition from the role of a student to that of an employee, which results in improved academic performance during their programs (Bates, 2005; Billett, 2011; Weisz & Chapman, 2005). Beside the opportunities, however, students may also experience problems including the feeling of “inadequacy” or “isolation” when working with very experienced and confident co-workers, or encounter obstacles to satisfactory achievement when working with “unsupportive” or “difficult” co-workers (Jackson, 2014, pp.11-12).
Training institutions benefit both directly and indirectly from the WIL experience as much as the student (Weisz & Chapman, 2005). WIL can bring to universities the opportunity to provide students with a quality education which can enhance their recruitment prospects as graduates (Shirley et al., 2006). The employment rate of graduates can boost the reputation of institutions who in turn attract more students and influence student retention rates (Orrell, 2004; Weisz & Chapman, 2005). WIL therefore allows education providers to keep pace with rapidly evolving professional contexts and ensure their prosperity in a competitive education market (Abeysekera, 2006). However, they also have to cope with the difficulties in finding workplaces for placements and addressing the problem of a shortage of staff with the necessary practical experience to coordinate the program effectively (Orrell, 2004).

The industry and employers can also benefit greatly from having interns at their workplace. These students are often able to provide innovative ideas which are not recognised by those already in that workplace (Ring, Dickinger, & Wober, 2008). WIL can help organisations increase savings in recruitment and training costs (Collis, 2010), since they can employ enthusiastic and motivated graduates by screening potential permanent employees during their placements (Braunstein & Loken, 2004). Organisations, therefore, have access to a workforce that has the skills necessary for success in the workplace, which can save them from retraining after recruitment (Bates, 2005). However, organisations and workplace supervisors may also have unpleasant experiences with WIL. Organisations may not provide enough support to supervisors or may require them to supervise interns in addition to their normal duties, which can place too much pressure on them. These supervisors may also experience a negative relationship with some students, or alternatively might hesitate to give negative assessments, which can distort the final results of the internship (ibid.).

2.4 OUTCOMES OF WIL

The central aim of WIL is to help students become work-ready by equipping them for their employment with both generic and specific competencies which will develop their sustainable employability after graduation (Fleming, Martin, Hughes & Zinn, 2009; Orrell, 2004). The competencies targeted by WIL encompass skills, understanding and personal attributes that give graduates more opportunities to obtain employment and to thrive in their selected occupations and gain new employment when required (Morgan 2004; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005; Yorke, 2006). There has been a considerable controversy among researchers as to which competencies and skills are required by employers to maximise the students’ chances to obtain and maintain their employment. In this study, three main employability skills, namely generic skills, global
competences and foreign language communicative skills, which enhance employment advantages in a global environment, are examined.

2.4.1 Generic skills

Generic skills, sometimes called soft skills or employability skills, are skills, abilities, and personal attributes that graduates can use within the wide range of working environments in which they operate throughout their lives (Felisitas, Molline, & Clotildah, 2011). These skills are considered to have greater influence on success in the workplace and can be more likely to guarantee employment than a strong knowledge base and professional (hard) skills (Bell et al., 2003; Fleming et al., 2009; Franz, 2008). The literature has pointed out that while hard skills are focused on seriously at universities, soft skills do not receive sufficient emphasis to prepare graduates for their professional life (Fleming et al., 2009). From the perspective of industry, companies tend to place soft skills high on their agenda in the recruitment due to the fact that hard skills can be easily trained, while it is often too hard for them to train graduates in soft skills (Nettleton, 2007).

Many researchers have generated lists of components of these skills and attributes. Spencer and Spencer (1993) list twenty-four key generic competencies for new graduates entering the world of employment. Among these, in research conducted by Fleming et al. (2009) are the top five competencies from the industry perspective: (i) ability and willingness to learn; (ii) initiative; (iii) personal planning and organisational skills; (iv) relationship building; and (v) teamwork and cooperation (p. 194). According to Yorke and Harvey (2005), employers expect students to be able to take the initiative, think for themselves by asking questions, be adaptable and flexible and have a willingness to learn. Rees, Forbes, and Kubler (2007) point out that in the disciplines of business and management, hospitality, leisure and sport, transferable skills which are highly valued by employers are effective communication, ability to work on one's own initiative or collaboratively, and responsibility for one's own development such as “ability and desire to learn for oneself and improve one’s self-awareness and performance” (p. 4). Drawing on established definitions and empirical work, Jackson (2010) underlines how ‘ethics and responsibility’, ‘written communication’ and ‘team working’ are also deemed important competences by employers. Felisitas et al. (2011) point out that there are numerous competencies which span into seven overarching areas: professional knowledge competency, operational skills, communication skills, ICT, human resources, management and business acumen related skills (accounting, finance, sales and marketing) (p. 15). Acquiring these skills will ultimately result in graduates having the necessary competencies to perform their roles effectively (ibid.). From a survey conducted by Wang (2008) with tourism practitioners in
Australia, five generic skills including oral communication, relationship management skills, work ethics, customer service skills and team working skills are ranked the highest in the list of 27 skills and attributes. Surprisingly, academic skills and attributes such as research skills, relevant work experience, legal understanding and academic grades are not placed highly by the industry practitioners in Wang’s study.

As different as the ideas are among researchers, it would seem that the four most common generic skills agreed on by employers are initiative, willingness to learn, team-work and communication skills. It is advised that the generic skills be integrated and contextualised into a curriculum (Bath, Smith, Stein, & Swann, 2004) and be embedded not only in any one module but throughout the curriculum at all levels (Hind, Moss, & McKellan, 2007).

2.4.2 Global perspectives

Global perspectives (Lunn, 2008), global competencies (Hunter, White, & Godby, 2006) and global consciousness (Gacel-Avila, 2005) are the different terms used for desired outcomes of WIL programs to prepare graduates for the global world of work. According to Lunn (2008), global perspectives are embedded in higher education in order to

enable students to develop knowledge about different places and cultures of the world; cross-cutting global issues, problems, and events—past, present, and future; and an understanding of the relevance to their own lives. Such students will be made more aware of different ways of thinking about the world and contemporary issues and will cultivate values, attitudes, and skills that equip them to be informed and active citizens, voters, employees, employers, and travellers in the world (p. 233).

The “global ready graduate” with “global competence” is defined as “having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others” (Hunter et al., 2006, p. 277). “Global consciousness” is a new concept to reform people’s way of thinking to be relevant in the new global environment, according to Gacel-Avila (2005). It is defined as “comprehension of and receptivity to foreign cultures, and the availability of certain knowledge of, and information about, socioeconomic concerns and ecology” (ibid., p. 123). In this sense, the implication for education is that training programs must highlight “an updating of academic content, making global phenomena understandable while promoting intercultural understanding and sustainable human development” (ibid.).
With global knowledge and understanding, values and attitudes, graduates are reported to develop the necessary graduate skills for a globalised world of work. Shiel (2006) maintains that global citizens are capable of working in a society where cross-cultural capability is essential to employment. Hunter et al. (2006, p. 277) add that graduates are able to “leverage the knowledge and understanding gained to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one’s own environment”. However, Shiel (2006) suggests that graduates need to go one step further and see the connectivity between their own experiences and the experiences of people throughout the world. Therefore, they require an understanding and appreciation of both local and global perspectives (Gacel-Avila, 2005; Shiel, 2006).

2.4.3 Foreign language communicative skills

In the global working environment in which the tourism industry operates, competence in a foreign language is regarded as indispensable (Leslie & Russell, 2005), and should hence be included as one of the most important outcomes of WIL. Good quality communication, particularly verbal communication, between hosts and tourists who come from completely different national or regional cultures can help maintain good relationships and will influence visitors' perceptions of the overall quality of the service, which have a direct influence on visitors’ future destination choices. Therefore, tourism graduates with good foreign language communicative competence can enhance their employment opportunities within this industry and will be more competent and qualified in the cross-cultural encounters.

According to Canale and Swain (1980, p. 705), communicative competence consists of four main areas of knowledge and skill: grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. The first two elements (grammatical and discourse competence) reflect the use of language itself and the last two (sociolinguistic and strategic competence) reflect functions of communication. Grammatical competence refers to the knowledge of vocabulary and of rules of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. In second language pedagogy, this competence is a core part of the communicative approach, whose main aim is to provide learners with the knowledge of how to perceive and produce utterances accurately. Discourse competence focuses on the rules of cohesion (grammatical links) and coherence (the logical links of communicative functions) of groups of utterances. While grammatical competence is relevant to sentence-level grammar, discourse competence refers to the relationship between sentences or utterances. Sociolinguistic competence reflects the socio-cultural rules of language use. Its emphasis is on the appropriateness of the proposition and communicative functions in a particular context, as determined by the topic, participants, setting and norms of attitude or style conveyed by the linguistic forms within given
socio-cultural contexts. Finally, strategic competence is formed by the mastery of verbal and nonverbal strategies to save interactants from communication breakdowns. These strategies are more likely to be achieved through real-life situations than in contexts like the classroom where communicative purposes are normally artificial.

2.5 STRATEGIES TO OPTIMISE WIL

The above-mentioned skills and attributes required in a global working environment are more than just the discipline-specific skills and knowledge which students acquire at their training institutions (Richardson, Kaidar, Henschke, & Jackling, 2009). They should necessarily be supported and reinforced throughout the students’ program as well as being highlighted during the workplace learning experience (Fleming et al., 2008). Whatever type of WIL activities are included, their success will be maintained if “the experience is graded to include increasingly varied and novel tasks and problems, high quality supervision and/or mentoring is provided, all parties are prepared for the activity and know and understand their roles, the activity has high level support and the activity helps to build partnerships with enterprises, the industry and/or profession” (Goodenough & Page, 1993). In other words, there should be practical roles of each stakeholder to maintain strong relationships of key players of WIL.

As illustrated in Figure 2.1, the three stakeholders – student, university and employer – have interconnected relationships under the impact of the policy of government and higher education. The roles of these three WIL stakeholders also depend on the orientation of the training institution and the employers towards the ethos of work experience, which will determine whether the goals of WIL are achievable or not. According to Harvey et al. (1997) (as cited in Orrell, 2004, p. 2), the orientation might exist on a continuum with a ‘value-added ethos’ at one end and a ‘stakeholder ethos’ at the other. While the ‘value-added ethos’ puts emphasis on tangible, short-term returns for the industry organisations in which students are expected to be adaptive, are assigned specific tasks to complete and are considered as workers or observers, the ‘stakeholder ethos’ emphasises learning, adopts a long-term view which legitimates students as real learners, allowing them to engage in a range of involvements in the host organisation, develop generic skills and personal attributes and have a chance to propose new ideas through the exploration of subject matter and the actual workplace. Therefore, the long-term outcomes of WIL can only be maintained if a stakeholder approach is adopted where partnerships between the university and industry are fostered and students are considered as learners.
A WIL process which applies the stakeholder approach is necessarily constituted by four main components as Groenewald (2004) has summarised, namely: “(a) an integrated curriculum, (b) learning derived from work experience, (c) cultivation of a support-base, and (d) logistical organisation and coordination of the learning experience.” (p. 24). In other words, the necessary conditions for the WIL process to be successful should be designed to include: a curriculum in which the academic requirements match industry needs; a curriculum designed to encompass the work component which enables experiential learning; support from workplaces which offer appropriate internships for students and provide them with advice and input pertinent to the curriculum; and logistics for the program which ensure profound detail about organising, coordinating and assessing students before, during and after the work experience (Groenewald, 2004). Therefore, WIL should feature close links between three stakeholders, namely training institutions, workplaces and students with “specified responsibilities for each party” (ibid., p.17) at the design, implementation and evaluation stages of the WIL process.

2.5.1 Design of WIL

In a study by Patrick et al. (2008), the importance of designing WIL as an integral part of the curriculum, rather than a supplementary element, is highlighted. It is essential to design an integrated WIL curriculum that is supported by sufficient resources to enable appropriate
preparation, supervision and mentoring coordination. The following section will discuss definitions of a WIL curriculum, principles and philosophy underpinning the design of a WIL curriculum, internationalisation of a WIL curriculum

### 2.5.1.1 Definition of curriculum

A curriculum is commonly considered “a whole program of educational experiences that is packaged as a degree program. Its constituent parts are a number of modules or courses, which in turn may be specified as a series of syllabi or course content” (Tribe, 2005, p. 48). The term curriculum can be used to describe “a discipline, a specific area of knowledge and academic study” (Hewitt, 2006, p. 406). It is also referred to “an interrelated set of plans and experiences that a student undertakes under the guidance of the school” (Marsh & Willis, 2007, p. 15). Different from the other scholars who emphasise planning and schooling features of curriculum, Tanner and Tanner (2007) generate a definition of curriculum which highlights the important roles of the personal life and experience of a learner – a central component of a curriculum. Curriculum is, therefore, “reconstruction of knowledge and experience that enables the learner to grow in exercising intelligent control of subsequent knowledge and experience” (Tanner & Tanner, 2007, p. 122). As Wang (2008) suggests, with massive changes in social thought, it is crucial for any definition of curriculum to place emphasis on the nature of the learner and practical social needs.

### 2.5.1.2 Underlying philosophies in tourism curriculum design

The curriculum design of tourism programs is influenced by the underlying educational philosophy that curriculum planners embrace (Fidgeon, 2010). Different framings of curriculum mean that graduates from tourism courses will be equipped with “a variety of perspectives, attitudes, and competences” (Tribe, 2002, p. 340). Two trends of whether curriculum design should be vocationally or liberally oriented were generated by Silver and Brennan (1988) (as cited in Tribe, 2005). Vocational curriculum is a curriculum for employment, equipping students with the necessary knowledge skills and competencies to engage and participate in the world of employment (Fidgeon, 2010; Tribe, 2005). Advocates of a vocational approach to curriculum design highlight the acquisition of skills, qualities, attitudes and knowledge that are valued in the workplace (Pring, 1993). In the tourism industry, several practical and transferable skills are highly valued by tourism executives, such as communication skills, interpersonal skills, computer literacy, human resource management, managerial accounting and managing service quality (Haywood & Maki, 1992; Koh, 1995). However, the curricula which are
vocationally dominated are criticised as “restrictive and mechanical” (Fidgeon, 2010, p. 708) with “a quite narrow view of tourism” (Tribe, 2005, p. 54).

While a vocational curriculum focuses on the employability of graduates, a liberal or academic curriculum places more emphasis on thinking and reflection, inducting students into the principles of the discipline (Tribe, 2002, 2005). A liberally designed tourism curriculum stresses the open acquisition of knowledge and the understanding of all aspects of tourism, including the role of tourism in society and the world (Fidgeon, 2010). A tourism curriculum framed only for academic ends with little focus on practical application or preparation for employment after graduation may risk the criticism of “detachment of the individual from any realistic perception of what is either socially desirable or practically meaningful” (Goodlad, 1995, p. 28).

In order to balance both vocational and academic outcomes, a multi-disciplinary approach is required in curriculum design (Fidgeon, 2010). Tribe (2002) developed a curriculum framework for philosophic practitioners for tourism higher education which combines the vocational and the liberal. Tribe’s curriculum model aims to prescribe the essential elements of a curriculum for good perception and action of practitioners (i.e. tourism students) in the world of tourism (Fidgeon, 2010; Tribe, 2002, 2005). This model can help tourism higher education to produce graduates who deliver efficient and effective tourism services, attempt a comprehensive understanding of the tourism phenomenon while at the same time discharging the role of stewardship for the development of the wider tourism world in which these services are delivered. (Tribe, 2005, p. 58).

*Figure 2.2. A Curriculum for the Philosophic Practitioner (Tribe, 2002, p. 349).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stance</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>Reflective</td>
<td>Liberal Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>Reflective</td>
<td>Vocational Action</td>
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</table>

The Philosophic Practitioner

**Chapter 2: Work-Integrated Learning: Theory, Principles and Implications in Tourism Training**
The curriculum for philosophic practice in Tribe’s curriculum model covers all four domains, as illustrated in Figure 2.2, and represents a synthesis of the dichotomy. These four key domains are vocational reflection, vocational action, liberal reflection, and liberal action. Reflective vocational curriculum places an emphasis on “reflection, evaluation and modification of tourism skills and knowledge” (Tribe, 2002, p. 343). The personal knowledge of the practitioners is developed from experience and action in the tourism world. Vocational action refers to the actions of those employed in the tourism industry, aiming to prepare for effectiveness at work. Therefore, curriculum development involves the acquisition of specific vocational skills and knowledge and personal transferable skills for work effectiveness. Reflective liberal curriculum aims at an understanding and critical evaluation of tourism’s society. It takes reflection beyond the workplace and places an emphasis on the world of tourism and the ethical issues pertaining to it. Liberal action requires the extra step of transferring the critical thinking and understanding of the tourism world into action. This action brings changes not only at the individual level, but also at a societal level in the form of cooperation in action with others. The curriculum of tourism higher education, which educates philosophic practitioners, is a way to strike the balance between the missions of tourism training institutions and industry needs.

2.5.1.3 Principles of designing WIL curricula in tourism discipline

Unlike his predecessors including Eraut, Goad, and Smith (1975), Manwaring and Elton (1984), Rowntree (1982) and Tyler (1949) who all proposed models for curriculum design with the consideration of the aims and purposes of the planned course as the starting point, Tribe (2005, p. 52) lists the typical sequence of successful design of a curriculum as follows:

- Establish rationale;
- Conduct market research and consultation to establish demand;
- Define aims and objectives;
- Establish a modular structure including progression between levels and compulsory/elective merits;
- Choose modules;
- Establish learning outcomes for modules;
- Determine assessment strategy;
- Determine teaching and learning strategy;
- Develop a system for validation, evaluation, review and improvement.
Specific principles to design well-conceived WIL programs are identified by Atchison et al. (2002, p. 6). These principles emphasise the significance of curriculum design which encompasses work integrated activities into the curriculum, considers the diversity of student needs, incorporates both specific and generic skills, targets specific learning outcomes such as learning strategies and problem solving skills, and develops students’ career plans and transition management skills. If a WIL curriculum aims to achieve its expected educational outcomes and bridge a gap between the training providers and the industry, innovative models that are purposefully designed and constructively aligned both to curricula and employer needs should be incorporated. Feedback and communication among students, institutions, and employers about curriculum issues will enhance the effectiveness of curriculum design and establish mechanisms for continuous quality improvement for future initiatives (Patrick et al., 2008).

### 2.5.1.4 Internationalising the tourism curriculum

Curriculum frameworks for WIL should be formally structured based on the aims, activities and culture of the industry in order to prepare the graduates with global perspectives. Therefore, a curriculum integrated with the needs of the international tourism industry and encompassing the work component in an international working environment is necessarily internationalised in its content. Internationalisation is considered “the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension (e.g., a perspective, activity or program) into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education” (Knight, 2003, p. 2) to produce graduates who can function properly in increasingly culturally diverse environments such as the tourism industry.

The central role of internationalisation of the curriculum in practically shaping the students’ international and intercultural perspectives is brought into focus by numerous researchers (Black, 2004; Haigh, 2002; Hobson & Josiam, 1996; Leask, 2001). Leask (2001) states, “internationalising university curricula is a powerful and practical way of bridging the gap between rhetoric and practice” (p. 100). Haigh (2002) explains in detail the significance of this process by arguing that this idea can prepare students to possess: (1) global and inclusive thoughts to consider issues from various angles; (2) a grasp of the fundamental tenets of intercultural viewpoints; (3) an awareness of their own cultural traditions and perspectives in relation to other cultures and their perspectives; and (4) an appreciation of the relation between their academic disciplines locally and globally. Black (2004) and Hobson and Josiam (1996) agree that graduates who are in contact with clients from various nationalities and cultural backgrounds (such as those who work in the tourism industry) will need knowledge and skills.
that enhance their capability to adapt to a foreign culture and to operate in a socially and culturally diverse environment.

Internationalisation of the curriculum can also refer to the inclusion of varied activities such as study abroad programs, foreign language courses, interdisciplinary or area programs, or the provision of programs or courses with an international, intercultural, or comparative focus. From a study conducted by Bremer and Van der Wende (1995), the following features of internationalised curricula are considered essential by department heads: studies of professional practices in other nations or cultures; learning about transnational knowledge; requiring students to complete studies in a foreign language or in areas such as intercultural communication or international studies; training of cross-cultural communication and skills; application of other countries’ experiences to local issues; discussion of global issues and international affairs; studies on international case studies; and parts of courses delivered by foreign scholars in departments and schools (p. 68).

Several approaches to the internationalisation of the curriculum have been suggested by various researchers. According to Guerin (2009), internationalising curricula is mainly obtained by “the infusion of international modules, especially in consortia of community colleges dedicated to enhancing international education.” (p. 612). More specifically, Edwards et al. (2003) suggest three levels of internationalising curricula: level 1 is including international examples, cases and perspectives in the curriculum; level 2 is creating cross-cultural interaction in formal and informal situations; and level 3 is immersing students in global settings through foreign language study and exchange programs (p.190).

2.5.1.5 Tourism subjects to be included in a WIL curriculum

From an empirical study conducted by Wang (2008) on academics in tourism programs from eight universities in Australia and tourism industry practitioners, subjects such as Strategic Tourism and Hospitality Management, Tourism Planning and Development, and Principles of Management are highly valued by both groups of participants. Many subjects are given more emphasis by tourism practitioners than by tourism academics and vice-versa. Subjects pertaining to sustainable development, for example Sustainable Tourism, International Trends and Global Issues in Tourism, and Tourism Planning and Environment are considered extremely important by the academic staff. Tourism practitioners, in contrast, place more emphasis on subjects which have readily observed commercial impacts on business, such as Principles of Marketing, Tourism and Hospitality Marketing, and Principles of Management. Some subjects received totally opposite views from both groups. Research skills are highly valued while
employment skills areas are considered to be least important by the academics. The tourism industry, however, has the opposite view. Likewise, accounting, finance and economics areas are highly valued by the tourism industry but do not receive a similar value in tourism education. The different perspectives of the tourism industry and tourism training providers towards the tourism subjects illustrate that “tourism higher education, with its strong vocationally oriented nature, needs to be relevant to the needs and expectations of the tourism industry” (Wang, 2008, p. 122).

In brief, the significance of the combination of academic and vocational components is emphasised in the literature through the definition of curriculum, philosophical grounds and principles to design a WIL curriculum. Therefore, it is essential that a WIL curriculum designed for tourism programs to create graduates to be work-ready in an international environment should combine the academic requirements and real-world experiences with international features in it. Practitioners of the tourism industry and of tourism education need to communicate to decide on which subjects should be included in the tourism programs, and it is essential that the needs of the tourism industry be satisfied.

2.5.2 Implementation of WIL: Activities to enhance WIL experiences and the roles of the stakeholders

In this study, the partnerships among the stakeholders and the central role of training institutions and academic staff as the key players of WIL, which are shown through both on-campus and off-campus activities, are strongly advocated.

2.5.2.1 On-campus WIL activities

There is a variety of on-campus activities to provide students with industry input (Atchison et al., 2002, p. 6). Varied as they are, training institutions and academic staff are expected to be involved in all stages of the WIL process to help maximise the students’ WIL experience (Jackson, 2014).

One of the most widely used WIL activities is the incorporation of guest lecturers (GLs) to provide “insights from industry” to university programs (Fleming, Zinn, & Ferkin, 2008). Despite its popularity, there is a paucity of guidance in the literature on the effective use of GLs. A paper written by Hoek, Godsell, and Harrison (2011) presents the benefits of GLs and analyses the challenges that the provision of GLs to training programs faces.
The incorporation of “insights from industry” into training programs via the use of GLs brings benefits to three sets of stakeholders comprising (i) the training institution, (ii) the GL and their host organisation, and (iii) the students. In particular, for the training institution: it equips students with the “insights from industry” to begin to understand how theory works in practice: assists the faculty to meet the intended learning outcomes of its training programs in an engaging way; and strengthens relationships with practitioners and increases opportunities for further collaboration. For the GLs themselves it enables personal satisfaction which means giving something back to the “system” and inspiring future managers; it increases association with the university and enhances opportunities for further collaboration; and it indirectly advertises the company and careers in the involved industry. For the students, GLs are primarily a source of inspiration on three levels: company, careers in the industry and specific roles. Secondly, GLs enable students to apply the theory to the real world, hence better preparing them for their future careers. Finally GLs help to promote deep learning and inspire students into lifelong learning activities (ibid., p. 146).

Incorporating GLs into the training programs encounters two main challenges that training institutions need to take into consideration: (i) strategies to effectively incorporate the GLs into the training program design to enable the achievement of the intended learning outcomes, and (ii) strategies to recruit and retain the GLs once an appropriate GL opportunity is identified. For the first challenge, Hoek et al. (2011) suggest that for students to appreciate the relevance and importance of a GL, the training institutions create explicit links between the GLs’ teaching activities to learning outcomes and assessment. Good assessment needs to reflect “the importance of practical relevance and students are rewarded not only for the regurgitation of underlying theory but also for consideration of its relevance in practice” (ibid. p. 143). The role of an academic lecturer is to help students grasp the theoretical underpinnings of a subject, and that of the GL to supplement this with insights into the practicalities of theory in action. Therefore, the training institution needs to ensure that GLs teach a syllabus topic in a relevant way and that the principles of good course design are still followed. The training institution can employ the following strategies to facilitate the delivery of GLs: (i) providing GLs with guidelines in advance regarding intended learning outcomes, time duration and delivery style; (ii) setting the GLs’ expectations, in terms of what to expect from the students; (iii) reviewing the GLs’ slides and discussing the delivery style; and (iv) encouraging the GLs to engage with the principles of active teaching to engage the students. After the design of activities and processes to incorporate GLs into the programs is decided, the institution may encounter challenges in recruiting and retaining appropriate GLs. Several strategies they may take are: (i) leveraging industrial contacts with the careers department; (ii) leveraging the student and alumni network, including their relatives; (iii) using practitioner bodies and conferences to network and
recruit; and (iv) leveraging the broader faculty network (ibid., p. 145).

In addition to the invitation of GLs, academics can expose the students to new, interesting and real-world experiences pertinent to their discipline of study through a range of other activities (Hoek et al., 2011). Creating project work is a particularly common strategy to enhance WIL effectiveness because it maintains the academic emphasis while giving the students exposure to workplace environments and interactions (Coll & Zegward, 2006). Sharing industry relevant experience is instrumental in motivating students (Patrick et al., 2008).

Inventing authentic case studies, role-plays and scenarios which simulate the scope, nature and standard of required skills for students is another important type of WIL (Fleming et al., 2008). Simulation is defined by Lateef (2010) as a technique for learning and practice which is applicable to various disciplines and types of trainees. It substitutes and augments real experiences with guided ones that evoke or replicate core aspects of the real world so that participants can be immersed in it as if they were in the real world. Simulation of aspects of the work environment gives students the experience of engaging in the workplace within an educational framework. Approaches to simulations are as diverse as employers’ involvement, use of videos demonstrating workplace interactions, or online programs (Jackson, 2014).

Similar to other WIL strategies, workplace simulation strategies need to be designed with the curriculum and an element of authenticity; as well, planning and support are to be emphasised to enhance the student learning experience (ibid.).

Academic staff can incorporate other activities in their class-based training prior to placements to provide students with sufficient industry input such as: creating, planning and goal setting activities which integrate the two learning contexts through a cycle of feedback and review; training for related occupation-specific tasks commonly practiced in the workplace; organising collaborative small group activities; and encouraging students to develop some ability and confidence in these areas (Patrick et al., 2008).

2.5.2.2 Internships and the roles of each stakeholder

According to a study conducted by Ring et al. (2008), the internship is always considered the most important aspect of academic programs by academics and industry professionals. It requires close links within the key triad of institutions, companies and students in order to function effectively. These three parties need to agree on the learning goals, the conditions of the work placement and the duties of each party (Collin & Tynjala, 2003; Reeders, 2000). Three essential aspects of successful placement preparation identified by Ring et al. (2008) include
organisation, communication and documentation. These elements are to ensure that “all parties are clear [regarding] what is expected of them, and the objectives of the work experience, so that students are not just “thrown in at the deep end”’ (Long, Larsen, Hussey, & Travis, 2001).

The cooperation for effective work experience of the stakeholders involves meaningful tasks as a means to an end, not as an end in itself, because the experience of work is not sufficient to lead to transformed learning (Orrell, 2004). Therefore, WIL must be backed up by induction of students and academic and workplace supervisors and the development of appropriate assessment to maintain its effectiveness. Empirical studies have demonstrated that student satisfaction with the placement will be enhanced if both academic and workplace mentors mutually support their learning (Fleming et al., 2008; Fleming & Martin, 2007). They are required to plan and facilitate appropriate learning experiences that link the workplace and university contexts in the design and implementation of WIL with the active roles of the students themselves in their own experience of WIL.

The following sections discuss the specific roles of the three stakeholders of WIL and their expected cooperation before, during and after the internship to ensure maximum effectiveness.

### 2.5.2.2.1 Roles of institutions

As the central stakeholder of WIL, institutions are expected to carry out systematic activities before, during and after the internship to maximise its effectiveness. Prior to the internship, institutions need to recruit an internship coordinator, build relationship with the workplaces, design and sign contracts, and prepare the students with appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes for the coming internships at a new environment. Details are presented as follows:

The academic supervisors assume an important role as internship coordinators (Harvey, Geall, & Moon, 1998, p. 10). An academic as a coordinator can bring a deeper understanding of curriculum and the missions of institutions and can provide an integration of theory into practice (Cooper, Orrell, & Bowden, 2010). However, the changing roles of staff as educators and coordinators are of concern to several researchers who recommend a continual need for professional development to make such initiatives instrumental in developing and maintaining quality curriculum (Fleming et al., 2009; Pegg, Waldock, Henry-Isaac, & Lawton, 2012). Before the internship, the coordinator is supposed to identify, negotiate and coordinate learning opportunities with the workplace and give induction to students, mentors and others involved in the workplace with the WIL programs (Cooper et al., 2010).
As in the definition of WIL, all WIL activities need to engage industry. Therefore, it is important that training institutions create and maintain a close relationship with workplaces and industry employers. Building the rapport with the workplaces is a key part of the design stage of WIL. Relationships between institutions and workplaces can be based on personal relationships and established networks of people (Cooper et al., 2010). Alumni are also reliable sources for establishing relationships with employers (Cooper et al., 2010; Orrell, 2004). In order to maintain strong and long-term relationships, it is advisable that training institutions offer privileges and rewards as incentives and send messages of appreciation to workplace personnel (Cooper et al., 2010). Before the implementation of the internship, it is also the responsibility of the institutions to contact the workplaces and arrange with the workplaces to take students (ibid.).

Contracts between the training institutions and the workplace outlining key requirements of each party need to be taken into account at the design stage (Bates, 2005; Cooper et al., 2010; Patrick et al., 2008). They need to be explicitly and transparently designed to provide a clear guide for the various WIL practitioners (Cooper et al., 2010). Many companies may not agree on the necessity of signing a contract, but this written record is considered essential to facilitate WIL practice (ibid.). When preparing a contract, the interests of all parties need to be taken into consideration through communication. Some elements of the contracts encompass names of all parties; aims of WIL, assessment requirements and intended outcomes; length and timing of WIL activities; insurance information; confidentiality and privacy issues; legal requirements; procedures to settle conflicts and to deal with unsatisfactory performance; roles and responsibilities of all parties including the WIL coordinator, student and workplace mentors; the validity duration of the contract; and signatures of all parties (ibid., p. 181).

Students need to be well-prepared before the WIL activities in order to be more confident when they are immersed in a new environment with various challenges. Academics cannot limit their duties to transmitting academic content but they should cooperate with the workplace supervisors in vocational matters to prepare learners for employment (Fleming & Martin, 2007). The psychological preparation for students before the placement, such as strategies for managing stress and achieving a healthy life and work balance during placement, is also an important action to be taken by the academics (Jackson, 2014). Students should be made aware of professional ethics and conduct as well as strategies to deal with situations where personal values may be conflicted, and their responsibilities expected in the workplace (Varghese et al., 2012). According to Coll et al. (2009), conflict management is one of the most poorly developed skills in graduates. The students’ familiarity with and mastery of relevant and modern technology to be used in the profession also needs adequate attention from the
academics to improve students’ productivity after the placement (Jackson & Chapman, 2012). Cooper et al. (2010, pp. 82-87) suggest in a systematic way that the teachers should prepare the students with workplace literacy, motivation, learning to work with others, noticing, self-awareness and port-folio preparation. Students need to be provided with workplace literacy concerning organisational issues including values, purposes, structure, and function of the workplace, legal and ethical literacy. The students’ understanding of the workplace literacy is essential for them to perform in compliance with the companies’ requirements. Students’ motivation in participating in WIL activities can be boosted if teachers engage them in the planning of their learning, remove their anxiety, make the learning environment safe and fun, provide them with care and share with them resources or experiences of other students. Learning to work with others, involving good communication skills, ability to give and take, understanding of work processes and ability to network, is another skill that the students need to be equipped with. Institutions can help students build up this skill by engaging them in collaborative learning activities such as group project work. Noticing, or the awareness of what is going on around us and the ability to judge what is important, is also a considerable skill of which students should be reminded. Video clips of workplace communications can help transmit the concept of noticing to students. The concept of self-awareness or understanding about one’s feelings and limits of knowledge to perform in a workplace is another point that teachers can bring to the preparation stage of WIL through discussion and role-modelling best practice. Finally, port-folio preparation is the most important step to help the students and teachers keep track of the actual WIL learning.

During the internships, academic staff, working as internship coordinators, need to give both learners and workplace mentors appropriate support (Cooper et al., 2010; Fleming et al., 2008). Specific activities of academic staff suggested by Cooper et al. (2010) are:

- working alongside and providing educational support for students and workplaces to provide quality experiences for all parties
- monitoring, assessing and reviewing student learning to ensure that the learning outcomes are achieved
- resolving any problems arising between students and other parties at the workplace while maintaining the interest of all parties involved
- managing academic administrative work associated with the program

In sum, the academics are expected to accompany the students and the workplaces across all stages of the WIL process.
2.5.2.2 Roles of workplaces

The workplaces have a substantial influence on the way the workers and students approach learning (Cooper et al., 2010). According to the stakeholder ethos as presented earlier, it is necessary that workplaces refer to themselves as learning organisations. They need to develop a long-term commitment with their strong support for the activities of learning. Workplaces also bear a responsibility to provide learners with a welcome and systematic preparation before they enter the workplace. As Cooper et al. (2010) recommend, orientation to the workplace is necessary as it can help provide a framework for learning by the host organisation and help achieve the WIL learning outcomes. Details of this framework can be found in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2. Orientation for Students Learning in the Workplace (Cooper et al., 2010).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introductions</th>
<th>Key practitioners and staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practicalities</td>
<td>Room/desk; lunch room and toilet facilities; computer arrangements; identification cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational background</td>
<td>History, mission, mandate; strategic plan, and organisational structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative and policy requirements</td>
<td>Significant act governing work practices; privacy requirements; intellectual property; internal policies manuals; standards of practice; behavioural standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and safety practices</td>
<td>Legislative framework and internal policies with respect to clients, and staff in the workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning plans and contract</td>
<td>Student life experience, skills and attributes; learning goals; learning opportunities; proposed activities and expected outcomes; and forms for formative and summative assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisory requirements</td>
<td>Time and length of meetings; required assignments; backup supervisor; expectations and supervisory approaches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the internship, workplace mentors play a crucial role in facilitating WIL in combination with the academics to ensure the satisfaction of students at the end of the placements (Busby, 1995; Tan & Morgan, 2001). Successful mentors are expected to have various functions and competencies such as counsellor, advisor, encourager, subject matter expert, friend, guardian, leader, motivator, role model and knowledge developer (Jackson, 2014; Martin, Rees, & Edwards, 2011; Tan & Morgan, 2001). More systematically, Goodyear (2006, p. 51) describes a mentor with roles as an assistant, a psychosocial supporter and a role model. As an assistant, the mentor gives the mentee assignments to new areas, and chances to learn new skills in new contexts. Being able to observe and engage with other professionals can enhance students’ critical thinking and problem-solving skills, discuss career choices and help them establish a tangible link between theory and practice (Goodyear, 2006). As a psychosocial supporter, the mentor motivates, counsels, befriends and helps the mentee to see his or her own values. Host organisations should make sure co-workers are empathetic and responsive to interns’ various levels of experience and confidence in order to minimise their stress. All mentors and co-
workers are expected to familiarise interns with the relevant procedures and protocols of the organisation, encourage them to ask questions, and also engage and listen to their ideas (Barron & Maxwell, 1993; Charles, 1992; Jackson, 2014; Keating, 2012).

Table 2.3. Competencies of Mentors (Sherman et al., 2000, p. 19).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill/Knowledge Areas</th>
<th>Mentors…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Interpersonal         | • are amiable, patient, compassionate, empathic, and honest.  
                        | • are self-confident.  
                        | • are open and friendly. |
| Communication         | • can pick up on protégés’ verbal and nonverbal cues.  
                        | • recognize and understand different communication styles.  
                        | • are skilled in conflict resolution. |
| Listening             | • are active listeners.  
                        | • listen for what is not said, as well as what is said. |
| Content Area          | • are experts in the areas in which their protégés require assistance.  
                        | • have a broad knowledge base in their field.  
                        | • keep up with current trends and latest research. |
| Awareness of Diversity| • are sensitive to protégés’ individual learning styles.  
                        | • are comfortable with people of diverse backgrounds.  
                        | • can accept different points of view. |
| Reflective Supervision Skills | • engage in self-reflection.  
                                | • have strong skills in observing and giving feedback.  
                                | • build on past experience to advise and assist protégés with their current dilemmas. |

Finally, as a role model, the mentor gives the mentee the chance to observe others and learn from their actions. Successful mentorship also requires of the mentors the capabilities to form strong, supportive relationships with mentees (Goodyear, 2006). The competencies of mentors are outlined in Table 2.3. However, such competencies of mentors can only be achieved if the mentors are properly trained (Smith, 2012). Furthermore, the mentorship can only reap success if it is supported by a mentoring plan which outlines the sequence of activities required for the program to be implemented (Sherman et al., 2000) and they need to have reduced workloads to have more time for mentoring students (Cooper et al., 2010).

2.5.2.2.3 Roles of students

The contribution of students, as the third key WIL stakeholder, also determines the success of the WIL process. First and foremost, being aware that academic capabilities are inadequate for a career in most disciplines and that the internship will help supplement these with other necessary competencies to enhance their employability after graduation can encourage the students to approach the placements more positively (Keating, 2012). Beside the support of the academic and industry supervisors, the interns’ active role in their own learning can maximise the benefits of a WIL process. They need to take action prior to and during the placement,
According to the graduates’ and supervisors’ perspectives in a study by Drahosz (n.d.). As the graduates in that study reported, before the WIL experience the interns need to:

- have conversations with previous students about their positive and negative internship experiences and their recommendations of well-known organisations that value student contributions;
- talk to more than one organisation about what they can offer, and after finalising their choice of a suitable organisation, sit down with the workplace mentor to discuss both sets of expectations from the experience;
- clarify the role they are fulfilling before starting; and
- be clear with their workplace supervisor about their background and existing experience.

Similarly, during the WIL experience, they are encouraged to:

- choose something that they are interested in;
- enjoy themselves;
- do as much as they can and take on as many roles as possible so that they get more insight into the organisation;
- prepare well so that they can undertake tasks with ease.

From the perspectives of supervisors, students need to be enthusiastic and well-organised; show initiative and have good communication skills. Specifically, students need to possess:

- strong organisational capacity, ability and desire to develop systems that clearly allow for contingency coverage;
- preparation to experiment with new and old ideas to see what combination suits the situation best; and
- good people and relationship building skills.

(Martin & Leberman, 2005).

### 2.5.3 Assessment of WIL

After the internship, the capture of workplace supervisors’ feedback on student work is significant (Martin & Leberman, 2005), since the supervisors’ perspectives can provide rich information on the effectiveness of WIL design (Patrick et al., 2008). The role of academics is also to assist and encourage learners in the reflection on their learning experience. They ensure
that the students understand the value or purpose of the reflective process and provide them with appropriate strategies to facilitate reflection (ibid.).

Clearly defined and tailored assessment methods and strategies for evaluation and quality assurance are also identified as important elements of a well-conceived WIL curriculum (Patrick et al., 2008). To ensure the assessment reflects the accurate skills and performance of students, the academics and workplace mentors need to take the following into consideration.

In comparison with on-campus assessments, assessing WIL in the workplace encounters various difficulties. The assessment of students’ employability skills is hard because they are “achievements that cannot be neatly pre-specified, take time to develop and resist measurement-based approaches to assessment” (Jackson, 2014; Knight & Page, 2007; Yorke, 2011). Despite the involvement of employers in WIL assessment, there are challenges in measuring skill performance while ensuring standardisation and quality assurance across different industry settings, according to Knight and Page (2007).

Therefore, the integration of WIL into curricula requires appropriate assessment methods that can be implemented within the constraints of resources and employer commitment and participation. Five main concerns about assessment methods in WIL are expressed by Yorke (2011) as follows:

- maintenance of academic standards
- relevance and consistency of assessment processes
- responsibility for assessment
- what should be assessed when a student is on work placement
- processes by which this assessment is supported and managed.

The selection of an approach for assessing WIL is greatly impacted by both the level of engagement of the employer partners and the availability of university WIL staff. The assessment method adopted must also be constructively aligned with WIL learning experiences as well as the professional program in which it is situated (Patrick et al., 2008, pp. 41-42). Patrick et al. (2008) also maintain that assessments should address the precise nature of the skill or behaviours, and the expected level of performance for students at different phases of their programs. It is useful to apply the standardised use of rubrics but because of the variation across different WIL contexts, it is necessary to employ these rubrics with caution.

Various methods of assessments have been suggested to ensure the quality of the WIL process. Assessment methods which encourage self-reflection and feedback such as peer assessments,
portfolio reviews, self-assessments and checklists are highly valued across different discipline groups (Yorke, 2011). The importance of formative methods such as blogs, e-journals, reflective journals, diaries, commentaries and emails as well as oral presentations and reports summarising the WIL experience are reiterated by Jaekel et al. (2011). Industry evaluations of student performance are well-emphasised by Martin et al. (2011), with mentors instrumental in on-going observation, review and face-to-face dialogue discussions on feedback between the student and assessor to enhance skills development and performance (Patrick et al., 2008).

Finally, assessment of the whole WIL programs for feedback on quality is identified as an important aspect of curriculum improvement and development (Bandaranaike & Willison, 2011). It is necessary that the WIL appraisal involve all stakeholders. In a study conducted by Patrick et al. (2008), both formal and informal mechanisms for gathering feedback, as well as indicators of success, are considered essential. The respondents suggest that formal feedback mechanisms including stakeholder pre- and post-surveys, evaluation forms and interview and informal feedback be gathered mostly through stories from stakeholders. Indicators of success are mentioned by the participants, including the high rates of graduates’ employment results; increased participation rates of students and employers; student enthusiasm and engagement; improved classroom interaction, grades, and completion rates; increased numbers of students returning to undertake further study; and increased numbers of employers requesting consultancies (p. 42). Atchison et al. (2002) highlight the responsibility that curriculum planners have to listen to their students and act on advice collected from formal student feedback.

### 2.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has examined the conceptual framework of an ideal WIL process. WIL has various definitions, but in general, is the combination of theoretical learning and practice. WIL brings both benefits and challenges to its three groups of stakeholders including (i) training institutions and academic staff; (ii) employers and workplace mentors; and (iii) students. WIL aims to provide graduates with employability skills in a globalised world of work, encompassing not only the specific skills, but also globalised perspectives, generic skills and foreign language proficiency. The WIL process is designed with the underlying philosophy of curriculum design which strikes a balance between vocational and academic purposes. Since the WIL process is to assist graduates to operate in a global employment environment, it is essential that the WIL curriculum be internationalised. The decision of which subjects are to be included in the tourism programs should be made through cooperation between the practitioners of the tourism industry and of tourism education, and more priority should be given to the needs of the tourism industry. The WIL process can be implemented through on-campus activities and internships in
which each stakeholder assumes specific responsibilities. Finally, for the continuation of the WIL process development, effective evaluation of the WIL initiatives is essential.
Chapter 3: Research Methodology: Philosophy and Strategies

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the methodological design of this study and justification of the selection of the research strategies. The research design was based on the conceptual framework of evaluation research. The definition of evaluation research, its types and the philosophical assumptions underlying it will be presented in depth. Integrated research strategies were employed and case studies were the main qualitative research approach. Methods of data collection including semi-structured interviews, document analysis, role-plays and questionnaire surveys were deployed. The analytical framework, together with issues of validity and reliability, ethical considerations and the researcher’s experience of data collection are also presented in this chapter.

3.2 EVALUATION RESEARCH AND ITS UNDERPINNING EPISTEMOLOGY

In order to find answers to the research questions, the design of this study was shaped in accordance with the theoretical framework of evaluation research. The definitions for this type of research are varied, but its core characteristic is to “improve” rather than “prove” (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 1985, p. 151). Paton (1997) defines a program evaluation as “the systematic collection of information about activities, characteristics and outcomes of programs for use by specific people to reduce uncertainties, improve effectiveness, and make decisions with regard to what those programs are doing and affecting” (p. 14). Weiss (1983, as cited in Alkin, 1990, p. 83) ascertains,

Evaluation is a type of policy research, designed to help people make wise choices about future programming. Evaluation does not aim to replace decision makers’ experience and judgement, but rather offer systematic evidence that informs experience and judgement. Evaluation strives for impartiality and fairness. At its best, it strives to represent the range of perspectives of those who have a stake in the program.

Drawing from the ideas of previous researchers, Merriam (1998, p. 5) summarises,
A program evaluation examines a program from a number of different perspectives and looks for causal linkages between program activities and outcomes. Program evaluation is a theory-focused activity that also considers the relevance of the various components of a program and makes predictions about future developments” (p. 5).

Kumar (2005) illustrates the concept of evaluation research in a diagram as shown in Figure 3.1.

*Figure 3.1. The Concept of Evaluation (Kumar, 2005, p. 275).*

Evaluation is divided into two types: formative and summative, according to Clarke and Dawson (1999). A formative study emphasises “identifying the strengths and weaknesses of a program or intervention” by “gathering information on program design and implementation” from “the perceptions and experiences of program planners, practitioners and participants” in order to “ascertain if any changes are needed in order to improve the program” (pp. 8-9). A summative study, on the other hand, basically aims “to determine the overall effectiveness or impact of a program or project, with a view to recommending whether or not it should continue to run” (pp. 8-9).
In this study, driven by the central aim to examine the effectiveness of the WIL process in a tourism program in six selected tourism training institutions in Vietnam, formative evaluation was carried out from the perspectives of the triad of stakeholders: (a) teaching staff; (b) tourism industry managers and internship workplace mentors; and (c) current students and graduates. The objective was to use their appraisals to help improve the current state-of-play of the WIL process in tourism programs and to create future generations of well-trained tourism graduates to satisfy the needs of the national and international tourism industry in Vietnam.

Since “knowledge of the differences between the various paradigmatic stances makes for more informed methods and decisions” (Clarke & Dawson, 1999, p. 63), it is essential to discuss the underlying philosophical assumptions of this evaluation study.

The philosophical assumption or paradigm worldview as termed in Creswell and Clark (2011) is “a worldview composed of beliefs and assumptions about knowledge” which researchers bring to their “inquiry” (p. 39). Research is normally informed by four worldviews, namely post-positivist, constructivist, participatory and pragmatist (ibid., p. 40). Since these worldviews differ in terms of three main broad philosophical elements of ontology (nature of reality), epistemology (relationship between the researcher and the researched) and methodology (process of research), researchers are advised to identify the best worldview that establishes a foundation for their research (Clarke & Dawson, 1999; Creswell & Clark, 2011).

In this evaluation research, a pragmatic worldview was the stance selected. At the ontological level, the nature of reality can be either “realist” or “relativist” (Clarke & Dawson, 1999, p. 39). This means reality can be either something “objective”, existing “independently of human perception” or something subjective since reality can be constructed from individual or groups’ perspectives (ibid.). The researcher, hence, either needs to identify exactly the truth established or just needs to ensure that different perspectives are recorded and reported accurately.

The epistemology of the pragmatism worldview highlights the practicality, which means that it encourages researchers to collect data by “what works to address research questions” (Creswell & Clark, 2011, p. 42). The researcher can either “adopt an objective stance and remain detached from the phenomenon under study” or get close to the data “to acquire insight and develop understanding” (Clarke & Dawson, 1999, p. 39).

The methodology thus involves a mixed-method design, including both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell & Clark, 2011, p. 2). The implications of this philosophical element will be presented in depth in the following section.
3.3 EVALUATION RESEARCH STRATEGIES

This project employed integrated research strategies, i.e. a mixture of quantitative and qualitative approaches, since in the field of evaluation research, this type of methodology has received particularly strong support (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). While quantitative research focuses on “deduction, confirmation, theory/hypothesis testing, explanation, prediction, standardised data collection, and statistical analysis”, qualitative research deals with “induction, discovery, exploration, theory/hypothesis generation, the researcher as the primary “instrument” of data collection, and qualitative analysis” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 18). A mixed method study is thus described as involving “the collection or analysis of both quantitative and/or qualitative data in a single study in which the data are collected concurrently or sequentially ... and involve the integration of the data at one or more stages in the process of research” (Creswell, Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003, p. 212). Different methods can be beneficial to social research as they enable researchers to answer research questions from different perspectives and hence “obtain a more complete picture of human behaviour and experience” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 189).

Mixed-methods design consists of three main types: triangulation design, explanatory design and exploratory design (Creswell, 2005). For the triangulation design, priority is given equally to both quantitative and qualitative data, which are collected concurrently. The findings from the analyses of these two types are integrated in the data analysis to be compared for convergences or discrepancies. With this design, the researcher can employ the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative approaches “to offset the weaknesses inherent within one method with the strengths of the other method” (Creswell et al., 2003, p. 229). Furthermore, type of design can produce “well-validated and substantiated findings” (ibid.). The explanatory design commences with the collection of quantitative data, which are sequentially followed by qualitative data. The second type of approach is used to refine or clarify major issues collected from the previous step. The quantitative and qualitative analyses are usually presented separately. On the other hand, in the exploratory design, priority is given to the qualitative data to explore a phenomenon. The quantitative data collection is then conducted in the second phase to account for the findings obtained from the qualitative methods (Creswell, 2005).

This study was conducted according to the theory of triangulation design. The qualitative and quantitative data were collected simultaneously and then analysed concurrently to compare similarities and dissimilarities.
The case study approach was chosen to be the main qualitative method because it is the most widely employed method throughout the field of education (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007; Grady, 1998; Merriam, 1998). The researcher determines if the utilisation of case studies is appropriate to the research problem when “the inquirer has clearly identifiable cases with boundaries and seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of the cases or a comparison of several cases” (Creswell, 2007, p. 74). In more detail, three particular criteria to consider when determining whether to use the case study as a research method, according to Yin (2009, p. 2), are: “(1) “How” or “Why” questions are being posed; (2) the investigator has little control over events; and (3) the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context”.

The definitions of case study research are generated by various scholars. Case study research is defined as “(a) the in-depth study of (b) one or more instances of a phenomenon (c) in its real-life context that (d) reflects the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon” (Gall et al., 2007, p. 447). Creswell (2007, p. 73) gives a detailed definition that “case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or a multiple bounded system (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observation, interviews, audio-visual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes” (emphasis in original).

Case study is also varied in types, namely: single instrumental case study, collective or multiple case study, and intrinsic case study (Creswell, 2007). In the single instrumental case study, an issue is focused upon, and then one bounded case is selected to illustrate the issue. In a collective case study (or multiple case study), one issue or concern is selected, but the issue is illustrated by multiple case studies. In this sense, several programs from several research sites or multiple programs within a single site might be selected. Often, multiple cases are intentionally selected to have different views on the issue. For an intrinsic case study, the case itself, which presents an unusual or unique situation, is given emphasis.

The multiple case study was chosen in this research. It was designed based on “the logic of replication” in which the researcher replicated the procedures for each case (Creswell, 2007, p. 74). Employing this type of case study, the suitable number of cases was of concern to the researcher. However, qualitative research is not to generalise from the sample as in quantitative methods but to develop an in-depth understanding of a few samples, so “the larger the number of people, the less detail that typically can emerge from any one individual” (Creswell & Clark, 2011, p. 174). Therefore, there are not actually a set number of cases. According to Creswell (2007), the selection of the case requires the researcher to establish a rationale for the purposeful
SAMPLING

Sampling selection was the next step to be taken into consideration after the research design was formed. It involves “the selection of a research site, time, people and events” (Burgess, 1992, p. 76). In this study, the theory of nonprobability sampling was chosen to frame the selection of samples. Unlike probability in which individuals are selected by chance, in nonprobability, participants are selected by some other methods (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Kumar, 2005; Merriam, 1998). According to Creswell and Clark (2011, p. 174), “non-probabilistic sampling involves selecting individuals who are available and can be studied”.

For the qualitative research, purposeful sampling was chosen to determine the sites and participants in this study. This means that, “the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study” (Creswell, 2007, p. 125). Several questions to be raised are “what form the sampling will take, and how many people or sites need to be sampled.” (ibid.). Paton (1990) argues,

The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term purposeful sampling (p. 169, emphasis in original).

A typical sample was selected in this study because “it reflects the average person, situation, or instance of phenomenon of interest” (Merriam, 1998, p. 62). The research was conducted in four areas with renowned tourist attractions representing the southern and central regions in Vietnam. These sites were chosen on account of not only their fame and potential for tourism, but also their reputation as locations for tourism training institutions which annually produce thousands of graduates for the so-called ‘smoke free industry’ (i.e. industry without factory emissions, as understood in Vietnam) in the southern and central regions of Vietnam.

Maximum variation was another type of purposeful sampling employed to select the sites for this study. The results derived from even “a small sample of great diversity” create “important
shared patterns that cut across cases and derive their significance from having emerged out of heterogeneity” (Patton, 1990, p. 172). Creswell (2007) highlights this form of sampling due to its frequency of use because “when the researcher maximises differences at the beginning of the study, it increases the likelihood that the findings will reflect differences or different perspectives – an ideal in qualitative research” (p. 126). Six typical tourism training institutions located in four cities were selected based on the above criteria. Of these, three government vocational colleges (Institutions A, B and C) under the management of Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), one government university (Institution D) and two private universities (Institutions E and F) under the management of Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), reflecting a diversity of education forms managed by different authorised ministries and operating in different ways, were investigated. These institutions were given pseudonyms for ethical purposes.

Snowball sampling was incorporated as the third form of sampling in this research. According to Merriam (1998), “this strategy involves asking each participant or group of participants to refer you to other participants” (p. 63). To recruit participants for this project, after the tourism training institutions were selected, the researcher contacted the Deans of the Faculties of Tourism to ask for permission to conduct the study in their faculties and express her purpose of conducting interviews with themselves and teaching staff teaching in tourism together with foreign languages. These key people then referred her to the tourism and foreign language lecturers. After conducting interviews with these people, the researcher was referred to classes of current students and some tourism graduates. Several tourism companies and the managers were also recommended by the Deans and the lecturers. After contacting these participants, the researcher once again was referred to the staff members who were working as internship mentors.

In this study, the current students pursuing tourism programs in the six case studies were chosen also based on the theory of non-probabilistic sampling. The interviewed lecturers informed the researcher about the classes in the final year and their class schedule. The researcher conducted a questionnaire survey among all the students of the suggested classes.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

In the process of collecting data, the qualitative methods were sequentially followed by a quantitative one. Specifically, four instruments to collect data, namely semi-structured interviews, document analysis, role-plays, and questionnaire surveys, were employed.
3.5.1 Semi-structured interviews

Interviews, as described by Guba and Lincoln (1981), are “the very backbone of field and naturalistic research and evaluation” (as cited in Clarke & Dawson, 1999, p. 71). Several reasons were given by researchers for the necessity of interviews in qualitative research. This technique can help learn “how people construct the realities – how they view, define, and experience the world” (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 110). According to Patton (1990, p. 72),

We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe... We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe behaviours that took place at some previous point in time. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer. We cannot observe how people have organised the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people questions about those things. The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspectives.

Interviews are divided into three main types: *structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews* (Burn, 2010; Fontana & Frey, 1994; Merriam, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). In this study, *semi-structured interviews* were employed. According to Merriam (1998, p. 74), this qualitative method is described as follows,

Usually, specific information is desired from all respondents ... But the largest part of the interview is guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored, and neither the exact wording nor the order of the questions is determined ahead of time. This format allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic.

Prior to the conducting of interviews, interview-guiding questions were designed (Appendix A). According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), “the guide may merely contain some topics to be covered, or it can be a detailed sequence of carefully worded questions. For the semi-structured type of interview discussed here, the guide will include an outline of topics to be covered, with suggested questions” (p. 130). The list of guiding questions for the interviews in this research was thematically designed based on the research questions. Different groups of participants were asked different set of questions. The participants’ first language (Vietnamese) was used in the interviews to ensure that all nuances of opinion were best expressed.
The interview protocol was piloted with six participants who were the researcher’s colleagues. The aim of pilot tests is to make revisions to emerging inappropriateness concerning the interview questions and process prior to the implementation (Kvale, 2007). Therefore, the people chosen for the pre-tests shared similar interests as those that participated in this study but the number of participants for pilot testing was not of serious concern (Kvale, 2007; Turner, 2010). The interview questions were subsequently refined in order to gain more specific responses from the informants. The official interviews were conducted at the participants’ convenience. Each interview lasted for approximately 30 to 90 minutes. Detail of the interviews will be presented as follows:

The academic groups to be interviewed included the faculty leaders, tourism lecturers and foreign languages lectures. They were asked about their experience, structure of the institution and faculty, curriculum, facilities and materials, teaching methods and assessment processes (Appendices A.1, A.2, A.3). The faculty leaders were additionally requested to evaluate the quality of their teaching staff. On the researcher’s arrival, only three Deans of Institutions A, E and F were available for interviews. In Institution B, no Dean had been appointed and in Institutions C and D, the Deans were away on business. Therefore, three Deputy Deans were invited for interviews in their place. The aim of interviewing these leaders was to gain an insight into the current process of WIL in the curricula currently being implemented in each institution. Furthermore, the interviews with these key figures in the academic field helped the researcher to gain access to important documents for this study, i.e. the specific WIL curricula of the tourism training program in each institution. The researcher then conducted interviews with the staff teaching the tourism specialisation and foreign languages. The participants were fifteen tourism lecturers, eleven English lecturers and one French lecturer. All were recommended by the leader of the Faculty of Tourism in each institution.

The researcher also interviewed thirteen human resource managers in the tourism companies that were recommended by the lecturers from the tourism training providers and from the researcher’s personal contacts. The purpose of interviewing these informants was to study their perspectives towards tourism educational programs, the internship and the graduates’ professional and communicative competencies. With their experience in employing, training them and managing new staff, they were able to provide a clear picture of the products of the tourism training. Specifically, the question set for HR managers addressed the experience of the interviewees, evaluation of tourism programs, internships and quality of interns and recently graduated staffs (Appendix A.4).
After interviewing the human resource managers, the researcher was referred to relevant key internship mentors who directly trained and supervised the tourism interns. They therefore had valuable knowledge of the tourism educational program, and the interns’ performances and behaviour during the internship. The questions for internship mentors comprised the details of the internships, including the *experience* of the mentors, the *implementation of the internship*, and the *quality of the interns* (Appendix A.5). Five mentors were willing to participate in this research.

Finally, the researcher conducted informal interviews with fourteen recent graduates after they were asked to complete a questionnaire survey which will be discussed in depth in a later section.

Various methods of recording interviews for documentation and later analysis include audio recording, video recording, note taking and remembering, among which audio recording was the most commonly chosen method. An audio recorder can free the interviewer to “concentrate on the topic and the dynamics of the interview. The words and their tone, pauses, and the like are recorded in a permanent form that is possible to return to again and again for relistening” (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, pp. 178-179). In this study, most of the participants’ responses were digitally recorded, except for some cases in which the interviewees refused. Furthermore, field notes were taken in all the interviews for later analysis.

### 3.5.2 Document analysis

Document analysis was employed as a method of data collection because its main merit is its “clear, tangible record” (Grady, 1998, p. 24). The data collected by this method are also named as “artefacts” (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 153) since they are the “products of a given context and are grounded in a real world” (Merriam, 1998, p. 109). This characteristic means that the collection of such data brings profound insights to the study. The artefacts employed in this project were the current situations of WIL and internationalisation in the curricula of the tourism programs of the selected universities and colleges. The full curricula of Institutions C, D and F were taken from the websites. Those of Institutions A and B were obtained thanks to the personal relationship of the researcher with their lecturers and the training departments. Unfortunately, only a part of the curriculum of Institution E was made available on its website. Except for the curriculum of Institution F, all of the collected curricula were written in Vietnamese, and were then translated into English by the researcher for the purposes of analysis.
3.5.3 Role plays: Assessment of English Language Proficiency

Role play is defined as the “simulation of communicative encounters that elicit spoken data in which two interlocutors assume roles under predefined experimental conditions” (Flor & Juan, 2010, p. 47). In this sense, role-play is a suitable method to “assess communication skills across numerous workplace settings” (Stokoe, 2011). This method was thus chosen to appraise the English proficiency of the recent graduates.

Role-play has two types: closed and open, according to Flor and Juan (2010). In the closed role-play, the participants respond to the role-play situation without a reply from an interlocutor. Open role-play, on the other hand, stipulates the actor’s parts, but the course and outcome of the conversation is not pre-established. During a role-play, participants are required to read a situational description and to respond orally, as they would in an actual situation with an interlocutor in face-to-face interaction.

In this study, role-play was a small element of the research strategy. Seven recently graduated tour guides and six office staff in four travel agencies were invited to participate in the research to do open role-plays with the researcher in English. The purpose of role-play in this study was to appraise the English language proficiency of these graduates. Specifically, the tour guides were asked to take the researcher to a place of interest with which they were familiar and gave a presentation about this destination. They were able to be as well prepared about the talk as they were on a regular basis. During the tour, they were also challenged with emerging questions about the history and cultural issues concerning the places. The office staff in the travel agencies were required to sell tours to the researcher. They were asked questions about a particular tour of her interest, including the itinerary, the services during those tours, the price and method of payment. These graduates were free to use brochures or leaflets for illustration.

The role-plays were digitally recorded for later analysis. The audio recordings were then given to an English native speaker working as a lecturer in an Australian university for him to evaluate the English proficiency of these graduates. The appraisal was based on an evaluation sheet modified from the marking criteria used for the speaking skills of an IELTS [International English Language Testing System] test (Appendix B). The model of IELTS test was chosen since this clearly reflected the theory of communicative competence generated by Canale and Swain (1980) and it was one of the international testing systems officially used in Vietnamese training institutions as a baseline to consider whether the students’ level of proficiency in English meets the institutional requirements for graduation exams. Four criteria, namely (1) fluency and coherence; (2) vocabulary range and word choice; (3) grammatical range and
accuracy; and (4) pronunciation, were listed for evaluation on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Further comments were also elicited for richer information.

3.5.4 Questionnaire surveys

A questionnaire survey was the quantitative method of data collection used in this research. Questionnaires are commonly used in quantitative research because they have many advantages. They can “help collect a large quantity of data in a relatively short period of time” and “when multiple choice items are used, it is easy to classify answers and calculate their frequencies” (Thomas, 2003, p. 69). This helped collect the general ideas of the participants about the issue under investigation here.

A questionnaire survey with nineteen close-ended questions was designed in order to triangulate with the data collected from the previous stages (Appendix C.1). The purpose was to study the students’ perspective towards their programs, especially the internship. In more detail, the questions concentrated on two main themes: evaluation of tourism programs and evaluation of foreign language teaching. In the first part, six sub-themes, namely (1) curriculum, (2) quality of lecturing staff, (3) materials and facilities, (4) assessment process, (5) internship and (6) generic skills were investigated. The second part elicited general comments about the students’ communicative competence in foreign language, the allocation of time for foreign language, the quality of their lecturers and the opportunities to communicate in the foreign language in the internship. Most of the questions required the participants to select the appropriate rating within a five-point Likert scale from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). Exceptionally, the questions about the generic skills were designed for the participants to choose the most appropriate skills among the list of twenty-four skills presented based on the ideas of Spencer and Spencer (1993) due to their thorough coverage. This list of generic skills was also given to the HR managers in order for them to evaluate the generic skills of the students for the purpose of data triangulation (Appendix C.2). The questionnaire was written in Vietnamese in order to ensure best understanding from the participants.

A pilot study was conducted online with ten ex-students of the researchers to assess the research instrument in terms of its clarity and comprehensibility. The pilot survey indicated a need for revision in wording and clarification. The questionnaire was then revised based on the collected feedback and then officially distributed to 266 tourism students majoring in Tour Guiding and Travel Management programs in the six institutions, and who had just completed their internship with the selected tourism training providers.
This questionnaire was also distributed to fourteen recent graduates of two tourism programs to see if their views correlated with the current students’ perspectives. The questionnaire survey data collected were then clarified by semi-structured interviews with the graduates.

### 3.6 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Since this research employed integrated research strategies with four methods of data collection, the analytical framework included the analysis of two data types: (1) qualitative data derived from documents, semi-structured interviews and comments of the experts and (2) quantitative data from the questionnaire data and data derived from the evaluation sheets.

#### 3.6.1 Qualitative analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research includes “preparing and organising the data … for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion” (Creswell, 2007, p. 148). Coding is defined by Krippendorff (2004, cited in Klenke, 2008, p. 92) as “transcribing, recording, categorizing, or interpreting of given units of analysis (words, speeches, book, web pages, photographic images…) into the terms of a data language so that they can be analysed”.

The coding procedure can be fractured into three main analytic steps: open coding, axial coding and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, pp. 101-161). Each step is scrutinised as follows.

In open coding, data which are conceptually related and similar in nature are grouped into categories. One way of doing open coding is “line-by-line analysis” which engages in “close examination of data, phrase by phrase and sometimes word by word” (pp. 102-119). Axial coding is the second step in which “categories are related to their subcategories to form more precise and complete explanations about phenomena” (p. 124). The purpose of axial coding is to reassemble data that were broken down in the open coding. The final step is selective coding which “is the process of integrating and refining the theory” (p. 161). Here, cases that illustrate the main themes and sub-themes are figured out, and negative cases are noted. The three steps above were key techniques for qualitative data analysis in this research. The audio recordings of the interview data were listened to several times for themes and sub-themes. All the quotes employed as illustrations in this thesis were translated into English by the researcher.

Because the multiple case studies method was used, this research based its analytical framework on the theory of comparative case study analysis, which consists of “two stages of analysis – the within case analysis and the cross-case analysis” (Merriam, 1998, p. 194). For the within-case
analysis, each case study was analysed as earlier described. Based on the *within-case* analysis, the *cross-case* analysis was conducted. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), researchers employ *cross-case* analysis to see “processes and outcomes that occur across many cases, to understand how they are qualified by local conditions, and thus develop more sophisticated descriptions and more powerful explanations” (as cited in Merriam, 1998, p.195). In order to have a comprehensive picture of the WIL initiatives in the tourism training programs in Vietnamese tertiary institutions, the *cross-case* study analysis was carried out by comparing and contrasting the data collected from each case study.

### 3.6.2 Quantitative analysis

After the completed questionnaires and English proficiency evaluation sheets had been collected, the data were then processed in the following sequence. First, they were entered into a computer to be processed with the aid of the software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Then, they were converted into frequency tables for analysis (Bryman & Cramer, 1994).

T-tests are used to compare the means of two groups, which helps determine how confident the researcher can be that the differences found between two groups as a result of an evaluation are not due to chance (Seliger, 1989). The results of applying the t-test provide the researcher with a t-value (p). This t-value is included in a special table of t values, which indicates whether given the size of the sample in the research, the t-value is statistically significant. In this study, the researcher uses the t-test procedure to examine whether differences of opinions among groups of students (males versus females, universities versus colleges, government versus non-public institutions) were significant or not. This statistical method was deployed in order to make triangulation with the findings from qualitative instruments more reasonably grounded.

### 3.7 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The research design based on the theoretical framework of qualitative research and case study methodology had to address issues of internal and external validity, and reliability, which are indispensable concepts that indicate the objectivity and value of research (Kirk & Miller, 1986). The following discussion will clarify what these three terms are and how the researcher secured them in this study.

Internal validity involves “the question of how research findings match the reality” (Merriam, 1998, p. 201). One of the assumptions underlying qualitative research is that reality is
complicated and ever-changing, so not a single, static, objective phenomenon existing to be explored, observed, and measured as in quantitative research (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). External validity deals with the generalisation of findings (Merriam, 1998; Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). Qualitative research actually does not emphasise the generalisation of results but pays more attention to the “comparability” of the research, which “refers to the extent to which adequate theoretical constructs and research procedures are used” in order that the research findings can be understandable (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009, p. 247).

Reliability refers to “the extent a measurement procedure yields the same answer however and whenever it is carried out” (Kirk & Miller, 1986, p. 19). In other words, it is concerned with the replicability of the procedures and findings (Merriam, 1998; Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). However, qualitative researchers find it difficult to maintain reliability because “human behaviour is never static… Reliability in a research design is based on the assumption that there is a single reality and that studying it repeatedly will yield the same results” (Merriam, 1998, p. 205). Because the issues studied in the field of education is assumed to be “in flux, multifaceted, and highly contextual”, and because information gathered depends on the informants and the skills of the researcher in collecting the information, reliability in the traditional sense is impossible (ibid., p. 206).

One common strategy to enhance validity and reliability is triangulation, which uses “multiple investigators, multiple sources of data, or multiple methods to confirm the emerging findings” (Merriam, 1998, p. 204). The triangulation will then make the results “consistent with the data collected” (p. 206, emphasis in original). Furthermore, the researcher can clarify the trail of the data collection for auditing by describing in detail “how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made through the inquiry” (p. 207). The thick and rich description provides details of the findings so that others can see how closely their situation matches the research situation.

In order to make this study highly valid and reliable, the researcher provided sufficient details of the research accounts with careful and systematic descriptions of the methods and the data analysis process to show consistency in all data. The triangulation process with integrated research methods of semi-structured interviews, case studies and questionnaire survey, were all employed to strengthen the validity and reliability of the data collection.
3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As Punch (2000) asserts, “all social research involves consent, access and associated ethical issues, since it is based on data from people about people” (p. 75). This study took ethical issues into serious consideration.

Ethical issues mainly involve the procedures of informed consent, confidentiality towards participants and benefits of participants over risks (Creswell, 2007). Therefore, in order to gain access to people or sites for the study, the researcher is to obtain permission of the person in charge of sites (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Also, to encourage support from participants, the researcher informs participants that they are invited to participate in the study, clarifies the purpose of the study, and “does not engage in deception about the nature of the study” (Creswell, 2007, p. 141).

Prior to conducting this research, the six selected tourism institutions were asked for permission to approach their staff and students as well as to gain access to their in-house documents which were useful to the study. Similarly, the chosen tourism companies were also contacted for their permission to allow the study to be conducted with their employees. Permission was sought from individual principals of institutions as well as the leaders of the Faculties of Tourism and directors of tourism companies, firstly via email and then with a follow-up phone call. A plain language statement with information about the research was provided to all participants (Appendix D.1). A consent form which informs “the research participants about the overall purposes of the investigation and the main features of the design as well as of any possible risks and benefits from participants in the research project” (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 70) was sent to the leader of each institution and to each participant for their signatures for that purpose (Appendix D.2).

The confidentiality which “implies that private data identifying the participants will not be disclosed” was also taken into consideration (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 72). Participants’ privacy, confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed at all times. Each interviewee was coded with a pseudonym in the analysis and each institution was given a false name with general information to avoid being recognised. This ethical principle will protect the participants and institutions from any harm which might result from politically prejudicial findings of this research. The data were stored in a secured place and backed up in accordance with RMIT regulations. They could only be accessed by the researcher but were available for the participants upon request.
3.9 RESEARCHER’S FIELDWORK EXPERIENCE

The researcher’s journey of data collection in her home country was memorable with interesting and rewarding personal experiences as well as productive data collection thanks to the support of the invited participants. She had an opportunity to travel to four famous tourist attractions in Vietnam. Although one of these destinations was in her home province, she felt like a tourist after one year away from Vietnam. Particularly, she had an enjoyable time with the graduates who played the roles of tour guides for her trips to different places of interest. Thanks to them, she built up her knowledge about geography, history, culture and even cuisine of her own homeland. Many of these tour guides spent a whole day traveling with the researcher and participating in the research but refused to take any remuneration offered.

On her arrival at each institution, she was warmly welcomed by the leaders and most of the teaching staff. These people valued the significance of this study highly. Therefore, they were willing to give her their time for interviews. Although many leaders refused to be recorded, most of the lecturers did not mind being so. Some of the lecturers were also forthcoming to give her documentation necessary for her research, which she could not gain access to via the institutions’ websites. Moreover, the lecturers facilitated the researcher’s contact with the final year students for surveys. For the intakes that had not finished their internships at the time of the researcher’s visit as required by the research design, some lecturers agreed to help conduct the surveys with these students for her and send the filled questionnaires to her afterwards. Those who had close relationships with tourism companies were happy to recommend the managers in their contact list to the researcher.

The contact with the managers of tourism companies was also successful. The majority of the recommended managers expressed their support for this research. Although these people had busy agendas, they gave their precious time for the interviews.

An impressive point for all interviews was that the researcher did not have to wait long for appointments. The participants, after being contacted, immediately gave the researcher appointments even after work time and in the coffee shops or at their own houses.

Besides these positive experiences, the researcher encountered several difficulties. At the time of the researcher’s visit, two Deans were away on business. Therefore, she had to interview the Deputy Deans who might not be able to give such reliable data. In the last case study, she invited several English language lecturers for the tourism programs to participate in this study
but they all refused to be interviewed. Their lack of cooperation might make the picture of the teaching and learning of English language in this institution incomplete.

3.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has detailed the methodology and the data collection methods employed in this research. This study chose the theory of evaluation research as its theoretical framework. The research strategies with the triangulation design of both qualitative and quantitative methods were selected in order to enhance the reliability and validity of this research. The multiple case study approach was also deployed. The sampling type used to select the case studies was non-probabilistic purposeful sampling. Four data collection methods, namely semi-structured interviews, document analysis, role-plays and questionnaires were utilised. The data collected were then analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. Validity, reliability as well as ethical issues were also taken into account. Finally, the researcher’s fieldwork experience was recounted.
Chapter 4: Tourism Training Programs in Vietnam: Six Case Studies

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, an analysis of the academic perspectives towards the WIL initiatives in the six selected tourism training programs is presented in the form of case studies. The analysis draws upon the interviews with the leaders of the tourism faculties and the tourism lecturers in the six tourism training institutions and the documents collected from the institutions’ websites or in response to the researcher’s request. The aim of this chapter is to examine the current state-of-play of WIL practices and the foreign language learning in these institutions. Discussed are all constituents of WIL, namely (1) quality of teaching staff, (2) quality of students and admission issues, (3) design of WIL, (4) implementation of WIL and (5) assessment of WIL.

4.2 TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTION A: GOVERNMENT TOURISM VOCATIONAL TRAINING COLLEGE IN A COASTAL CITY

4.2.1 Introduction

This state-owned college was founded in 2008 on the basis of a Tourism Vocational School with twenty-three years’ history dating from 1975. It functions under the administration of the Vietnamese Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and is academically controlled by the General Department of Vocational Training (GDVT) under the management of the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA).

This college is advantageously located on a busy road near the commercial centre of a coastal city in the south of Vietnam. At the time of the researcher’s visit, its refurbishment was nearing completion with the expansion of the building for practical activities. This five-storey building is worth approximately US$1,150,000. This sum was sourced from the Official Development Assistance fund. It houses fourteen bedrooms, two conference rooms, one hall and some practical rooms. It was specifically designed for restaurant and hospitality practice and for commercial purposes such as hiring out rooms for conferences or organising wedding receptions. At the back of the building under construction is the U-shaped main building which houses administration departments, classrooms and a meeting hall on the top floor.
The office of the Faculty of Tourism is located in a small room on the second floor of the main building. The researcher was warmly welcomed by the principal and the lecturers on her arrival for data collection. When she contacted the Faculty of Tourism for interviews, the Dean generously gave his time for an interview and arranged an interview schedule for the other lecturers of the faculty to facilitate the data collection. At the time, he was finalising his retirement documents after approximately twenty-five years devoted to his teaching career and the development of the college. With such a long commitment to this institution, he was a rich source of information about the training and management system of the college as well as the establishment and development of the Tourism Faculty and Tour Guiding program.

4.2.2 Quality of the teaching staff

The Tour Guiding program was managed by the Faculty of Tourism which consisted of five lecturers in charge of two different groups of subjects: 1) two lecturers teaching subjects specialising in tour guiding and travel 2) three lecturers teaching basic tourism subjects such as History, Cultures, Communication, and Vietnamese Geography for Tourism etc. All of the tourism lecturers held Bachelor Degrees in Tourism and related disciplines like Psychology. The English language was also one main subject in this program but the English lecturers did not belong to this faculty, but to the Faculty of Foreign Languages. This faculty was staffed by seven lecturers: one PhD candidate, two Masters, three Masters candidates, and one Bachelor. Four lecturers from the Faculty of Tourism and four lecturers from the Faculty of Foreign Languages participated in this project. Their profiles are presented in Table 4.1.

The lecturers’ profiles illustrate that the majority of the teaching staff had had long experience in their careers and all of the lecturers were doing jobs related to their trained academic expertise. Most of the tourism lecturers had previous and current work experience in the tourism industry, especially in tour guiding. One lecturer, Vu, explained,

*The special feature of this field requires of the teachers great passion as well as the motivation to immerse themselves in actual tour guiding, to bring their real life situations and sharing to each lesson. Most of the lecturers were therefore self-motivated and self-funded to supplement their own skills and knowledge to teach this major well.*

This lecturer used to be an English teacher for twelve years before he changed to the tour guiding specialisation. He then equipped himself with the appropriate qualifications and tour guiding experience to be qualified for his new area. At the time of this research, he had a
further twelve years’ experience in delivering tour guiding lessons in this college. He was ranked second after the Dean in his commitment to the development of the Tour Guiding program and the Faculty of Tourism.

Table 4.1. Profiles of the Lecturers in Tourism Institution A.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Positions</th>
<th>Educational Qualifications</th>
<th>Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Working Experience in Tourism Industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tin</td>
<td>Dean</td>
<td>BA in Tourism Studies</td>
<td>Full time lecturer for the Vocational School since 1987 Dean since 8/2001</td>
<td>Manager in tour guiding of The National Oil Services Company Of Vietnam Limited (OSC Vietnam) and Director of a Travel Agency of OSC Vietnam for 16 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lecturer for Tour Guiding skill subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Du</td>
<td>Tourism lecturer</td>
<td>BA in Vietnamese Studies 2 year degree in tour guiding</td>
<td>10 years’ experience in teaching foundational subjects, including history and Vietnamese culture</td>
<td>Working as a casual tour guide for some travel companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An</td>
<td>Tourism lecturer</td>
<td>BA in Tourism Culture</td>
<td>6 years’ experience in teaching communication skills and tour guiding skills in the college</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vu</td>
<td>Tourism lecturer</td>
<td>BA in English, 6 month certificate in tour guiding, and 2 year degree in tour guiding</td>
<td>24 years’ experience in teaching: 12 years teaching English to all majors, 2 years teaching both English and Tour Guiding skills, about 10 years teaching Tour Guiding.</td>
<td>Working at the time of interview as a casual tour guide for some travel companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho</td>
<td>English lecturer</td>
<td>BA and MA in TESOL</td>
<td>26 years’ teaching experience Dean of Faculty of Foreign Languages for 16 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ba</td>
<td>English lecturer</td>
<td>BA in English, MBA</td>
<td>Teaching since 1972, teaching tourism since 1992, teaching tour guiding for one class</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La</td>
<td>English lecturer</td>
<td>BA in English</td>
<td>16 years’ teaching English at the college</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ca</td>
<td>English lecturer</td>
<td>BA, MA in TESOL, PhD candidate</td>
<td>8 years’ teaching English</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although these tourism lecturers were active in equipping themselves with real world knowledge and skills to supplement and broaden the success of their teaching career, they only met the minimum requirement of the qualification for teaching at college level. None of them had obtained Masters or Doctorate degrees. A young lecturer, An, revealed,

All of us are eager to upgrade our degrees but we all want to study within our province. We are young but all married, so we cannot travel far from
home. The training institutes in this province only offer a Master of Business Administration whereas we are more interested in a tourism major. Therefore, we are still waiting for a Masters course in the area of our expertise to be able to enrol. Finance is another hurdle for us. We must mainly fund ourselves for the course.

The college actually had some regulations to foster the lecturers to improve their competence and upgrade their qualifications such as allowing time for their study and granting a bonus of about US$400 on their completion.

The EFL lecturers appeared to have been better qualified than their tourism counterparts with three lecturers holding Masters Degrees and one PhD candidate. However, they did neither have qualifications in the tourism discipline nor any work experience in the tourism industry. This was a limitation when they taught English for tourism specific purposes. Their lessons were limited to general English vocabulary and structures for use in daily encounters rather than in more complicated and specialised communicative situations such as tourism workplaces and tourism sites.

Another limitation of the teaching quality was that none of the lecturers had obtained their qualifications in a foreign country nor had work experience in an overseas context. Such lack of exposure could restrict the international perspectives in their teaching. Financial constraints were one of the main reasons for this. A government employee earns between US$145.25 to US$ 652.50 monthly depending on one’s seniority in the organisation, according to the pay sheets provided by the finance department of this college. Therefore, without scholarships or other sources of financial support, it is hard for these lecturers to have an opportunity to complete their qualifications overseas.

Although the lecturers were basically qualified in their academic expertise, the quality of teaching in this college was still negatively affected by the shortage of teaching staff. On average, a lecturer was teaching twenty 45-minute periods a week with five periods a day. However, the time distribution fluctuated quite frequently. A lecturer could occasionally teach up to forty periods a week with ten periods a day but he or she might have no teaching obligation during a whole month at other times. The standard workload for a lecturer required by the Ministry was within the range of 280 and 510 standard hours per academic year, depending on the seniority of the lecturer. However, since 90 per cent of the lecturers were overloaded with the teaching hours, hardly anyone was conducting research. Research, if
required to be done, was thus only tokenistic and hence of poor quality. Therefore, the research skills of these lecturers were generally limited.

4.2.3 Quality of students and admission issues

From the information on the website, the college had a reputation as a pioneer in providing human resources in Tourism and Hospitality for the southern provinces, especially in the Mekong Delta provinces. It annually admitted about 2,000 students enrolling in certificate and two or three-year programs specialising in Hotel Management, Restaurant Management, Tour Guiding, Accounting and Culinary Arts. In particular, in 2013, the enrolment targets for the three-year programs in the above five majors were 500 students, among whom 100 students were the targets for the tour guiding each year. The number of students in the Tour Guiding program at the time of the researcher’s visit was only approximately thirty students for one intake. The number of enrolments for this program was of great concern to most of the lecturers. One lecturer explained that tour guiding was not a strong major in this college. The college was not ideally located to attract students because it was some distance from a big city – this made it more convenient for students from nearby areas.

This problem meant that the reputation of this college and its Tour Guiding program was not appealing enough to potential students. The actual entry requirements were based only on the GPA of maths and literature that candidates had achieved in grade 12 of high school. This basis of entry into the courses in this college was simpler and easier than that required for entry into university programs which required the students to take competitive, norm-referenced tests. Therefore, many of the students who enrolled in this program were candidates who had failed to gain entry to universities. The number of those interested in tour guiding jobs was thus limited. Consequently, on orientation day when the program coordinator informed the freshmen of the content of the tour guiding program and requirements of a future tour guide which was quite a challenging job, many students decided to change their major since they found they were not suitable for the job, as the Dean recounted.

The attrition of students during the program was another concern to the lecturers in this college. The dropout rate of the Tour Guiding intake that graduated in 2012 was approximately twenty per cent in comparison with the enrolment at the beginning of the course, according to the data sourced from the academic department. Apart from the number of students who enrolled but then quit or changed major after the orientation day, many terminated their study halfway due to financial difficulty regarding tuition fees and practical tour expenses or through failure to meet the academic standards of the course.
4.2.4 Design of WIL

This section will present how the WIL was designed in this college, including its outcomes, curriculum design and materials.

4.2.4.1 Outcomes of the Tour Guiding program

From the college website, the outcomes and descriptions of the Tour Guiding program were displayed as follows:

*The main duty of a tour guide is to provide domestic and foreign tourists with information and interpretations of the natural beauty of the country, the history of thousands of years’ struggle for establishing the nation and protecting its territory, the material and spiritual culture of Vietnamese people, and the victory of the communist regime in the era of economic reforms (Doi Moi) etc. Therefore, the students enrolled in this program will be equipped with:*

- general, complete and exact understanding about the job as a tour guide;
- specialisation knowledge, practical skills, ability to design and organise tours;
- ability to prepare and conduct tourism focused presentations at venues of interest and to escort tourists on sightseeing trips or as required in programmed tours;
- knowledge about communication, social relations, diplomacy, basic photography skills, first aid and skills in team recreation.

To achieve such aims, the college claimed that the learner would acquire theoretical knowledge at school with compelling and practical illustrations and would learn more practical skills at tourist sites with different themes about historic and religious tourist destinations, ecotourism sites, or places reflecting other forms of tourism such as festivals and craft villages. The data collected from the documents and interviews with the lecturers, however, demonstrated that although most of the content above was addressed in the curriculum and in actual teaching, the components of WIL still needed to be improved to achieve the targets.
4.2.4.2 Curriculum design

An investigation into the college website showed that a complete curriculum was not publicly available. Only the staff and the current students were entitled to gain access to this document through direct contact with the academic department. An examination of the document indicated that the teaching curriculum was designed rather informally. It was a simple document addressing the total time for the program and for the extra-curricular activities and a list of units and their time allocation within the whole program. No objectives of the specific units or assessment for these units were outlined.

The curriculum consisted of three groups of subjects: general subjects, fundamental subjects and specialised subjects. The first group provided students with general knowledge about law, politics, physical education, computing and basic foreign languages. The total amount of time for this group accounted for 14.4 per cent of the whole course. The second group accounted for 28.8 per cent, equipping the students with fundamental knowledge of tourism and the remaining 56.8 per cent of the periods was for the group of specialised subjects in tour guiding.

Although the specialist subjects were given the most amount of time, most of the lecturers overtly exhibited their dissatisfaction with this training framework. They pointed out some limitations with time allocation and content overlap. Vu stated,

"The amount of time allocated to several subjects is not sufficient. Some core subjects such as Tourism Psychology, politics subjects like Marxism and Leninism, Philosophy etc., or A General View about Accommodation and Accommodation Services are not practical for the job but require a great amount of time."

Du added that some other units were allocated insufficient periods in the curriculum design despite their necessity for any future job. This lecturer illustrated his comment with an example, “The subject Process of Vietnamese History used to have 75 periods but is now reduced to only 60 although it is important to the tour guiding job and contains a huge amount of content to cover”. Another lecturer commented that many subjects overlapped in content and she supported her remark with an example, “The subject Process of Vietnamese History has similar content to Vietnamese System of Historic Sites and Scenic Spots, while Travel Skills repeats the content of Building Tourism Programs. The repetition then causes boredom to both lecturers and learners” (An).
The data demonstrated that there was a lack of logical distribution of time for practical activities in comparison with the delivery of theoretical aspects in the curriculum. While the total time for actual learning was 106 weeks, that allocated to tour guiding practical activities, including the internship, was just 11 weeks. The internship lasted for four weeks but accounted for 1,000 periods, equivalent to 26.6 per cent of the whole program. It seemed to be impossible for the students to complete all the periods within only one month. Excluding the time for practical tours and internships, the number of practical periods of other subjects only accounted for one fourth of the time for theoretical periods.

Although the subject choice and time allocation were considered unreasonable by the lecturers, the college was unable to make any modifications once the training framework had been approved and issued for implementation by the GDVT. This authority controlled the quality of up to fifty vocational programs, of which tourism was only one. The procedure of curriculum design was as follows: the GDVT nominated a particular institution to design a curriculum for one particular area of training. The GDVT members then approved this curriculum before mandating its application to all vocational colleges. Hence, the competency of the staff members of this GDVT in their pivotal curriculum decision caused much concern to the lecturers. One lecturer, An, showed her discontent with the management of this authority by revealing,

I used to cooperate with these officers in a project of creating lists of essential teaching aids for vocational training, so I totally understand their competence. They must manage various disciplines which they are not specialised in. The majority of them have expertise in engineering or technical areas rather than social fields like tourism. Now they also govern the quality of the tourism major. Therefore, when the nominated institutions give them the design of the training framework, they give approval perfunctorily. As a result, their approval of the training framework for tourism programs leads to dissatisfaction among practitioners.

However, the college was allowed to make adjustments to thirty per cent of the elective subjects in the training framework to suit its particular situation. These changes were decided by the rector of the college after consultation with the Dean of the related faculty and an academic board. The rector subsequently reported to the GDVT for approval. The Dean illustrated this point,
The Faculty of Tourism proposes two subjects for tour guiding supplementary skills which are First Aid and Photography to help students with suitable skills while guiding tours. This recommendation originated from the needs of the tourists on a tour. For example, when the tour guide is asked to help take pictures for the tourists’ family, but if they do not have the basic skills, they will disappoint their customers. The design of these subjects received positive feedback from the students through informal discussions.

However, he also revealed that since their implementation, these supplementary units had not officially been evaluated by relevant experts. Therefore, the quality of these units is still in question.

4.2.4.3 Evaluation of materials

The meagre library holdings were an issue of great concern to most of the lecturers. One teacher freely admitted,

*The library is virtually useless due to its poor stock of holdings. There is neither reading space nor seats for the readers. Even worse, the librarian has been sick for the whole year and there has been no replacement as yet.*

(An)

The Ministry had selected particular tourism training institutions to write curriculum materials to be used in all vocational colleges across Vietnam. However, only a small number of materials had been finished and were being deployed. As some completed course books currently in use were too theoretical, the college had to write their own internal materials.

The process of material design was as follows: the rector requested the faculty to write a course book for a particular subject based on the time and content allocated in the training framework stipulated by the Ministry. The lecturers in charge of the writing had to read other materials available on the market for reference, make outlines, write the materials and ask for approval from the academic board including the rector, the head of the training department, relevant lecturers, and various industry members, and then apply them to their teaching. According to Du, “these in-house materials are interesting in their content because their authors are all tour guides with real knowledge and skills”. However, “they are neither systematically nor logically designed since the authors are not professional writers”, stated
Vu. Furthermore, these materials had not been officially evaluated with a view to improvement from the perspective of the industry or the students.

### 4.2.5 Implementation of WIL

This section will elaborate on the implementation of WIL by looking into the delivery of tourism subjects, the work integrated activities within the program, the internships off-campus and the extra-curricular activities.

#### 4.2.5.1 Delivery of tourism subjects

Due to the lack of quality materials, the lecturers had to make great efforts to give the students quality lessons. The interview data showed that the lecturers were aware of applying modern and innovative approaches in their lessons. Teaching methods varied among lecturers but most of the lecturers agreed that they used multimedia resources and electronic lesson plans to deliver ‘theory’ as stated in the curriculum documents. They gave the students clips or videos about a scenic spot to watch and then asked them to make a presentation to introduce the place afterwards. However, they were confronted with many difficulties in making clips by themselves. Du explained, “We are not financially sponsored by the college to create these videos and their creation is very time consuming”. Also, they sometimes failed to conduct their planned lessons in this way since the facilities were not sufficient or properly installed. Particularly, “when there is no power, I cannot teach with visual aids because the college has no generators as back up for such unexpected situations”, admitted Vu. For teaching practice, the lecturers said they modelled first, and required the students to practise accordingly. The difficulty in conducting practical activities inside the college building was the lack of a fully equipped practical room. Du reflected, “Although there is a practical room for travel and tour guiding skills, it has no real devices with internet connection to help the students play simulated roles as a tour guide or a tour operator”. Although the tourism lecturers were committed and academically qualified, they were not able to provide quality teaching due to the lack of necessary teaching supports.

However, the Dean expressed his satisfaction with the current situation,

> The Tour Guiding program does not require many facilities. What we need is a bus, speakers and microphones. Our college has a medium size bus. If there are more passengers than it can seat, we can hire a larger bus from the travel companies that sell us the tours.
However, what the other lecturers expected was a simulated workplace to give the students opportunities to immerse themselves in a workplace environment to prepare them for later learning phases.

### 4.2.5.2 On-campus WIL activities

The interview with the Dean revealed that the Faculty of Tourism made a dedicated effort to enhance WIL activities within the college. The faculty occasionally invited guest speakers who were directors of tourism companies and experienced tour guides to the seminars or conferences to share their experience on inbound and outbound tours with the teaching staff and the students. Furthermore, experienced tour guides were frequently invited to join the training program on practical tours. Although the tours are conducted outside of the campus, they are included in this section because they are chiefly organised and carried out by the lecturers. On these tours, the lecturers accompanied the students and took charge of the whole tour. Meanwhile the experienced tour guides from a company played the role of a real tour guide modelling the steps they took when guiding a tour for the students to observe. To put it another way, the lecturers taught ‘theory’ while the experienced tour guides assisted with tour guiding skills.

The three-year Tour Guiding program included five practical tours in which the students had opportunities to apply what they had learned from the classroom in the real world. These tours were conducted for between three and seventeen days. When asked about the finance to go on these tours, Vu explained,

> When the college purchases such tours from travel companies, it is normally offered at discount rates. The students therefore pay low rates to go on these tours. With this financial aid, the companies and their partners such as hotels or restaurants can advertise their brand names to the potential tour guides and will, in the long term, indirectly attract customers through the recommendation of the graduates.

However, he added, “The support as such normally terminates when the business thrives.” Therefore, the college was unable to rely on such assistance and needed a better plan for long lasting cooperation.
4.2.5.3 Evaluation of the internships

As part of the Tour Guiding program, a four-week internship in a related company was compulsory in the students’ final semester. Significant as the internship was in providing the students with opportunities for real life practice and learning, it seemed that the liaison between the college and the companies was not close enough and the roles of the stakeholders in an internship were not unified for appropriate implementation.

The procedure of an internship was conducted as follows: the students were required to contact a company for their internship. The lecturers helped them by referring them to the companies with whom they had a personal relationship. The college simply issued an introduction letter. Without much official support from the college, the students were faced with numerous obstacles in their contact with the companies. According to Vu,

"Many companies tend to be critical of interns and do not welcome them warmly. Their excuse for the lack of cooperation is that travel companies have small offices, so they are afraid that the interns may cause a mess or trouble to their customers due to their lack of sufficient knowledge and skills. They may accept these interns but just for fulfilling required paperwork rather than for actual training."

Consequently, due to the lack of official arrangements between the college and tourism companies, if the lecturers or the college did not have a good relationship with the industry, their students had few opportunities to complete internships effectively. Therefore, the students themselves played an active role in finding a host company and showing them that they were qualified for undertaking the assigned tasks to be admitted for an internship. If not, as the Dean asserted, “they will not have any jobs to do during the internships and cannot learn much”.

During the internship, the college required the staff from the student services department and the lecturers to be in contact with companies for supervision, according to the Dean. However, the interviewed lecturers countered that only the lecturers who felt responsible supported the interns if necessary but they did not visit them at the companies because they were neither assigned with supervising tasks nor received any remuneration or benefits for doing so from the college. The quality of the internships was thus out of their control.
4.2.5.4 Activities to enhance students’ generic skills

Extra-curricular activities to improve the students’ generic skills were not given enough consideration in this college. The interview data revealed that only a singing and dancing event was organised on Teachers’ Day in November or for a food festival and camping on the anniversary of the establishment of the Youth Union in March. No clubs for the students to participate in after class were active at the time of the researcher’s visit.

The lecturers interviewed listed some obstacles as reasons for not organising adequate extra-curricular activities, namely, the lack of staff for those activities, the lack of finance and particularly the lack of students’ motivation to join. Du expressed his disappointment when recalling a game show organised in 2011,

Last year we had a game show to enhance the students’ general knowledge organised together with singing and dancing performances to celebrate Teacher’s day. But you know the students were less interested in the game show than the performances. After watching the performances, just a small number of students stayed for the game. The indifference of the students really discouraged us.

Nevertheless, some lecturers interviewed asserted that the students could enhance their soft skills through classroom activities such as group work, pair work, presentation, etc. or through fieldwork learning such as on practical tours or in the internship.

4.2.6 Assessment of WIL

When asked about assessments, the interviewees appeared neutral by giving just factual information. The lecturers aggregated the marks of the students throughout the whole semester. They gave marks for attendance, participation, mid-term tests and final tests. The final test format varied depending on whether it was a theory or practical subject. For theory subjects, lecturers gave written tests: students sat for an open-book exam or a closed-book exam. For practical subjects, lecturers assessed students individually. Each student was expected to present an introduction of a place of interest and the examiner gave comments. The students were allowed to prepare for their talk beforehand. Assessment criteria were agreed upon by the lecturers in the faculty.
The internship was assessed for formality rather than for actual quality. The students were given an internship sheet addressing the assessment criteria. The students brought these documents to the company and got the internship sheet signed by the directors of the company together with the feedback of the mentor as a proof of their completion and brought it back to the college for credits.

4.2.7 Summary

As a more practically than theoretically oriented vocational college, with a long and prestigious history in tourism training as well as a significant role in providing human resources to the tourism industry, this college was assumed to produce high quality graduates that could satisfy demanding employers in the fast changing tourism industry in the globalisation era. However, the investigation of the elements of WIL and the internationalisation in the Tour Guiding program in this college revealed a picture of more limitations than success.

The lecturing staff of the tourism specialisation, albeit with long experience in their careers and doing their job based on their training and academic expertise, only met the minimum requirements of qualifications for teaching at college level. The EFL lecturers were more qualified than their tourism counterparts but lacked knowledge of tourism and work experience in the tourism industry. The shortage of teaching staff was another issue that impacted on the unsatisfactory quality of teaching. Furthermore, the lack of exposure to foreign cultures and the lack of foreign language proficiency of some tourism lecturing staff disadvantaged them from transmitting global perspectives to students.

Despite being formerly a pioneer in tourism training, this college has gradually lost its attraction to potential students, as illustrated by the decreasing number of enrolments each year. The dropout rate of the tour guiding majors every year also demonstrated the declining quality of the Tour Guiding program in this college.

An examination of the design of WIL identified some drawbacks although expected outcomes for the Tour Guiding program were clearly outlined on the institution website. The program curriculum was strictly designed according to the training framework issued by the authorised Ministry but insufficient time allocation for core subjects, content overlap and unreasonable distribution time for theoretical and practical activities were some of the limitations outlined by the lecturers interviewed. Except for the inclusion of foreign language teaching in the program, other elements of internationalisation such as studies of professional practices in
other nations or cultures, learning about transnational knowledge or training of cross-cultural communication and skills in the curriculum were neither given sufficient attention in the design nor in the implementation of WIL. The lack of quality guidelines from the leaders in management was blamed for producing such an unsatisfactorily conceived Tour Guiding program for this vocational college. At the governmental leadership level, the incompetence of senior staff and their perfunctory approval of curricula and teaching materials resulted in discontent amongst the practitioners. At the institutional management level, the limitations manifested themselves in various aspects. The meagre materials, insufficient facilities and requirements for upgrading the quality of teaching staff were the issues that could have been addressed in a more timely manner by the board of leaders in their round-table meetings.

WIL was to some degree well implemented, thanks to the dedication of the tourism lecturers and the leader of the faculty of tourism, despite the lukewarm attitude of tourism companies in facilitating the internships. The lecturers claimed to have made efforts to apply modern and innovative approaches to their lessons. The faculty also attempted to enhance the work integrated activities within the college by inviting directors of tourism companies and experienced tour guides to seminars or conferences to share their experiences with the teaching staff and students and by inviting experienced tour guides to join the training program through practical tours. The internship, despite being a significant element of WIL, was a mere formality. The institution did not have official liaison with tourism companies in this regard, so the students encountered numerous obstacles such as being rejected or being assigned only menial administrative duties such as photocopying, typing or faxing rather than specialised tasks in tour guiding. Neither did the institution ensure appropriate processes to supervise the quality of the internship.

The interviewees also expressed their dissatisfaction with the activities to equip students with generic skills since these activities did not receive enough attention from either the institution or the students themselves.

The WIL was assessed in a fixed pattern in which theoretical knowledge was assessed with a written test and the practical component was orally assessed with a prepared talk. The internship was simply evaluated via a feedback form signed and commented on by the internship mentors.
4.3 TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTION B: GOVERNMENT TOURISM VOCATIONAL TRAINING COLLEGE IN A CENTRAL PROVINCE

4.3.1 Introduction

This government vocational college is ideally situated in the heart of a tourist area in the central region of Vietnam. Its convenient location makes it amenable to potential students from both northern and southern central parts. The college has two campuses with a total land area of 17,000 square metres. The first campus houses an L-shaped five-storey building, accommodating classrooms for all majors. The airy classrooms can hold about forty students each. A new nine-storey building was due to be built at the end of 2013. The second campus is a short distance from the first one, where there is also an L-shaped building which seems to have been built in the 1990s, housing administration departments, a dormitory and a range of practical rooms for all majors. The practical rooms for tour guiding and travel management programs are located on the second and third floors of the building. Each room is equipped with a television, a video player and some flip charts that the lecturers have prepared themselves. The college website reported that the facilities, equipment and teaching aids were sponsored by the Luxembourg government, European assistance and a Vietnamese government budget allocated to assist the college to meet the quality vocational training mission for between 2,000 to 2,200 students per academic year. At the time of the researcher’s visit, the college was refurbishing part of this old building. It was expected to be rebuilt at the end of 2013 with the renovation of the practical rooms. In particular, this campus houses an impressive hotel built for two purposes: for the students in both the hospitality and restaurant majors to practise their skills and, secondly for commercial activities. It has become a well-known address for accommodation when tourists visit the city.

Not much information about this college was displayed on its website. Most of the essential constituents of a vocational college such as curriculum, staff profiles, facilities etc. were listed but had no content in them. Just a brief introduction to the college was available. This tourism vocational college, formerly known as a tourism vocational school, was established in 1999 under the management of the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, which had been named the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism by the time of this project. The college provided training for the tourism industry workforce in the Western Highlands and central part of Vietnam at three main levels: three year bachelor degree, diploma and certificate. It included four main faculties: Fundamental Subjects; Hotel; Travel and Tour Guiding; and Restaurant and Services. The Faculty of Travel and Tour Guiding was established in 2001 and
offered only two-year programs until 2007. After the upgrade of the school to college status, this faculty expanded their offerings to three-year programs in the two majors of Travel Management and Tour Guiding.

On the researcher’s arrival at this college, she received a cordial welcome and considerable support in administrative procedures from the rector. He immediately introduced her to the leader and teaching staff of the Faculty of Travel and Tour Guiding and requested them to assist her in her data collection. Therefore, most of the invited participants were enthusiastic about spending their time participating in the researcher’s interviews. One lecturer was very forthcoming with information and documents related to the internship; however, the acting Dean who had been in charge for about four years was reluctant to share information about the faculty with the researcher. She refused to be recorded. When asked, she provided sparse information and declined to comment further on particular issues.

### 4.3.2 Quality of the teaching staff

The Faculty of Travel and Tour Guiding included eight lecturers, three with Masters degrees, four with Bachelor degrees and one enrolled in a Masters program. Six lecturers agreed to participate in this research. Presented in Table 4.2 are their profiles.

The profiles revealed that the lecturers were well credentialed, though none had a Ph.D., and qualified to teach, and had industry experience and proficiency in a foreign language. Most lecturers were working in their area of academic expertise. About two thirds had obtained or were doing their Masters degrees and one third had obtained their degrees in a foreign country. A distinguishing feature of the teaching staff in this faculty was that the majority of the lecturers had both bachelor degrees in English or French and a tourism specialisation. In addition, six lecturers, including the foreign language lecturers, had experience working in the tourism industry. The bilingualism of the tourism lecturers together with their industry experience was advantageous for the faculty management. They were able to deliver tourism major subjects satisfactorily and simultaneously assume the responsibilities of a foreign language lecturer. Their interchangeable roles helped with the allocation of teaching tasks when there was a shortage of staff at a particular time. For instance, at the time of the researcher’s visit, two EFL lecturers were on maternity leave, and their duties were easily covered by their tourism colleagues in the faculty. These bilingual lecturers were granted international tour guiding permits. Therefore, they were qualified to guide some delegations of visitors from other countries coming to the college. The dynamic style and competence of the teaching staff would definitely enhance the college’s reputation to its foreign partners and
attract sponsorship from overseas organisations. On the researcher’s visit, Hung was being nominated to guide a delegation of Chinese visitors who could communicate in English. He asked one good student to accompany him as an assistant. This was also a rewarding opportunity for this student to extend his learning in real life with his lecturer. Like Hung, the lecturers also held part-time jobs as tour guides for both outbound and inbound tours. It was evident that their practical experience would benefit their students with both professional skills and their perception of diverse cultures.

Table 4.2. Profiles of the Lecturers in Tourism Institution B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Positions</th>
<th>Educational Qualifications</th>
<th>Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Working Experience in Tourism Industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hai</td>
<td>Acting Dean Lecturer in Travel Management subjects</td>
<td>BA in English teaching MA candidate in Tourism Studies in Crème University, Austria</td>
<td>Since 2002: full time lecturer Since 2008: acting Dean</td>
<td>Since 2009: casual manager for a tourism company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>Lecturer in Travel Management subjects</td>
<td>BA in tourism business management MBA</td>
<td>Since 2002: full time lecturer</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoai</td>
<td>Lecturer in Tour Guiding</td>
<td>BA in English BA in Tour Guiding MA candidate in Tourism studies</td>
<td>Since 2002: full time lecturer</td>
<td>Since 2000: casual tour guide for several companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hung</td>
<td>Lecturer in Tour Guiding</td>
<td>BA in English BA in Culture and Tourism Studies MA in Tourism Studies</td>
<td>2006-2010: guest lecturer Since 2010: full time lecturer</td>
<td>Since 1994: sales officer in hotel, tour guide, tour operator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong</td>
<td>EFL and Restaurant skill lecturer</td>
<td>BA in Foreign Languages Trained and granted international tour guiding permit in 1992 2006: 1 year certificate in Restaurant Services and French in Luxembourg</td>
<td>Since 2004: full time lecturer: teaching general English and specialised English for Tour Guiding; and restaurant skills</td>
<td>1990-2004: Waitress, restaurant manager, an international tour guide to Belgium, France, Switzerland, Japan, Italy and Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tra</td>
<td>French and Tour guiding lecturer</td>
<td>BA in French</td>
<td>Since 2010: full time lecturer, teaching general French to Tour guiding, travel management and hospitality majors</td>
<td>Since 1996: tour guide for French speaking delegations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The responses to the interviews indirectly revealed that the research skills of the lecturers were not emphasised. Although research was carried out at the college level and presented in tourism seminars organised in the central provinces in Vietnam according to the college website, research was not conducted by the lecturers in this faculty. One possible reason for
this limitation was the excessive workload of the teaching staff. According to Hoai, “Apart from our teaching responsibilities, we are currently overloaded with other duties and tasks such as designing materials and banks of test questions, supervising interns etc. because this faculty is currently short-staffed”. This lecturer also expressed her concern about the leadership of the faculty, “The acting Dean is managing both travel management and tour guiding programs, whereas she specialises in travel management only. Therefore, the tour guiding team is now facing many difficulties”. Hung explained that the lack of staff in the tour guiding area was due to the fact that the applicants for the teaching positions were mainly trained in foreign languages or business administration without any exposure to real tour guiding skills. This person added, “The college is now resolving the problem by inviting guest lecturers who are tourism experts from tourism companies or enrolling the inexperienced lecturers in tourism training programs to upgrade their expertise. The situation will gradually be resolved”.

4.3.3 Quality of students and admission issues

All information about the new program was advertised through newspapers, banners, the college website or other websites specifically designed for information about university and college admission. Public announcements provided general information such as which programs were admitting a student, who was eligible to apply for them, what the entry requirements were, when and where the candidates could apply for the courses etc. For the Travel Management and Tour Guiding programs in this college, those who had graduated from high school or equivalent were all eligible to apply. Those who had obtained a two-year diploma could transfer to a three-year bachelor program with an additional requirement that they were required to have at least two years’ experience in the area they applied for.

According to the information on admission on the college website, the total number of students in the college in 2012 was approximately 1000, half of whom were enrolled in a three year bachelor program. In the academic year 2012-2013, the number of students who received offer letters from the college was over 1300, but only half of them officially enrolled in the college programs. The 2013 enrolment target for the Tour Guiding program was 50 and for Travel Management 90. However, in the interview, Hung gave different figures inasmuch as the Tour Guiding program actually admitted approximately 80 students annually who were divided into two classes. He added, “The number of enrolments is always higher than the target.”
Similar to the first institution, this vocational college admitted students based on the results of the High School Graduation exam and the academic progress report. The quality of the students in this college thus was not much different from the previous institution. The students were mainly those who had failed to gain entry to universities.

At the time of this research, a survey evaluating the college and its programs from the perspective of the graduates since 2000 was being conducted via the college website. A questionnaire was uploaded on the website for interested graduates to download and fill in. The multi-purpose survey was carried out to strengthen the bonds between the lecturers and the graduates, to share information about their careers, to create opportunities for the graduates to find partners in their fields, to popularise the programs to enhance the reputation of the college and to give the graduates opportunities to contribute their ideas and evaluate the curriculum and teaching methods to suit the requirements of the workplace and to meet the demand of potential companies. This questionnaire and its aims seemed practical and useful for the development of the college and programs. However, the survey required the participants to contact the college to fill out the questionnaire, and it was expected that there would be little to no response.

4.3.4 Design of WIL

4.3.4.1 Outcomes of the Travel Management and Tour Guiding programs

The outcomes of the Travel Management and Tour Guiding programs were stipulated in the training curriculum document that the researcher obtained from the academic department of this college. The Tour Guiding or Travel Management program was designed for three years, divided into six semesters. Seventy per cent of the program was claimed to be allocated to practice, enabling students to be exposed to more real world activities. The students had opportunities to apply the theory they had learned in their classrooms to practice.

On the theoretical side, the learners were equipped with specialised insights into tour guiding and travel management together with supplementary knowledge of Vietnamese history, tourist psychology, communication skills etc. Particularly in the Tour Guiding program, students were provided with essential knowledge to work with international tourists, such as world geography and global economics. In addition to the clearly acknowledged specialised skills, the communicative skills in foreign languages and generic skills such as team work, discipline awareness, organisation skills etc. were also highlighted.
4.3.4.2 \textit{Curriculum design}

The curricula for both the Travel Management and the Tour Guiding programs were determined by the GDVT in the MOLISA. The curriculum was a meticulously designed document of 221 pages. It was modified from the guidelines of the training framework issued by the GDVT. Specifically, this curriculum addressed: the outcomes; time allocation for classroom training, workplace training, revision and assessments, and other extra-curricular activities; and particularly, detailed theoretical, practical and evaluative content of each subject in the program.

According to the curriculum, the total weeks allocated to classroom training was 107.5 and 13.5 weeks were allocated to workplace training, accounting for 525 out of 3750 periods across six semesters. The majority of the tourism subjects and specialised subjects delivered in the classrooms included both theoretical and practical sessions. The allocated periods for the theoretical classes were generally outnumbered by those for the practice except for specific English, second foreign language, travel management skills and tour guiding skills in which much more focus was placed on the practical activities.

However, several lecturers pointed out a paradox in the design and the implementation of the framework. Hai, Hoai and Hung were united in their comments on this issue. They stated that the training framework for the vocational colleges in the central region was designed from the perspective of the people from the north. Therefore, most of the destinations selected for the practical tour programs were located in the northern area of Vietnam. This selection made it difficult for the students living in the central area when they must travel far from their place of residence. Moreover, Thu and Hung pointed out the inclusion of some useless subjects in the training framework and the exclusion of some useful subjects. According to Hung,

\begin{quote}
For the Tour Guiding program, learning about destinations is crucial for their future career but the curriculum is devoid of this issue, whereas it is not sensible for the students in this program to study the subject Designing Menus, which is a current requirement.
\end{quote}

Likewise, he added “English language is allocated too many periods while it is not useful for the students after graduation because the college graduates are not allowed to guide international tourists, according to Vietnamese Tourism Law”. Thu supported the limitation of the training curriculum by stating, “The Travel Management and Tour Guiding programs share many similar skills and knowledge. The students in these two programs should be
allowed to go on practical tours together to gain mutual benefits, but they must practise separately”. Hai revealed that the shortcomings in the curriculum design were being amended but it was not clear how long this would take.

4.3.4.3 Evaluation of materials

According to Thu, the library was stocked with a wide range of holdings in different tourism disciplines. It was well equipped with sufficient reading places and about ten computers but it was not clear whether there was Internet connection. Many of the books were bought from overseas by the lecturers. The students normally borrowed books from the library and took them home to read.

The lecturers were quite satisfied with their in-house curriculum materials. According to Hoai, each tourism training institution was supposed to design its own materials based on the standard criteria from the GDVT. The outline and content of the written materials were approved by a panel of examiners, including the rector, vice rector, dean, discipline leader, program lecturers, and tourism experts such as experienced tour guides, researchers and directors of tourism companies. The procedure of material design was described differently by Hung as follows:

The Faculty proposes a demand for material to the board of principals. After being granted approval, the Faculty nominates their staff to design materials based on the European standard reading materials written by top ranking professors and materials from other tourism training institutions for reference. After the materials are designed, an academic board including experts, faculty lecturers, academic department, and board of principals will meet to reach a consensus.

However, these lecturers revealed that after the materials were implemented, no official evaluation was conducted for their improvement.
4.3.5 Implementation of WIL

4.3.5.1 Delivery of tourism subjects

Most of the lecturers claimed that they used technology in their teaching and made full use of the facilities such as projectors, computers, TV, and other equipment in the practical rooms. According to Hoai,

_The majority of the students in the centre of Vietnam are from families with financial hardship, so they cannot afford to frequently go to the required destinations due to high admission fees. Therefore, they can benefit much from the power point slides and video clips of the destinations and procedure of guiding or operating a tour shown with the college equipment._

However, Hung added, “Although the college has provided sufficient equipment for teaching and learning, the materials designed for an effective use of such equipment are not adequately supplied”. The advantages of the facilities were therefore offset by challenging the lecturers to deal with the financial and timing problems to make video clips or films and slide shows for their lessons. The college only encouraged their effort with compliments or certificates of contribution to the college development. Hoai reflected sadly, “It is the lecturers’ good will and devotion to their teaching career that motivates them to continue their missions. Actually, we do not survive entirely from our teaching jobs.” This lecturer also shared that most of the lecturers in this faculty had financial support from their spouses or family. Thu was an example of this. She had a family owned coffee shop which could provide extra income in addition to her teaching job.

4.3.5.2 On-campus WIL activities

All of the tourism lecturers expressed their satisfaction with the mutual liaison between the college and tourism companies. For the Travel Management program, the faculty had been cooperating with two casual lecturers, one of whom was the director of a travel company and held a bachelor degree in education. “The students benefit much from these lecturers thanks to the real examples that they could not learn from books”, Thu affirmed. In the Tour Guiding program, the cooperation between companies and the college was mainly based on the personal relationships of the lecturers who were also casual tour guides for the companies. The
students in this college were, hence, given more priority and advantages in their internships and employment opportunities.

More precisely, the students had opportunities to apply what they had learned at their college through three practical schemes: (1) practical tours for the Tour Guiding program; (2) observational placement and (3) internship. The college received support from companies for these practical learning opportunities, but “their assistance is reliant on the willingness of the company leader or the personal relationships between the lecturers and the companies”, stated Hai. For the Tour Guiding program, the students were required to go on five practical tours during the whole program. The students travelled to several destinations in the company of their lecturers and took turns playing the role of a tour guide. They could go to visit some ethnic minorities, join donation campaigns or give blood, and go on camping trips. “Through such activities, the students’ communication skills can be improved”, the lecturer asserted. However, Thu recognised some challenges for the lecturers to enhance their students’ communicative skills since the students in the central region of Vietnam were characterised by the lecturers as timid and lacking confidence.

4.3.5.3 Off-campus WIL activities

The second practical stage required the students to go to travel companies to observe experienced staff. This practice was carried out after the first year. The aim of this was to give the students an overview of their future career. However, in Hoai’s opinion,

\[ \text{The effectiveness of the observation is not obvious. The students have yet to acquire fundamentally basic skills while the companies normally expect them to start working for them, not just come for mere observation. Therefore, the students are discouraged by the negative comments they receive from their mentors. Normally, after the observation, the students quit their study or change to another major. This is one of the limitations of the program and is on the way to being reformed.} \]

The final practical element was the internship for two to three months in a travel company, which was usually implemented in the last semester of the third year. Students made contact with the companies on their own initiative. For those who had difficulties in finding a place to do their internship, the college was supposed to be responsible for arranging a place for them, but mainly based on the personal relationships between the lecturers and tourism companies. During the internship, the lecturers in charge of internship supervision contacted the students
to supervise and give them support as necessary. They also assumed responsibility for collecting internship reports and giving marks. However, Hoai revealed, “The lecturers do not receive any benefits or remuneration for these jobs”. Therefore, the effectiveness of their supervision and support totally depended on their good wills.

### 4.3.5.4 Activities to enhance students’ generic skills

As a crucial component of WIL, generic skills were taken into account by the lecturers. Hung advised that the lecturers often recommended that the students work in companies at peak seasons to help them gain more confidence. In addition to theoretical lessons, in their classrooms they had to work in groups to organise fairs, sell things, design a tour, etc. On practical tours, the students could go to visit some ethnic minorities, join donation campaigns or give blood, and go on camping trips. “Through such activities, the students’ communication skills can be improved”, the lecturer asserted. Regarding the activities at institutional level, Hoai was rather critical, revealing that the college rarely organised events for the students to participate in. There were neither clubs nor other extra-curricular activities for the students to improve their generic and specific skills.

### 4.3.6 Assessment of WIL

There was a common process of assessment of the tourism subjects among the lecturers. For theoretical tests, multiple choice or written formats were given. For practical tests, students did as directed and lecturers gave marks based on the marking criteria designed by the lecturers themselves. However, the marking process could be flexible, so Hoai had a different way of conducting the assessment from the other lecturers. To assess theoretical knowledge, she gave two tests during the semester. One was a project for group work and the other was a multiple-choice test for individuals. For practical skills and knowledge, she gave the candidates a list of topics to choose from. The students went through three rounds. In the first round, a student was required to prepare a written presentation about a destination with twenty minutes’ preparation time and ten minutes’ presentation time. Next, he or she was asked to play a role and solve a given problem. The last round was to test the skills of organising fun games and activities. The total time for a practical test was forty minutes per candidate. The majority of the students passed the final exams but the number of those who achieved excellent marks was limited.

For the WIL activities off-campus, the students were assessed based on their journals that detailed the activities the interns did at the workplace, the feedback forms from the internship
supervisors and internship reports. The feedback form generally addressed three main criteria: (i) *attitude of the intern in compliance with the company regulations*; (ii) *attitude of the intern in learning and contribution to the tasks assigned*; and (iii) *the specialised skills of the interns*. There were no other sub-criteria for the mentors to give detailed feedback. Therefore, the general comments did not reflect the actual quality of the interns. The internship report was designed in the form of a minor thesis of approximately 30-page-long. The student was required to choose one of the five given topics and collect data during their internship to write up this thesis. The student was allocated a supervisor during the time of the internship for the purpose of this minor thesis rather than for the supervision of the students’ performance at the workplace. Two lecturers were responsible for giving the students marks for the report.

### 4.3.7 Summary

In comparison with the previous case study, this institution achieved some more positive aspects of WIL initiatives and of the internationalisation process. Different from the other state-owned college, this one appeared to be well-equipped thanks to the proper use of funding. Possessing a well-qualified team of teaching staff with relatively high qualifications, current industry experience, and proficiency in a foreign language, the college had an advantage in attracting potential students. This was evidenced by a good number of enrolments for the two selected programs in this study. The staff was active in upgrading their qualifications and expanding their expertise through involvement in the target industry. They also took their foreign language proficiency into account to support their teaching career. Thanks to their overseas study or their work in international tourism companies, they had opportunities to be exposed to an international environment. This was a highlight in the process of integrating elements of internationalisation into the program.

Unfortunately, although many lecturers had international experience and credentials, they were not aware of bringing elements of internationalisation into their teaching. Some lecturers did not emphasise the necessity of teaching foreign languages to students, given that the graduates would not be able to use these languages in the future due to the restriction of the Tourism Law. Their indifferent attitude toward this issue could be traced back to the claimed outcomes of the tourism programs, where global perspectives of the graduates were not taken into account.

The WIL components in this college also encountered some problems in the design, such as inappropriate selection of tourist destinations for practical tours, inclusion of unnecessary subjects, unreasonable allocation of time for English in comparison with other core units etc.
Despite some rigid requirements in the guidelines of the managing authority on the training content, the college generally made appropriate adjustments. The materials and facilities, in general, were thought to suffice and the lecturers claimed that they made full use of the equipment in their lessons. However, the materials were still considered to be insufficient for some dedicated lecturers, who were creative in their teaching. These lecturers had to create more materials at their own time and expense and the quality of these materials was not officially evaluated.

Although the mutual liaison between the college and tourism companies was regarded as satisfactory in the three practical schemes: (1) practical tours for the Tour Guiding program; (2) observational placement and (3) internship, the lecturers did not give clear examples of how they received the support. The observational placement was thought to be the least successful element due to the incompatibility of expectations of the institutions and the companies. The roles of the lecturers in the coordination and supervision of the internship were still vague. Their engagement in this WIL component was not an officially assigned task but a result of their willingness to participate.

The students’ generic skills were also taken into account by the lecturers through their work in companies at peak seasons, in groups to organise fairs, sell things, or design a tour and when they participated in practical tours. However, there were no extra-curricular activities organised at the institutional level for the students in this college.

The assessment of WIL, similar to the previous case study, was only described factually rather than reflecting the participants’ perspectives. The tourism subjects were formatively assessed in both written and oral form. The internship was assessed in more varied forms than the previous institution, which required an internship feedback form from mentors and journals and internship reports from the students. It was still questionable whether these documents could reflect the real quality of the internship due to the lack of detail in design.
4.4 TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTION C: GOVERNMENT VOCATIONAL TRAINING COLLEGE IN A COASTAL CITY IN SOUTHERN CENTRAL REGION OF VIETNAM

4.4.1 Introduction

The college is located on a large piece of land on a small street in the south of this coastal city. It has three areas: a two-storey building for college administration and faculty teaching and administrative staff, a five-storey building for classrooms and an area for practical rooms and workshops. It was upgraded from its former role as a School of Economics and Technology in accordance with a Decision made by the MOLISA. It now provides vocational training at three main levels: three-year bachelor degree, diploma and certificate. It is not only tourism specific but also specialises in engineering and other technical majors.

The researcher contacted the Dean of the Faculty of Tourism by email before the fieldwork. The Dean expressed her enthusiasm for the topic of this project and facilitated the data collection as well. She gave the researcher a list of lecturers who had agreed to participate and all of them were supportive of the project. When contacting the lecturers, the researcher learnt that the teaching staff was satisfied with the organisation of the faculty; in particular, they admired the Dean and were happy with her managerial style. She was also the only person who held a PhD degree in the faculty. She gave instructions and made significant decisions on the design of most of the curriculum subjects of the Tour Guiding program. During the researcher’s time working with the lecturers, the Dean was taking the students on practical tours to the southern provinces for ten days. Therefore, the researcher unfortunately missed an opportunity to include this key person in the research.

4.4.2 Quality of the teaching staff

The Faculty of Tourism is one of eight faculties in the college, offering four majors, namely (i) Tour Guiding; (ii) Restaurant Services; (iii) Hospitality Management and (iv) House Keeping. The Tour Guiding program commenced in 2008 with five classes and the number of classes has been maintained since then. At the time of the researcher’s visit, the Faculty had eighteen lecturers, including one PhD, six Masters, eight Masters Candidates and three Bachelors. According to the college website, it was estimated that 90 per cent of the teaching staff would have obtained either Masters or PhD degrees by the end of 2015. The profiles of the six lecturers participating in this research are shown in Table 4.3.
Table 4.3. Profiles of the Lecturers in Tourism Institution C.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Positions</th>
<th>Educational Qualifications</th>
<th>Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Working Experience in Tourism Industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vi</td>
<td>Vice Dean Tourism Lecturer</td>
<td>BA, MA in Tourism Studies</td>
<td>Since 2003: full time lecturer, teaching tour guiding skills, restaurant services, psychology, general tourism</td>
<td>Since 2009: Vice Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoa</td>
<td>Tourism Lecture</td>
<td>BA in Tourism Business Management</td>
<td>Since 2007: full time lecturer, teaching Overview of Tourism, Marketing, Vietnamese Culture</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngan</td>
<td>Tourism lecturer</td>
<td>BA in Tourism Economics</td>
<td>Since 2008: full time lecturer</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uyen</td>
<td>EFL Lecturer</td>
<td>BA in Foreign Language; MA candidate in TESOL</td>
<td>Since 2009: English full time lecturer</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sen</td>
<td>EFL Lecturer</td>
<td>BA in English Teaching; MA candidate in Linguistics</td>
<td>Since 2003: English full time lecturer</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Li</td>
<td>EFL Lecturer</td>
<td>BA in English teaching; MA candidate in TESOL</td>
<td>Since 2009: English full time lecturer</td>
<td>One year working for a tourism company</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is evident from the profiles that the lecturers all had good academic credentials, having graduated from the academic disciplines relevant to their current duties. Two thirds of the lecturers had Master degrees and the rest were enrolled in or intended to pursue a Masters program in the near future. They were sponsored either by the city or by college funding. Those who graduated prior to 2009 had been fully sponsored. Those graduating after this time only received a sponsorship of around fifty per cent of the tuition fees based on their seniority in the college. Being aware of the importance of lifelong professional learning in continuing to evolve in the teaching profession together with the support from the college leaders, most of the lecturers had motivated themselves to upgrade their knowledge and qualifications.

However, all of the lecturers had graduated from Vietnamese universities rather than from foreign training institutions. One could assume that their lack of exposure to foreign cultures would be a disadvantage in teaching tourism disciplines or English, which requires good knowledge of intercultural exchanges. Notwithstanding the lack of opportunity to study overseas, the lecturers were still competent in the English language, according to Uyen. By enrolling in a Masters program, all of the tourism lecturers were required to achieve an English proficiency of B1 on the Common European Framework for Reference, which is
equivalent to an IELTS score of 4.5. Therefore, they could at least use English in simple exchanges and comprehend basic English materials.

The profiles also showed that the lecturers had limited or virtually no work experience in the tourism industry. Their teaching experience only resulted in the delivery of textbook-based lessons rather than practical transmission of skills and knowledge. Furthermore, without industry involvement, the lecturers were limited in their contact and relationships with tourism companies. Hence, they could not provide sufficient support to the students in their internships or employment after graduation.

Most of the lecturers were in their early careers. This could be an advantage for the faculty to possess a team of dynamic lecturers who were eager to take initiatives to apply the theory they had learned and put it into practice. They were also receptive to professional development evidenced by their awareness to upgrade their qualifications. However, novice lecturers were usually less effective than experienced lecturers in class management.

Furthermore, one tourism lecturer was required to be in charge of various subjects within or even beyond their area of expertise. On the one hand, challenging, role-changing, experimental activities might increase their job satisfaction and help them learn and grow. On the other hand, this was a pressure on their time and effort to prepare different lesson plans and hence reduced the effectiveness in the delivery of a single subject.

The average teaching load of a lecturer was approximately 800 forty-five-minute periods per academic year, which was about 300 periods more than the standard teaching load for one lecturer per year as required by the Ministry. Each lecturer generally undertook about 20 to 25 teaching periods a week. With this teaching load, the lecturers were also required to conduct research for the improvement of the organisation and for their self-development. However, as Uyen admitted, “the lecturers are rarely interested in conducting research. Just those who are pursuing a Masters program have an impetus to do research for the sake of their own study.”

A search of the college website revealed no record of previous or current research.

To maintain the teaching quality, within the faculty there was reciprocal peer observation of the lecturers’ actual teaching, together with teaching contests at provincial and national levels. For observation, a lecturer registered a time and date for one period when he or she was delivering a lesson to be observed by the faculty leaders and their colleagues. Normally a meeting occurred after each observed period for the observers to give feedback. This created a chance for academic and professional exchanges amongst lecturers and for the leaders to
supervise their staff’s quality and their commitment to their teaching duties. For teaching contests, the faculty nominated a lecturer to participate. The procedure was similar to an observed teaching period at the college level. The examiners were normally representatives from the provincial Department of Vocational Training.

4.4.3 Quality of students and admission issues

According to the college website, students enrolled in the programs in this college paid low tuition fees thanks to the policy of tuition assistance from the budget of the city. Each student at college level was given a grant of seven million VND (about US$350) for tuition fees per academic year. Therefore, this college attracted a good number of potential students. Tour guiding was one of the programs that attracted the highest enrolments in the college. In 2013, it aimed to admit 100 new enrolments in comparison with targets of 50 to 80 enrolments in other programs. In addition to the advertising of new programs on the college website, this college participated annually in vocational seminars or meetings at high schools in the local area or in nearby provinces before the admission season in April or May for the promotion and popularisation of its programs to potential students.

Similar to the previous institutions, the college admitted students through document assessment. However, this institution took both the students completing year 12 and even those who only competed Year 9. The students were only required to submit their final academic report to be processed. With the low requirements, the quality of students admitted into this college was an issue.

The dropout rate of students in any one intake was normally about thirty per cent, according to information received from the College’s Department of Student Management. That is, only seventy per cent of the students enrolled in the first year remained in the final year. This was due to various factors such as financial hardship, failure to meet the academic requirements, or receiving offer letters from other universities after the students retook entrance examinations during their study at this college.

4.4.4 Design of WIL

Vocational colleges place a high emphasis on the elements of practical learning. Similarly, this college also claimed the incorporation of WIL components in the design and outcomes of its programs.
4.4.4.1 Outcomes of the Tour Guiding program

The outcomes of the tour guiding program were found in detail on the college website. They suggested that the learners would fully develop in their knowledge, skills and personal development after completing the course. The students were expected to be equipped with:

- deep insight into tour guiding, including characteristics and values of the natural resources and tourist destinations, process of organising tourism programs, and problem solving in situations arising during the implementation of tourism programs etc.
- the knowledge necessary for tour guidance such as an overview of tourism, tourist psychology, communication skills, Vietnamese culture, Vietnam tourism geography, events, the process of Vietnam's history, Vietnamese ethnic groups etc.
- additional knowledge for tour guiding such as travel management skills, payment skills, culinary culture, accommodation skills, and applied computing etc.

In addition to the knowledge acquired on the course, the students would also be trained in professional skills in tour guidance such as preparing and implementing tourism programs, giving presentations, guiding sightseeing tours, managing groups of tourists, supporting marketing and advertising sales activities, establishing and maintaining relationships with partners, solving problems arising in the implementation of tourism programs, and providing care to meet the needs of different types of tourists.

Also, some generic skills were claimed to be highly emphasised in this course. The learners were able to work independently, and apply technology to tour guiding activities. Their personality could also be improved for the suitability of the job in areas such as morality, sense of discipline, professional working style etc. They would be able to find employment, to be self-employed or to further their education after graduation.

In particular, the website highlighted the provision of foreign language competence for the learners through this Tour Guiding program. Learners could use their foreign language in everyday conversations and in some specific activities of professional international tourist guiding at a relatively high level.
4.4.4.2 Curriculum design

The course structure was shown publicly on the college website. This was a special feature that differentiated this college from the other government vocational colleges which did not advertise their training frameworks and regarded them as their own intellectual property.

Similar to the other colleges in the same government system, the curriculum of the Tour Guiding program in this college was also controlled by the GDVT. Three tourism lecturers diverged in their appraisal of the curriculum. Hoa declared her satisfaction with the current training framework, “The curriculum is fine. It demonstrates a link with the demands of the companies. The number of periods of the subjects I am teaching is reasonable.” Another lecturer, Vi, commented that ten to fifteen per cent of the content of the training framework was illogical but he did not explain the problems in detail. Only Ngan, the third interviewee, clearly explained some questionable subject inclusion in the training framework. For example, being located in the central area of Vietnam, the college needed to send its students enrolled in the Tour Guiding program to the destinations nearby for practical training, while the framework required the lecturers to take the students to northern destinations instead. Also, some unnecessary subjects were included in the curriculum. This lecturer gave an example, “The subject Analysis of Trading Activities is not suitable because it requires a lot of mathematical knowledge, while the students’ major is in a social science discipline and they are generally poor at solving mathematical problems.”

4.4.4.3 Evaluation of materials

In contrast to the divided opinions of the lecturers on the curriculum, the issue of teaching materials received unanimous criticism. All of the lecturers shared the view that the materials for many tourism subjects were unsuitable and insufficient. Vi said, “The materials for the tour guiding subjects are not well designed. Normally, they are translated from overseas resources, or designed for university students and modified to fit the requirements of the college training framework.” Hoa supported this, adding that the compulsory materials required by the Ministry were too general. They were applicable for all majors, not for a particular program. This lecturer gave the example of the textbook for the overview of the tourism subject. The book was used for various programs which shared the same subject while the content and examples for different majors should have been different. Therefore, each lecturer had to be selective in the use and application of such materials in teaching different students from different majors. Agreeing with the two lecturers, Ngan added, “For many
subjects, the lecturers must design their own materials. However, this is a challenging job because the reference resources for tourism majors are very limited”.

In contrast to the previous complaint about the deficiency of specialisation materials, some interviewees expressed satisfaction with the library holdings and facilities. It provided about 100 reading spaces with chairs, tables and about ten computers with Internet connection. With approximately 6000 students in the college, it was a relatively modest place. An online library where the students could search for the materials of their interest commenced in 2012. The library holdings were sponsored by the European Union through the International Labour Organisation. According to Uyen, each year the librarians requested the lecturers to suggest some books that they needed for reference. The librarians would then purchase the materials in accordance with the suggestions.

4.4.5 Implementation of WIL

4.4.5.1 Delivery of tourism subjects

All the tourism lecturers stated that they made full use of technological facilities such as computers and projectors in their teaching, although they encountered various problems in the application. Hoa said she normally asked her students to surf the Internet for information before each lesson. During the lessons, she let the students watch relevant videos that she collected from her acquaintances. However, she frequently faced many difficulties in her lesson delivery due to the shortage of resources for the information she wanted. Most of the information she had was from foreign resources, so she had to spend time selecting, translating and making subtitles. Furthermore, the time for one period was limited to 45 minutes, which was not enough to deliver the theory and simultaneously watch the videos. Ngan expressed her dissatisfaction with the lack of practical rooms for tour guiding and travel skills although the equipment for practice was sufficient. Therefore, when there was a practical lesson, she had to borrow equipment and install it in her classroom.

In the three-year Tour Guiding program, the students went on four compulsory practical tours ranging from one day to ten days. In addition, depending on the content of some particular subjects, for example the System of Historic Sites and Vietnamese Culture, the lecturers themselves also organised field trips to relevant destinations.
4.4.5.2 On-campus WIL activities

The participants were supportive of the on-campus WIL activities which were implemented through some types of cooperation with companies. The college and several invited companies met annually to discuss the training issues where the companies were able to voice their requirements from the college, and the college could seek the companies’ comments on the training framework. The meetings were also opportunities for the companies to recruit casual employees and for the students to learn from real experience shared through the speeches of the representatives.

4.4.5.3 Evaluation of the internships

The WIL components were significant as demonstrated by the three-month internship in tourism companies. The contact with the companies for the placements was at first based on the personal relationships of the students themselves. Those who had difficulties in finding a company for their practicum were asked to report to the college for assistance. During the internship, the academic supervisors were asked to come to the companies to see whether the students were physically present for work or what tasks they were allowed to do. Hoa commented positively that the internships were generally effective. Before the internship, the students had observation time for preparation. The host companies allowed them to undertake real tasks with the help and supervision of the mentors. Many students who performed well during the internship were recruited thereafter. Sometimes, the college conducted surveys with the companies and the students were normally thought to have sufficient knowledge and the skills to work well during the internships. However, Vi and Ngan were more hesitant in their remarks, saying that the effectiveness of this hands-on training was strongly reliant on the host companies. Some companies allowed the interns - especially those who could demonstrate their abilities and skills - to work as tour guides, but some just gave them errands to run. Ngan gave one positive example of a student of hers who did her internship in a tourism company and was asked to join as a student tour guide on many tours, including to Thailand. However, she added that the number of fortunate students like this was very limited. She suggested that for the internships to be effective, the college should sign agreements with companies to ensure that for each semester a fixed number of its students could have a place to do their internships and the company could receive a small amount of money from the students in return.
4.4.5.4 Activities to enhance students’ generic skills

Generic skills such as confidence, communication skills, and problem solving etc. were enhanced at the college level through many annually organised activities such as beauty contests, cultural contests, sport activities, voluntary clubs etc., according to the lecturers. The college also cooperated with life skills training organisations to offer short courses for soft skills training to their students. However, the students were required to pay for their attendance. Ngan and Hoa showed their awareness of the importance of generic skills during their lessons. Nonetheless, due to the lack of practical rooms, they could not freely organise activities for fear of making too much noise and affecting the neighbouring classes. Li and Sen developed generic skills through role-plays, group work for problem solving and games.

4.4.6 Assessment of WIL

Assessments were carried out in two main formats: written and oral. The written tests were used to test the students’ acquisition of theoretical knowledge and oral tests were for assessing the students’ presentation skills where they provided introduction and interpretation of a tourist destination to potential tourists in simulated situations. A particular feature of the oral tests for the Tour Guiding program, as Vi pointed out, was that all the tests were conducted both in English and Vietnamese in order to help the students focus on improving their English.

The internship was assessed through a simply designed feedback form filled in by the internship mentor. Two assessment criteria, including the interns’ attitude toward tasks assigned and the working skills were required. For each criterion, the mentor was requested to choose one of three options (1) good, (2) required to improve, and (3) not good. There was a section for the mentor to give further comments.

4.4.7 Summary

This vocational college showed some determination in making the WIL initiative effective to the students with sufficient investment in upgrading the quality of the teaching staff, facilities, materials and reform of management. The lecturers themselves also demonstrated their commitment to the college and their teaching profession. However, the lack of exposure to other cultures than Vietnamese and limited tourism industry experience, particularly in an international working environment, prevented the lecturers from delivering tourism lessons effectively to a certain degree or providing the students with global perspectives. The
lecturers’ excessive workload, overlapping duties and restricted research experience were some of the other limitations to the quality of the lecturers in this college.

The Tour Guiding program was quite appealing to potential students thanks to the low tuition fees. However, the quality of students on entry was a considerable issue due to the low requirements. The dropout rates were quite significant for various reasons.

Although the college mapped out promising outcomes for the Tour Guiding program, the design of WIL did not actually satisfy the interviewed lecturers. As the curriculum was commonly designed by the authorised Ministry, the college could not make amendments to it due to the restriction of the regulations from the higher leadership level, irrespective of inclusion of irrelevant subjects. The materials for many tourism subjects were thought to be unsuitable and insufficient although the library facilities and holdings seemed satisfactory.

Similar to the two other government colleges, this institution did not acknowledge the importance of integrating the internationalisation elements into the program. Its claimed outcomes mainly focused on providing the students with discipline-specific knowledge and skills whilst the international issues and cross-communication skills required for dealing with people from different cultures were totally excluded. The lecturers held an indifferent attitude towards this matter when they tried to translate all the resources into Vietnamese rather than encouraging their students to use their proficiency in foreign languages to understand the resources.

The implementation of WIL was thought to be reasonably satisfactory despite some limitations. The lecturers asserted that they made an effort to apply new and interesting approaches. However, they complained that they could not deliver lessons satisfactorily due to the lack of resources. Fortunately, the students were given enough opportunities to practise tour guiding skills on practical tours organised by the faculty. The cooperation with tourism companies was also appraised as successful to some degree. Despite not having an official arrangement with them, the college received enough support from the companies in accepting students for doing their internships on their premises. However, the quality of the internship was not discussed in depth in the interviews.

Some activities, both inside and outside the classroom, to enhance students’ generic skills were also emphasised by the lecturers.
The assessment of WIL, like the previous case studies, was only presented factually by the interviewees, rather than in a reflective manner. A commendable feature of the assessment policy was that students were required to undertake oral presentations in both English and Vietnamese. This was considered a chance for the students to improve their English speaking skills. The internship, however, was assessed in a simple way, which could not guarantee the quality of the experiential learning.

### 4.5 TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTION D: GOVERNMENT UNIVERSITY IN A COASTAL CITY IN THE SOUTHERN CENTRAL REGION OF VIETNAM

#### 4.5.1 Introduction

This university has a convenient location in the south-eastern section of this coastal city. With a long history of 35 years and development since 1975, this university seemed to be well set up at the time of the researcher’s visit. It comprises six areas of auditoriums with over 100 classrooms, which can accommodate roughly 4,500 students.

The researcher visited the university with strong support from the Dean via email. Unfortunately, at the time of the researcher’s visit, he was in Australia to complete a project for the university. He then recommended her to see the Deputy Dean, who welcomed the researcher discreetly. He referred her to two other tourism lecturers and two EFL lecturers for interviews. However, when interviewed himself, he was reluctant to provide any in-depth information. All the information he gave was rather general and confined to facts rather than opinions. He also refused to be recorded. On the other hand, the other lecturers whom he had recommended were enthusiastic and helpful. They provided information and expressed their opinions in great detail. The EFL lecturers welcomed the researcher in their homes. Therefore, they could also feel free to express their opinions about the issues raised in the project.

The Faculty of Tourism was established in 2012 after being separated from the Faculty of Commerce and Tourism, which had been operating jointly since 1992. It was offering four-year bachelor programs of Tourism Business Management and recruited approximately 120 new students annually. It provided personnel for the tourism industry in the central region and western highlands of Vietnam.
4.5.2 The quality of the teaching staff

The teaching staff included fifteen lecturers, among whom were three with Doctorate degrees, eight with Masters degrees and four with Bachelor degrees. Many lecturers had obtained their qualifications in an overseas training institution under the sponsorship of the Vietnamese government or other foreign governments such as England, Germany, Switzerland and France. The profiles of five lecturers who participated in this research are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4. Profiles of the Lecturers in Tourism Institution D.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Positions</th>
<th>Educational Qualifications</th>
<th>Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Tourism Working Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To</td>
<td>Deputy Dean Lecturer for Travel Management subjects</td>
<td>BA in Commerce&lt;br&gt;MA in Economics</td>
<td>Since 1990: full time lecturer&lt;br&gt;Since 2005: Deputy Dean</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Na</td>
<td>Tourism lecturer</td>
<td>MBA from Nantes University sponsored by FNEGE (The National Foundation for Teaching Business Management) with 6 months of internship in France&lt;br&gt;PhD candidate in Engineering Economics</td>
<td>Since 1994: full time lecturer</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dong</td>
<td>Tourism lecturer</td>
<td>MBA</td>
<td>Since 1995: full time lecturer</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tan</td>
<td>EFL lecturer</td>
<td>BA, MA in Foreign Languages&lt;br&gt;BA in Tourism Studies</td>
<td>Since 1992: full time lecturer</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu</td>
<td>EFL lecturer</td>
<td>BA, MA in TESOL</td>
<td>Since 1993: full time lecturer</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teaching staff for the Tourism Business Management program had a high level of education with all the interviewed lecturers holding at least Masters degrees in their professional teaching fields. They were experienced, all having over twenty years in the teaching profession.

The university also provided these lecturers with a positive research environment as it was known as the largest research institute in economic science in the central region and western highlands in Vietnam. It published a quarterly Journal of Economic Studies in Vietnamese for interested readers such as scientists, managers, lecturers and students. Its purposes were: to
popularise the guidelines of the Communist Party, the various policies and legislation on the economy, business and management of the government; to exchange theoretical studies, practical problems of the economic sciences, business, contemporary management of Vietnam and the world; to announce the results of scientific research in economics, business and management; to share the experience of scientists, and managers in the country and abroad; and to reflect on current issues in these areas.

The academic profiles of these lecturers on the university website also revealed that they played important roles in the development of the research activities in the university. The Faculty of Tourism frequently organised academic seminars for the lecturers and students to present their studies. The university website reported some roundtable seminars in which these faculty staff presented on the development of tourism in Vietnam and in the central region. The lecturers in this faculty spent time conducting research thanks to their light teaching workload. One lecturer was normally in charge of two to three classes. Each week he or she taught two or three periods for one class depending on the number of credits.

### 4.5.3 Quality of students and admission issues

Annually, the university admitted 2200 mainstream students. The intake capacity of the Business Administration of Tourism Services and Travel was 110 places in 2013. To qualify for admission into this undergraduate program, applicants were required to have successfully completed a course of study at Year 12 or equivalent and to take a competitive norm-reference entrance examination in either: group A (Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry); or group A1 (Mathematics, Physics and Foreign Language); or group D (Mathematics, Literature and a Foreign Language). The majority of the students admitted into this program were academically strong since the passing grade was rather high (20.5/30 in the university entrance examination in 2013). The students were mostly from medium or upper class family backgrounds. The student attrition rate was very low. Only rare cases were expelled or suspended from their study due to their failure to meet the academic requirements.

### 4.5.4 Design of WIL

#### 4.5.4.1 Outcomes of the Tourism Business Management program

Unlike the three vocational colleges which highlighted vocational skills and knowledge in tourism, the Tourism Business Management program of this university placed an emphasis on
the managing of and business in tourism. Its outcomes were clearly addressed on the university website. On completion of the Tourism Business Management course, learners would attain:

\textit{Knowledge:}

- Understanding of a basic knowledge of law, economics, society and business administration
- In-depth knowledge of the business activities in tourism services such as planning, human resource management, financial management, and marketing management ... as well as knowledge supporting capacity for thinking and decision-making
- In-depth knowledge of business operations in typical tourist businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and tour operating etc.
- Understanding of the political and national defence education in accordance with the guidelines, and policies of the Communist Party and the government

\textit{Skills:}

- Analysing, designing and implementing strategies, policies of business development in general, and tourism business in particular
- Organising and managing tasks in the areas of service delivery and functional activities such as finance, human resources, marketing of tourism businesses
- Coordinating the activities of the functional parts of typical tourist businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and tour operating etc.
- Communicating with clients and resolving problems, with an English proficiency equivalent to TOEIC 500 or French DELF A2 or certificate of equivalent language level B1 - European Framework (Common European Framework - CEF)
- Good communication skills in team environments
- Independence in managing issues, particularly in the tourism sector
- Using information technology for business activities

\textbf{4.5.4.2 Curriculum design}

The total length of the program was four years. However, depending on the students’ ability, this might be reduced to three years or be extended to a maximum of six years. The total
credits for the whole program were 125 credits, excluding the modules of Physical Education and Military Services Education.

However, the credit-based system initiative was actually an issue of concern to the lecturers. This training system allowed students from different faculties to assemble in one class for one subject and to choose any subjects at their convenience. Therefore, the design of the content of “one-size-fits-all” subjects could hardly be specific to any particular major. This dilemma could only be solved by separating students of each faculty to learn separately to explore the content more deeply and in a way more closely related to their major, according to Dong. Furthermore, the Vietnamese students’ ability to study on their own initiative was quite "weak" as a consequence of rote-learning at primary and secondary level, which hindered them from adapting to the requirement of this system of training at the tertiary level.

The units of this program focused mainly on developing managerial knowledge and skills in tourism generally rather than specialising in any particular profession. Therefore, this university normally organised some short courses in a particular major for those who wished to further their study in a particular field. For anyone who was interested in a tour guiding job, the university offered two programs. The one-month course was designed for those who had graduated from a four-year bachelor program in tourism but were not specialised in travel guidance. The two-month course was for those who had a three-year bachelor degree in tourism but had not specialised in travel guidance or those who had a four-year bachelor degree in the fields of economics, social sciences and humanity. These courses covered all of the components of knowledge and skills necessary for a tour guide in a reduced period of time. Those who obtained the certificates after attending these courses were granted a domestic tour guiding permit to be eligible for employment.

The interviewed lecturers all agreed that the selection of compulsory or elective subjects and the time allocation for them were somewhat unreasonable. While some subjects not essential for the program were compulsory and allocated a great amount of time, some other essential subjects for the specialisation were optional or excluded from the curriculum altogether. Dong and Na agreed that Politics was allocated a large number of periods although it was not closely related to the specialisation, while Econometrics which was highly academic and more appropriate for Masters level or for those interested in doing research was a compulsory subject. Meanwhile, some practical areas about bartending, wine-testing skills, map reading etc. were not included in the curriculum. However, Na explained that some obstacles to the provision of such skills were the lack of teachers or facilities.
4.5.4.3 Distribution of teaching tasks

The Faculty of Tourism was in charge of managing and providing the teaching staff for tourism subjects within the Tourism Business Management program. Other subjects were conducted by other related faculties. For example, Business Management was taught by the lecturers from the Faculty of Management, English by the Faculty of Foreign Languages and other general subjects by the Faculty of Fundamental Studies. According to Tan, this division of responsibility was, on the one hand, to use the personnel efficiently and economically. On the other hand, it caused some challenges for the lecturers when they did not have a say in the design of the curriculum or syllabus of the program managed by the faculty of which they were not a member. Furthermore, the content of teaching delivered by one teacher for many faculties was not designed for the demands of a particular discipline, which was a disadvantage for the students in their employment applications after graduation. Na took two subjects, namely Human Resources Management or Strategic Management, to illustrate her comment. These subjects were taught similarly for all faculties, not specifically for a tourism context.

4.5.4.4 Evaluation of materials and facilities

The deficiency of materials for major subjects was an issue which generated discussion. For general subjects, the materials were abundant, but there was a scarcity of materials for specialised subjects in the travel management program, especially in Vietnamese. Dong said,

*Only English or French materials are available but they are not useful due to the students’ weak reading comprehension skills in foreign languages and due to the different viewpoints of the authors of these materials which are not suitable for a Vietnamese context.*

It was known from the university website that the university had just invested in a new modern and airy library with approximately 20,000 holdings. It had three reading rooms, seating over 1,000. However, it had not been equipped with computers for research purposes. The number of students coming for study was considerable. The library was said to be an ideal study place for them because most of them originated from other provinces and were living in rented houses or dormitory rooms which had limited space for study.

Equipment such as computers, projectors, CD players, speakers, microphones etc. were generally regarded as being sufficient. However, as Na and Dong revealed, for specialised
tourism subjects, there was a lack of investment in both practical rooms and equipment. The lecturers themselves had to prepare the devices, for instance, different kinds of glasses to show the students the type of glass which went with a particular kind of wine. Or they had to set up the classroom themselves to suit the requirements of the content of a particular lesson and then had to clean it for other classes sharing the same room.

4.5.5 Implementation of WIL

4.5.5.1 Delivery of tourism subjects

As mentioned earlier, due to the lack of facilities for some practical subjects, the lecturers had to find their own ways to compensate for this deficiency to give the students opportunities for more practice. Their commitment to the teaching job was commendable. For the theoretical parts, the interviewees employed a lecturing method with the assistance of technologies such as projectors and laptops to give presentations. However, the large number of students in one class was a hindrance to the effectiveness of the delivery.

4.5.5.2 On-campus WIL activities

The faculty and its teaching staff had been active in their cooperation with tourism companies in providing practical training for the students. As the Deputy Dean outlined, they invited various companies to participate in research or projects to improve the quality of training organised by the faculty. Also, they frequently organised extra-curricular activities such as inviting guest speakers to share their experiences with the students or searching and persuading tourism companies to allow the students to visit their premises for observation. They also kept in contact with the graduates who held key positions in many tourism companies or organisations, since these people were then highly instrumental in maintaining the cooperation between the companies and the university. In particular, the improvement in the links with the tourism industry was marked by cooperative training contracts between the university and a company with a big brand name in the tourism field in August 2012. The students could therefore learn theory at the university and take turns doing their paid jobs over one month at the company. They were tested and assigned tasks suitable for their levels, abilities and majors. The operation of this program had started in the summer of 2013.
4.5.5.3 Evaluation of the internships

There were still some gaps in the cooperation surrounding the internships however, which were usually carried out during the last four months of the program. Normally, the students were supposed to contact the companies themselves for their internships based on their own relationships with the companies. Many companies, especially the large and prestigious ones, were reluctant to recruit interns or allow them to participate in their business activities. They proffered the excuse that the students did not have the required skills and feared that their actions could affect the service quality and the reputation of the company. Furthermore, after the internship, to be eligible for graduation the students were required to write a report on a particular topic supported by evidence or data provided by the companies. However, Na stated, “They do not always receive the necessary information from the companies to complete their assignment. Therefore, many of the students find their internships ineffective and a waste of time”. The students who were fortunate enough to be admitted to the company only received menial administrative tasks to do, not the managerial tasks as anticipated. The indifference of some tourism enterprises that did not have an actual need for casual personnel in cooperation with the university could be partly attributed to the fact that they did not receive any financial benefit from taking the interns. Dong explained, “The limitation of state universities is the budget. As they charge low tuition fees, this does not allow them to pay the companies for their support in the internships”.

Na and Dong also indicated their concern about the difficulties that the students encountered when they worked with some foreign tourism companies which had their own training systems or small enterprises with real labour needs. These organisations were pleased to take the interns; however, they considered the interns as their own staff and took full advantage of their time and ability. The students had to work full time like the official employees and hence did not have adequate time to write a good quality report or a minor thesis [approximately 20,000 to 30,000 words] as required by the university after the internship. Na mentioned that as a consequence, “The good students who have competent foreign language skills try to avoid working in these companies for fear that they may not graduate because they cannot complete their project report or thesis on schedule”. This created an obvious paradox in the training outcomes between effective internships on one hand and satisfactory reports and theses on the other.
4.5.4 **Activities to enhance students’ generic skills**

The lecturers maintained that the students’ generic skills were enhanced through activities organised in the classrooms or at the university level. The lecturers believed that group projects, presentation, and simulations could be beneficial to the students’ soft skills. Also, the university occasionally invited guest speakers to deliver speeches about generic skills, including skills leading to success or public speaking skills. However, since the students were required to pay for this activity, it was not able to attract the interest of a large number of students, according to Na and Dong.

4.5.6 **Assessment of WIL**

In terms of assessment of tourism subjects, the lecturers divided their evaluation into three elements: the first included attendance, attitude and participation which accounted for 20 per cent; the second was a mid-term test which could be a presentation, a group project or a written assignment, accounting for another 20 per cent; and the last was a final test which is either oral or written accounting for 60 per cent. The lecturers normally decided themselves the formats of the first and the second assessment elements. Na concluded,

>This flexibility was an advantage for the lecturers when they could actively prepare the assessment at their own convenience based on the level or attitude of their students. However, this freedom can lead to unfairness among classes learning the same subject when one teacher is generous in their marking while others are strict and rigid.

As mentioned earlier, the internship was assessed in the form of a minor thesis. The students were required to do their internships to collect data for their graduation thesis. They first wrote an internship report, concerning the overview of the company, its organisation, its business activities, and its financial or accounting issues. The students then developed the internship report into a minor thesis as an academic requirement for graduation. Each student was supervised by a lecturer for this thesis. According to Na and Dong, many of the students could not receive enough and reliable data for their theses, which was considered one drawback of the assessment of WIL.
4.5.7 Summary

In comparison with the other three case studies, this university was run in a different way. It did not focus on the practical skills or knowledge of the profession, but paid more attention to managerial attributes. At the university level, the quality of the lecturers and their research skills were enhanced thanks to a moderate teaching workload and a professional research environment. The faculty of tourism possessed qualified lecturing staff, most of whom had obtained Masters and Doctorate degrees overseas. Their experience in an international environment was an advantage when they delivered international elements to their students.

The Business Administration of Tourism Services and Travel program attracted academically strong students at the entry level. Its outcomes were clearly delineated on the website, promising to equip students with managerial knowledge and skills in the tourism discipline as well as generic skills and foreign language communicative skills. Nonetheless, the outcomes excluded international perspectives that their students should be equipped with to work in a global environment.

Some aspects of curriculum design in this university were distinct from the other institutions. With the application of a credit-based training system, the students had the advantage of shortening or expanding the study time at will, but they encountered many difficulties such as lack of deep insight into some subjects that they had to share with other majors in the same class, or an inability to adapt to an independent learning style, to name a few. The selection of compulsory or elective subjects and the time allocation for them displeased the lecturing staff to some extent. The nomination of lecturers from the faculties other than Tourism Faculty to deliver subjects in the tourism program was also of concern to the lecturers.

The deficiency of materials for the tourism subjects in Vietnamese was another drawback, although the library was described to be modern and well set up. In the interviews, the lecturers showed their negligence in providing the students with elements of internationalisation through their comments on teaching materials. Their insistence on giving the students Vietnamese materials and teaching them only Vietnamese culture would hinder the development of global perspectives, which the students would need in an international working environment after graduation.

The faculty and teaching staff’s cooperation with tourism companies was commendable. Several activities to enhance the students’ practical learning had been initiated. The university made a breakthrough when signing an agreement with a large tourism company to facilitate
the internships. However, the cooperation between the university and other tourism companies regarding internships was still problematic. Without an official arrangement with some tourism companies, the students had to struggle themselves to find a workplace. Some students got rejected while some were exploited to work as a fulltime member of staff and ended up with not enough time to complete their minor theses. The interns were not given managerial tasks to practise, so it is obvious that the objective of creating graduates with managerial skills was not likely to be achieved at the graduation stage.

Activities to enhance students’ generic skills were varied, including classroom-based or university-based. However, the participants were sceptical of the success of the activities that required admission fees.

The assessment of tourism subjects was described as flexibly designed and implemented. The flexibility on the one hand enhanced the creativity of lecturers when designing tests, but might cause injustice among classes when implementing them on the other. The evidence for an internship was the internship report and the minor thesis that the students needed to write based on the data collected during their internship at the company. However, whether the data was reliable or not was an issue that the participants raised in the interview.

4.6 TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTION E: PEOPLE-FOUNDED UNIVERSITY IN A METROPOLITAN CITY

4.6.1 Introduction

This university was established in 1995 as one of the first people-founded universities in Vietnam under the administration of the MOET at the decision of the Prime Minister. A distinguishing characteristic of this non-public institution is that it does not receive direct funding from the government and was founded by a community group. It has two campuses with building areas of approximately 10,000 square metres each.

The website showed that the Faculty of Tourism of this institution was one of the first training organisation of the southern region authorised to deliver a Tourism English course for tour guides aiming to apply for an international tour guiding permit approved by the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism. In addition, starting from 2012, it was allowed to organise a Tour Guiding program designed for those who desire to work as tour guides. This
development played a part in tackling the shortage of quality human resources in the tourism
industry in the local area and nation-wide.

Its Faculty of Tourism received a lot of guidance and assistance from the tourism authority
departments such as the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism and Departments of
Culture – Sports – Tourism in the local area and in other provinces. It also had close linkages
with tourism businesses. It frequently organised international scientific conferences on themes
such as Sustainable Tourism or Tourism and Local Communities. In 2010, it became a
member of the Tourism Association of the local region.

On the researcher’s visit to this faculty, she was warmly welcomed by the Dean and all the
participating lecturers. The Dean was very approachable and made the researcher feel at ease
during her visit. She was also informative and supportive, spending approximately one and a
half hours on the interview. Holding the highest qualification and being the most senior
lecturer in the faculty, the Dean provided useful and rewarding information. The researcher’s
observation of the communication between her and the faculty staff also demonstrated that this
key figure had created a collaborative and relaxed working environment in the faculty.

4.6.2 The quality of teaching staff

The Faculty of Tourism, one of thirteen faculties in the university, offered two majors: (i)
Management of Services; and (ii) Tourism and Travel and Management of Hospitality. It
comprised eight full time teachers including one with a Doctorate and the other seven with a
Master’s degree, all with expertise in tourism studies. These academic staff members were
mainly responsible for the tourism subjects, which could also be taught by casual lecturers
from tourism companies or other universities. The other subjects in the two programs were
taught by lecturers from other faculties. The five teachers participating in this research were
from various organisations. Their profiles are presented in Table 4.5.

Half of the interviewed lecturers had obtained their degrees overseas. Two of the participants
expressed their intention to upgrade their qualifications in a foreign country the following
year. One lecturer was applying for a scholarship and the other intended to self-fund her PhD
program. When the lecturers enrolled in such programs, they were still required to maintain
their teaching hours in the faculty, as Thu explained.
Table 4.5. Profiles of the Lecturers in Tourism Institution E.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Positions</th>
<th>Educational Qualifications</th>
<th>Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Working Experience in Tourism Industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>La</td>
<td>Dean, Tourism lecturer</td>
<td>PhD in Russian Linguistics; MBA</td>
<td>Since 1999: full time lecturer Teaching management studies for three to four years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>Tourism lecturer</td>
<td>MA in Tourism Studies in France</td>
<td>Since 2007: full time teacher</td>
<td>Worked for a Sports Tourism Company for several years before becoming a full time lecturer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nho</td>
<td>ESL lecturer</td>
<td>BA in TESOL; MA candidate in TESOL</td>
<td>Since 2009: full time lecturer</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hai</td>
<td>ESL lecturer</td>
<td>MA in Linguistics; MA in Hospitality Management</td>
<td>Since 2004: full time lecturer</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ky</td>
<td>Casual Tourism lecturer</td>
<td>BA in Tourism; BA in Journalism; BA in Business Administration</td>
<td>Since 2005: casual teacher</td>
<td>Manager, tour guide, tour operator, team building organiser</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The university and its Faculty of Tourism frequently hosted international and national scientific seminars, concerning current and controversial issues in the field of tourism: a number of international seminars were listed the university website. It seemed that the teaching staff had many opportunities to develop their research skills in this environment.

The quality of the lecturers in this university was maintained and upgraded through various academic activities. The students were surveyed after each semester to collect their feedback on issues related to the subjects they had just covered. Their comments were given on a variety of items such as the syllabus, facilities, teachers’ attitudes, knowledge and methods. Random observations were occasionally conducted by the faculty leaders to evaluate the actual teaching of the lecturers. There were also frequent academic meetings, seminars, research activities and professional development activities conducted by foreign experts. Furthermore, many scholarships were granted to the lecturers from different funding sources to upgrade their expertise.

4.6.3 Quality of students and admission issues

Applicants for the Management of Services and Tourism program in this university had to undertake an entrance examination with three main subjects in either Group A (Mathematics,
Physics, Chemistry); Group A1 (Mathematics, Physics, English); Group D1 (Mathematics, Literature, English); or Group D3 (Mathematics, Literature, French). The mark required to gain entry into this program in 2013 was 14, 15, and 16 out of 30 corresponding to groups A, D1, and D3 respectively. This grade was average standard when compared with the similar programs in other universities.

The tuition fee ranged from 12 million VND (US$600) to 19 million VND (US$950) depending on the different majors. For a dual degree program, the tuition fee might reach 29 million VND (US$1,450) per year. In comparison with government universities, these tuition fees were relatively high. To be able to afford to enrol in these programs, the students had to come from middle or upper class family backgrounds.

4.6.4 Design of WIL

In contrast to vocational training institutes where practical and work-ready skills are highly emphasised, universities often focus on equipping the students with knowledge and skills at higher levels so that the graduates can pursue wider career choices. According to the outcomes of the Tourism Management Services and Travel program advertised on the website, WIL components were taken into account in this university.

4.6.4.1 Outcomes of the Tourism Management Services and Travel program

Graduates from the Tourism Management Services and Travel program were able to work as operating managers and tour guides for international and domestic tourism companies, tourist transport enterprises, entertainment business, etc. They were expected to be responsible for assigning travel guides, designing tour programs, collaborating with other departments in a company and authorities to solve emerging problems, and deal with both customers’ requests and complaints about travel plans etc.

To achieve such aims, the students were provided with knowledge and professional skills in tour guiding, managing skills at medium and advanced level, and a capability in strategic and policy planning in the field of the governmental management of tourism. The Faculty of Tourism helped students focus on building a sense of civic responsibility, appropriate attitudes, a professional working style, and the development of complementary skills such as communication, information gathering and processing, problem solving and team work.
4.6.4.2 *Curriculum design*

Unfortunately, the full course structure was not publicly available. From the university website, it was possible to obtain only scant information on some of the distinguishing subjects for the Management of Services, Tourism and Travel program that differentiated the training of this university from that of other tourism training providers.

It was understood from the interviews with the participants that, unlike the training framework of the college programs, the curriculum of Vietnamese four-year Bachelor programs in Tourism and Hospitality studies was not rigidly determined by the Ministry. There were only requirements for the percentage of foundation and specialised subjects, but which specific subjects to be included in the curriculum could be decided on by the faculty members. The curriculum for the tourism programs in this university used to be designed mainly by the Dean of the Faculty of Tourism but was then taken on by the academic board of the faculty at the time of this research. There were some baseline criteria for the curriculum designers to generate ideas for which subjects should be included or excluded from the training framework.

According to La, subject selection in the curriculum was based on related curricula in other institutions in developed countries. Due to their affiliations with other institutions in several countries such as France, the faculty was expected to raise their quality of training to the same level as their partners and the curriculum should hence be similarly designed. The similarity in the curriculum content meant that the degree issued by this university was now recognised by the affiliated university in France. The Dean gave another explanation for the curriculum which was based on personal experience or recognition of the designers. She explained,

> For instance, the inclusion of Sociology of Tourism in the curriculum is based on the idea that the whole process of creating a tourism product should include the motives and demands of the travellers and tourists. That process cannot only focus on the products themselves, but also on the social factors. Therefore, the subject can give the students deeper insights into their future career and equip them well with relevant knowledge for their success after graduation.

Despite the inclusion of many innovative subjects in the curriculum, the nomination of personnel to deliver such challenging subjects had been managed well, according to the Dean. These new subjects were normally assigned to the full time teachers who had expertise in those related disciplines. The full time lecturers were responsible for approximately sixty per cent of the curriculum and the casual teachers were just in charge of the subjects which
required the transmission of real experience or which were beyond the capacity or expertise of the full time teachers. La gave an example, “Transport System is currently undertaken by a person from the Air France Corporation since there are no teachers in the faculty specialised in airlines, which is the primary means of transport in the tourism industry”.

The Dean explained that the curriculum was reviewed annually from various perspectives: the teachers in charge of the subjects, the faculty academic board, the students through the internship reports or surveys conducted at the end of each semester, input from tourism companies in meetings, and government leaders in the provincial tourism seminars etc.

However, another staff member, Thu, advised that consultation with the companies was not carried out consistently due to the diversity of the stakeholders’ opinions and the restriction of the training framework. Whereas the companies argued strongly that the duration of internships and the amount of time for specialisation subjects should be increased, the faculty could not adjust the curriculum appropriately due to the core requirements of the ministry’s training framework. This restriction could be an explanation for the complaint of a casual teacher, Ky, about the lack of time for teaching tour guiding skills. He insisted, “This subject is one of the key parts of the program. It should be allocated at least seventy periods instead of only thirty periods”.

4.6.4.3 Evaluation of materials and facilities

Because of the curriculum innovation with many subjects unfamiliar to Vietnam, the materials were a real challenge for the faculty and the lecturers responsible for these subjects. There were no available Vietnamese materials for immediate use. The teachers had to spend a lot of time compiling diverse resources from their own knowledge or real experience in the tourism industry to produce the official in-house materials. For the guest teachers, particularly those who were delivering tour guiding skills like Ky, their real-life adventures in tours or encounters with customers from all walks of life were the most authentic and rewarding materials that could be brought into their lessons to portray authentic pictures of the students’ future careers. Another way to solve the problem of lack of materials was to search the Internet or overseas institutions that offered similar subjects in order to obtain resources (Thu). Therefore, the majority of the materials were in English or French. A hindrance to both the lecturers and the students when using materials written in foreign languages was the concepts or technical words which did not have equivalents in Vietnamese. This issue was temporarily solved by “simultaneously using Vietnamese translations and English or French original sources while more feasible solutions are being contemplated” (La).
The university library was organised on an “open model” basis that facilitated the students’ access to its use. There was an open library with shelves which allowed the students to freely visit and choose their own books of interest. All of the students were permitted to use the library free of charge. The students were also able to recommend supplementary materials to the library. They also had opportunities to work part time at the library.

Since 2005, the information development centre of the university had designed a managerial system that uploaded all the library information onto the university website. It also provided computers in the libraries of both campuses to meet students’ requirements. Therefore, students could search for information or materials on the university computers from the department, faculties or any computers with Internet connection. On the library website, readers simply clicked on the "Search List" and selected the topic or title. There they would find the book they needed with specific information on the current status such as the registration number of the book, its position in the library stock, and the loan status.

The library regularly updated its holdings according to requirements at a particular time. The additional material was based primarily on detailed syllabi and readers’ recommendations. In addition, the library regularly received funding from foreign universities, businesses and domestic publishers. The university spent the majority of its budget on equipping the library with documents for the purposes of teaching, researching and learning of teachers and students. The library had approximately 30,828 book titles and 80 types of magazines and journals at the time of this project.

4.6.5 Implementation of WIL

4.6.5.1 On-campus WIL activities

The Management of Tourism and Travel program provided a number of opportunities for the students to have practical learning. There was a one six-day practical tour during the first year, an eleven-day tour in the second year and two internships in tourism companies. For the practical tours which are organised by a travel agency, as Thu described it “The students are accompanied by their lecturers who normally act as their supervisors to give presentations during the tours, observe the students’ practice and assess their performances.” In more detail, students were given a topic randomly selected one month earlier than the tours to prepare and took turns to present during the tours. Students were expected to present what they had learned in their classroom such as knowledge about destinations, tour guiding skills,
health services in tourism and games organisation. This theoretical knowledge combined with the practical experience they gained during these tours would equip the students for their future career as tour guides.

Furthermore, many subjects in the course also integrated practical training with a theoretical framework. One teacher, Thu, explained that she normally organised field trips to relevant destinations. When she was responsible for a particular subject with a requirement for practical training, to ensure the success of the training she did most of the administrative and academic tasks herself, such as making plans, proposing the schedules to the Dean for approval, asking for financial and personnel support, taking the students to the places, lecturing on the spot and marking the reports written by the students after each trip.

The practical training could also be indirectly implemented through the lessons transmitted by guest teachers from the tourism industry such as Ky. With his background as a tour guide and as the leader of a tourism company, he taught theory through his examples of real-life situations, from which the students could imagine solutions to workplace problems they may encounter in their future career. Despite these benefits, the training conducted by amateur teachers was sometimes “too casual”, “unprofessional” and “not appropriate in an educational environment” (Thu). For this reason, the faculty frequently observed new teachers and gave constructive feedback for them to improve their teaching.

The collaboration between the university and tourism companies was strengthened through a variety of joint activities. The faculty frequently invited guest speakers from companies to attend seminars and give talks to the students, sharing their experiences from the tourism industry, ideas about workplace environments and requirements of recruiters from candidates in interviews etc. In addition, tourism firms collaborated with the university by granting scholarships to its students or sponsoring some activities in the faculty.

4.6.5.2 Evaluation of the internships

Students were required to undertake two internships, once in the summer of the second year and another in the third year. The duration of the placements was usually two months minimum. The internships at tourism companies were managed and carried out by the company staff without academic supervision from the faculty. When the students needed help, they would contact the internship coordinator who was in charge of all the necessary paperwork and solving any problems during the practicum. The internship initially involved an induction in which the students were provided with the administration procedures, academic
requirements during and after the internship and the general regulations at the companies that the students must obey. The students then searched for and contacted the companies by themselves. Thu added,

*Their self-motivation in the contact can be an advantage in their results at the end of the placement. Actually, the students encounter no difficulties in finding a host company to admit them for their internships because the companies in the travel sector normally have a high demand for human resources. However, the students’ individual contact with the companies causes disorder and results in discomfort for the companies. It would be better if there were an official arrangement between the university and the companies.*

During their internships the students were required to undertake tasks assigned by their mentors who gave feedback in a sheet provided by the university. The internships seemed to reflect close cooperation between the faculty and the companies. However, the link with the companies was based on personal relationships and the stakeholders’ recognition of mutual benefits. The Dean explained, “*Most companies avoid signing contracts for official affiliation in order not to involve themselves in legal issues in case of unexpected consequences.*”

### 4.6.5.3 Activities to enhance students’ generic skills

This university was well-known as an organisation with strong extra-curricular activities. It had about thirty clubs at the faculty and university level regarding specialist skills, life skills, culture, art, and sports. These clubs normally organised specialised activities and support for the Youth Union and the universities with their programs and events. These included the English club and the Green Pack Back club, which offered voluntary jobs to enhance teamwork, public speaking skills, organisational skills and team game organising skills etc. Some tourism major clubs were also organised into topics to provide the students with more specialised and generic skills such as photography, wine, and table setting. The students themselves took the initiative in making plans for the whole year, and put these plans to the faculty for approval for administrative procedures, finance and implementing the actual activities. Through these activities, both the organisers and the participants formed and developed various skills useful to their lives and for their future careers, including organisation, management, and communication, to name but a few. The purpose of these clubs was for the students to relax after their study time, to make friends, to practise and enhance their skills, to gain more knowledge and to boost their confidence.
4.6.6 Assessment of WIL

Similar to the findings from the previous four institutions, the assessment processes in this case study were only factually described by the lecturers. For the practical tours, the students were assessed based on the following criteria: 40 per cent given to content of the presentation, presenting styles, and problem-solving skills and 60 per cent for the reports written after conducting the practical tour. The internship was evaluated based on the feedback provided by the companies and the internship reports written by the students.

4.6.7 Summary

With innovation in management and training, this university has gained a nation-wide prestigious image despite having the word “people-founded” in its name. The Faculty of Tourism provided qualified lecturing staff with high qualifications and expertise in teaching and researching. Since most of the lecturers held their educational qualifications and had many opportunities to communicate with people from other countries thanks to international seminars or conferences hosted by the Institution, the lecturers had many opportunities to bring international elements into their lessons.

The design and implementation of WIL were given satisfactory attention from the faculty leaders and teaching staff. Being a non-public university, it had the advantage of being able to take the initiative in curriculum design. Therefore, many new subjects such as Management of Recreation Areas and Strategies of Visitor Management were introduced to make the training course more attractive to potential students over similar programs in other universities. However, since some core parts of the curriculum were still under the control of the authorised Ministry, there were still some limitations regarding allocation of time for specialisation subjects and duration of the internship that displeased the participants and some tourism companies.

Being a financially strong university, the materials and facilities were more than adequate. The electronically operated library with a large number of holdings was an impressive feature of this institution. Despite that, the lecturers in several specialisation subjects unfamiliar to the Vietnamese education system were faced with the usual lack of Vietnamese materials. Nevertheless, the insistence on the use of Vietnamese resources indicated that the lecturers were not yet fully aware of internationalising the tourism program. The availability of foreign materials was, in fact, advantageous in providing an international context for the students to learn about other cultures.
The faculty carried out significant university based activities to improve the students’ practical learning such as practical tours, field trips and guest lecturers from tourism companies. Although more practical actions would need to be taken to enhance official cooperation between the university and tourism companies around internships, the faculty was making a commendable attempt to provide the students with varied opportunities to apply the knowledge and skills acquired in the classrooms to the real world.

Some extra-curricular activities from which the students could improve their generic skills were also given prominence in this university.

The assessment of WIL was conducted through similar channels to the previous institutions. Specifically, the practical tours were formally assessed with aggregation of both the presentation skills and written reflective reports.

**4.7 TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTION F: PRIVATE UNIVERSITY IN A METROPOLITAN CITY**

**4.7.1 Introduction**

This university was founded in 2006 as a semi-public institution. This private university was a non-profit and self-funded organisation. Four faculties were subsequently created to offer programs in vocational technical training, Bachelor of Arts or Science and Postgraduate degrees. These were: (i) Polytechnics; (ii) Economics and Commerce; (iii) Science and Technology; and (iv) Languages and Cultural Studies. Of these, the Faculty of Languages and Cultural Studies, established in the academic year 2007-2008, offers an English Language program and three other programs for prospective students interested in pursuing tourism and hospitality related careers, including Tourism-Hotel Management, Tourism and Travel Management, and Restaurant and Food Service Management. Since 2010, these three courses can be taken in either Vietnamese or English. This faculty had approximately 2,000 students at the time of this research.

Prior to the researcher’s arrival at this faculty, she contacted the Dean via email to ask for his consent and support for the conduct of the project in his faculty. She was well received by this faculty leader and his administrative staff who gave her a full list of the eight lecturers in charge of tourism and the English subject of the Travel and Tourism Management program for her to contact. However, she did not receive sufficient interest from the invited participants.
She sent emails to all of the lecturers in the list but just three responded and agreed to participate in the project.

From the information on the website, it was apparent that the Dean had a dynamic and proactive style in his management and communication with the staff and students. He initiated an extra-curricular program aiming to create a forum for direct exchange between the Dean with students in a democratic way so that the students could share their interests, aspirations, concerns and opinions about specific topics and about the Faculty in general. The first five students who registered to join the event each month were invited to participate in this rewarding gathering.

### 4.7.2 Quality of the teaching staff

The faculty consisted of twenty-seven lecturers and staff among whom were seven Doctors, seventeen Masters and three Bachelors in diverse disciplines such as English, French, Linguistics, Hospitality, and Business Management. In particular, three of the teaching staff were foreign lecturers, who all held Doctorate degrees. For this research, four lecturers, including the Dean, agreed to participate. Their profiles are shown in the Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6. Profiles of the Lecturers in Tourism Institution F**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Positions</th>
<th>Educational Qualifications</th>
<th>Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Working Experience in Tourism Industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>Dean, EFL Lecturer</td>
<td>BA in English Studies; MA, PhD in Linguistics in the USA under a Fulbright scholarship</td>
<td>1998-2002: EFL lecturer Since 2011: Full time lecturer 2011-2012: Director of General Education program Since 2012: Dean of the Faculty</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thang</td>
<td>Tourism Lecturer</td>
<td>MBA</td>
<td>2009-2011: Full time lecturer for another university Since 2011: Full time lecturer</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu</td>
<td>Tourism lecturer</td>
<td>MA in Advertising and Marketing in Australia</td>
<td>Since 2010: full time lecturer</td>
<td>Working for an export import company in Australia for several years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chan</td>
<td>Tourism Lecturer</td>
<td>BA in Tour Guiding; MA in Tourism Studies</td>
<td>Since 2011: Full time lecturer</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The teaching staff profiles demonstrate that the faculty was made up of several credentialed lecturers. In particular, the lecturers were still young and had the potential to upgrade their qualifications further.

The majority of the economics and tourism lecturers in the faculty were able to use English to teach satisfactorily because most had obtained their qualifications in foreign countries or in transnational postgraduate programs. The lecturers’ research skills were also highly valued in this faculty. The Department of Scientific Research was established in 2011 to support and coordinate research activities among faculties, lecturers and students. From the university website, dozens of domestic and international professional conferences were organised in the university, addressing a large range of topics for the university faculties, staff, students, and the community.

Despite the strengths of the faculty in the development of the quality of its staff, the unreasonable distribution of tasks among the lecturers signified a lack of teaching staff that might affect the quality of teaching. One lecturer was normally assigned to teach various subjects which might or might not be related to their academic expertise. For example, at the time of this research, Tu was in charge of four subjects, namely Sales, Marketing, Event Organisation, and Negotiations in Tourism, and Chan was responsible for Design and Operating, Advertising, Tour Guiding Skills, Tourism Geography, Travel Management and Resort Management, the last of which was out of his area of specialisation. The allocation of multiple tasks was problematic for the lecturers, especially in terms of the time required for preparation. However, from a more positive angle, this challenge broadened their range of knowledge and skills.

4.7.3 Quality of students and admission issues

In contrast to the other training institutions, this private university openly publicises its program structures, staff profiles and research activities on its website. Such information was regarded as the intellectual property of some tourism training providers while it was openly advertised in this university in three languages: Vietnamese, English and French. Although only the basic information is translated, the foreign language versions differentiate the quality of this university from its counterparts.

Navigating the website uncovered some interesting information such as the tuition fees that the university charges. The 2013 school year tuition fee for the Management of Services, Travel and Tourism program taught in Vietnamese ranged from VND 3,500,000 (US$175) to
VND 3,800,000 (US$190) per month. From the third year onwards, the students in this program were educated entirely in English and the tuition fees ranged from 4,100,000 VND (US$205) to 4,300,000 VND (US$215) per month for the ten-month academic year. The fees covered the cost of learning materials, school expenses and English classes to help graduates achieve the outcomes equivalent to IELTS 5.0 or higher. In comparison with the tuition fees of a student in a government university, this amount was about eight times as much. Compared with other private universities in Vietnam, this university charged the highest fees. This indicated that the students who enrolled in this program normally originated from wealthy families. Furthermore, this university seemed to be the only university that offered the programs in which English was the main medium of instruction at the time of this research.

The Management of Services, Tourism and Travel program in this university required the applicants to undertake an entrance examination with three main subjects in either Group A (Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry); Group A1 (Mathematics, Physics, English); Group D1 (Mathematics, Literature, English); or Group D3 (Mathematics, Literature, French). The mark to gain entry into this program in 2013 was 14 for A and A1, and 15 for D1 and D3 (out of 30). These grades indicated that this program only expected students of an average academic level.

4.7.4 Design of WIL

As mentioned earlier, all the information that a prospective student required was available on the university website. For the Management of Services, Tourism and Travel program, readers were provided with an overview of the program, reasons for choosing it, employment opportunities after graduation, tuition fees and financial support, program outcomes, program content and the qualification granted to the graduate.

4.7.4.1 Outcomes of the Tourism Management Program

According to the website, graduates would be equipped with the practical skills and essential professional knowledge required to assume responsibilities in managerial positions in the fields of tourism such as travel agencies, hotels and restaurants. Different from the previous institutions, this university explicitly highlighted the features of internationalisation through its outcomes. It mainly focused on providing the graduates with skills and attributes to work in an international environment. Specifically, it claimed to equip the students with:
• Ability to communicate effectively, attract and negotiate with culturally diverse customers;
• Ability to work independently, in teamwork and adapt easily to a rapidly changing work environment;
• Ability to apply basic laws and principles of safety, security and customer service in accordance with the regulations and procedures of the government, business and international standards;
• Foreign language proficiency in daily communication and in professional fields;
• Ability to further their study abroad or pursue an international training program in Vietnam.

The website also acknowledged some strengths of the program compared to other training institutions such as:

• Focus on English language proficiency,
• Understanding of tertiary study strategies, media communication skills, research strategies, critical thinking, computing skills and project management,
• Delivery in English (except for some particular subjects such as philosophy and political economics),
• Choice of second foreign language such as Chinese, French or Japanese,
• Eight-week observational internship,
• Fifteen-week graduation internship and graduation thesis.
• Opportunities to study in France for one year (in the third year) with fees equivalent to studying in Vietnam. After completing the second year, the students would have the opportunity to learn French for one year in a student exchange program with a French University. Then the students would return to Vietnam to complete their university program. Upon graduation, they would receive two Bachelor degrees.
• After graduation, students were able to work in the field of tourism, culture, amusement parks and entertainment at home and abroad, and travel companies in positions in: accommodation, catering services, marketing, administration, event organising, tour guiding, design and tour sales etc.
4.7.4.2 Curriculum design

The curriculum of the Tourism Management program of this institution was meticulously designed in both English and Vietnamese. Each subject in this curriculum had its outcomes. This was a distinguishing feature in comparison with the curricula of the previous programs.

The program had a duration of four years with a delivery of 142 credits (excluding Physical Education and Military Service Education). The curriculum allowed students to choose from different streams in the last two years of their studies: Tourism and Travel majors could specialise in Transportation (Airlines and Cruises) and Heritage and Tour Guiding; Hospitality majors could follow Hotel, Food and Beverage Management; Restaurant majors could select either Culinary Arts or Restaurant Management.

According to Long, the curricula of the tourism programs were designed internally based on the curricula of similar programs offered by institutions in other countries. Additionally, prior to the curriculum design, the faculty surveyed several tourism companies on their expectations of graduates to tailor the program contents to their needs. The courses were then approved by the academic board of the university before being put into practice. In the future, there would be official reviews of the curricula with the contribution of invited foreign experts.

From the lecturers’ perspectives, the curriculum of the Travel and Tourism program was formulated logically. In Tu’s opinion, the constituent subjects were adequate with the allocation of forty-five periods for each. However, from Chan’s point of view, practice and theory were not properly balanced; the former was outweighed by the latter. He explained in detail,

In particular, the time for practical tours is rather limited, due to the credit-based system which gives the students the dilemma of either choosing to go on the tours in tour guiding skills or to attend the classes of other subjects that they have simultaneously enrolled in. Therefore, the tours have been designed with less time than they should last.

4.7.4.3 Evaluation of materials and facilities

All of the lecturers complained that there was a shortage of materials for tourism specialisation written by Vietnamese authors. Therefore, the lecturers had to compile various resources, especially with reference to the materials from overseas institutions or from pioneers in
tourism training. However, for the subjects which were new to the Vietnamese tertiary education such as Heritage, Advertising, and Restaurant and Hotel Brand Names, the documents in these areas were almost all in English or other foreign languages. The use of such foreign materials was somewhat disadvantageous to both the lecturers and the students according to Chan and Thang. Chan explained the drawbacks as follows,

The knowledge that foreign authors convey in these materials are not completely suitable to the Vietnamese context because the way foreign people deal with tourism issues such as advertising and serving customers in their tourist destinations is different from what Vietnamese people normally do. As a consequence, some knowledge is even beyond the lecturers’ understanding and impossible to transmit to the students.

Thang added, “The language barrier in these materials may cause misunderstanding and hinder the students from grasping the full ideas of the authors”. One solution was to summarise the key points from the foreign books, then combine them with the ideas taken from Vietnamese materials together with the lecturers’ real experience to produce in-house materials.

According to the university website updated in August 2013, the library contained more than 17,000 book titles, including over 8,000 electronic copies, approximately 200 CD-ROMs of all kinds, 30 journals and 32 magazines in many different fields such as business administration, financial administration, accounting, finance, information technology, foreign languages, tourism and in many different languages such as Vietnamese, English, French. Moreover, the library had a great number of course books to serve the specialised fields of training in the university. Each campus housed a library with computers with free access to the Internet so that the students could search for the material for their study. Step by step, the library would be changed into an electronic library. To provide the faculty with good resources for teaching and reference, and to develop a collection of quality books in the library, the university allowed lecturers to recommend specialised books or study materials necessary for the subjects they were teaching to supplement the library holdings. With such support and investment on the part of the university, the shortage of Vietnamese materials for specialised subjects discussed earlier should be soon resolved.
4.7.5 Implementation of WIL

Work-integrated learning was enhanced in the activities in the classroom or at faculty level and in the workplace at tourism companies.

4.7.5.1 On-campus WIL activities

From the description of the lecturers, the students were required to participate in classroom activities that simulated real working environments. Tu gave an example of his subject Event Organisation: the students were asked to organise events in their classroom and receive his feedback for improvement. Likewise, Chan said, “The students are able to learn from practice by watching related video clips that the lecturers made themselves or collected from various sources”. Furthermore, the students were taken on field trips to observe experienced staff in tourism companies and subsequently write reports.

During the program, the students were also required to do two large projects. The first one included activities for data collection such as conducting surveys on psychological aspects of the tourists, interviewing tourists at heritage destinations or in home stays etc. The second project was done in the third year. The students went into companies, or organised an event or a program on topics of their choice. At the time of the researcher’s visit, the faculty was organising some large events for travel, restaurant and hospitality majors. Thang described one of the events as follows,

The students are both the organisers and competitors. In the role of an organiser, they have to ask for sponsorship, organise activities, prepare questions related to tourism knowledge and skills etc. The participants are also the students of the faculty and guest students from other universities. The competition is conducted in three rounds and lasts from three to six months. Activities like these are effective and fun for the students to improve their knowledge and skills related to their majors.

Another activity that helped the students to learn from real-life experience was the talks or lectures delivered by the staff members or managers of tourism organisations. However, Long explained one disadvantage of this,

The invitation of casual lecturers who are experienced in the tourism industry is not frequent because they are occupied with their company duties and unable to
commit to the teaching role for a period of at least ten weeks. Moreover, those who can manage their time and are well experienced do not always have relevant qualifications.

4.7.5.2 Evaluation of the internship

In addition to the projects, the students were required to undergo their internships in two stages. The first phase was implemented in the first or second year of the program and called observational internship which required the students to work in a company for about one month. The purpose of this practice, according to Long, is “to help the students observe and build up their rudimentary knowledge about life in the workplace”. The second internship called graduation internship was conducted in the final year. This internship was one of three options for graduation. The students could either register to do an internship or write a minor thesis or undertake three elective subjects. The internship lasted approximately three months in a company and required the students to acquire and perform their specialised skills. The companies were considered “cooperative” in assigning tasks to the students, according to Long. However, Chan clarified, “it also depends on the students and the activities of each company as to whether the tasks are relevant to the majors of the interns or not”. The students were given an internship outline, which listed all content that the interns had to complete while undertaking the work-based activities. According to the internship regulation, lecturers were assigned to visit the interns during the internship at their workplace to check how the internship was being undertaken.

Both of these internships required support from the companies, so the university and the lecturers took the initiative of building relationships with organisations in the tourism industry. The university established relationships with its partners in the local city and nearby surroundings as well as expanding cooperation with some tourist attractions in remote areas such as Da Nang and Hoi An. The partnership had also been expanded to several countries in the South East Asian region such as Thailand, Singapore and Cambodia. Similarly, Chan believed that the lecturers were committed to making contacts and maintaining relationships with the partner companies, while trying to understand more about their demands in order to be able to satisfy them and seek employment opportunities for the students.

4.7.5.3 Activities to enhance students’ generic skills

Generic skills were enhanced particularly through both the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. The first and second year students could register to enrol in a General Education
subject for about 45 periods. This was an elective subject that provided the students with general knowledge and skills such as Communication Skills, Study Skills, Research Methods, Effective Use of Vietnamese etc. In particular, applying the training model of the U.S. credit system, the Skills and General Education discipline aimed to provide students with:

- General and fundamental knowledge such as environmental awareness, artistic appreciation etc.
- Core competencies to develop oneself and one’s career (e.g. the ability to pursue lifelong learning, critical and independent thinking).
- Essential work and life skills (e.g. communication skills, intercultural communication).

The students also undertook a compulsory subject called Negotiation and Discussion which provided them with the necessary business skills for their future career. The students could acquire these skills through role-plays in simulated working environments and through their real daily encounters. Similarly, there was an integration of generic skills in each major subject. The students could improve their speaking skills through presentations, writing skills through report writing, or problem solving through situations in the classroom etc. Moreover, they could develop their soft skills through competitions or clubs at the faculty or university levels.

4.7.6 Assessment of WIL

The internship was assessed via a feedback form which required the internship mentor to comment. The students had to write their daily activities in internship diaries for reporting to the faculty on completion. In order to avoid plagiarism in some reports, the faculty had formed a club to enhance academic quality in the faculty by administering serious punishments to offenders such as suspension or expulsion. They also installed some software to scan the reports and eliminate any that are similar. Furthermore, through the students’ oral defence of their reports, Long asserted that the examiners could recognise whether the internships had actually been done or not. According to the internship regulations, the results consisted of three components:

- marks given by the workplace: 20% to 30%
- marks for internship reports: 30%
- marks for oral defence: 40% to 50%

The students who achieved less than 50 per cent needed to retake the internship. As Long commented, these requirements were to guarantee the actual results of the internship.
4.7.7 Summary

Similarly to the previous non-public university, this institution reflected the strengths of a money-oriented education system. With the high tuition fees received, this university was able to invest sufficiently in quality teaching and learning.

Institution F was particularly outstanding in integrating the internationalisation elements into the tourism program. The high qualified lecturing staff from multicultural backgrounds and in particular being bilingual in both Vietnamese and English gave it a significant advantage over state owned and other private tourism training institutions.

Furthermore, this university had an impressive and professional website written in Vietnamese, English and French, intentionally designed for international web-users. In comparison with the other five institutions, this university exhibited almost all the necessary information on its website for potential students. The information about outcomes, curriculum, facilities and training activities was well demonstrated.

The outcomes of the Tourism Management Program would make a good impression on any one who supports the idea of internationalisation of tourism education. The program was particularly designed to create graduates for an international working environment with all the necessary attributes. The elaborate WIL design and implementation demonstrated that the university had good reason to advertise those attributes on its website.

An innovative curriculum which offered English as a medium of instruction for the majority of subjects was another highlight of internationalisation in this university. The faculty was allowed to decide on the design of a large part of the curriculum. Therefore, some new subjects were created based on other curricula of similar programs from universities in other parts of the world together with ideas contributed by tourism companies. The inclusion of those subjects thus pleased the interviewed lecturers, although they were not satisfied with the time allocated for practical subjects.

Unfortunately, when it came to the issue of materials, the lecturers revealed that they somewhat ignored the ultimate aims of internationalising the program when they complained about the shortage of Vietnamese materials for specialisation subjects. The lecturers’ awareness of providing the students with the impetus to read foreign language materials to have more understanding about the cultural perspectives of other countries was more substantial.
The WIL initiatives were well implemented to enhance the students’ practical learning. They were conducted through university-based activities such as classroom activities that simulated real working environments and two large projects that required the students to deal with real world situations. Likewise, cooperative activities with tourism companies were implemented on a regular basis. The observation and graduation internships were reported to be effective and satisfactory due to the arrangement of the university with many tourism companies in the local city and nearby provinces.

Students’ generic skills were particularly emphasised through both the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. A distinguishing feature of this institution was the inclusion of subjects in the training curriculum specifically designed to enhance students’ life skills.

The assessment of WIL was clearly regulated by the university policy and it was commented to maintain the reliable quality of the internship. The results were aggregated with three different components, the feedback from the workplace, the internship report and the oral defence. The method of assessment of WIL in this institution was commendable.

4.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has presented the current situation of WIL initiatives in the six institutions in this study. The main elements that influenced the effectiveness of the WIL processes - the quality of the staff and the quality of students on entry - were presented. The WIL design and implementation were then described based on the data collected from the documents and the interviews with the lecturers. The WIL design focused on the outcomes of the investigated programs, the curriculum design and the materials and facilities that the institutions prepared to facilitate the WIL. The implementation of WIL, entailing on-campus WIL activities, the internships in tourism companies and activities to enhance students’ generic skills was described. Finally, the assessment of WIL was examined.
Chapter 5: WIL Initiatives in the Selected Tourism Training Programs from the Perspectives of Teaching Staff: Case Study Analysis

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter described the current state-of-play of WIL practices and the foreign language teaching and learning in these six institutions based on the findings collected from interviews of the Deans and tourism lecturers. This chapter will present a cross-case analysis based on those results. The particularities from each case will provide a means of exploring similarities and differences among the states of play of WIL in the six tourism training providers from the viewpoints of their teaching staff. The analysis is theme-based with the comparison of the WIL strategies in the public versus the non-public institutions as well as those in the universities vis-à-vis the colleges.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE GOVERNANCE OF THE INSTITUTIONS

In terms of their academic programs, colleges and universities answer to different government ministries. Three-year bachelor programs in vocational colleges are managed by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), while bachelor programs in universities are managed by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET). Different ministries issue different curriculum structures for each program of study, prescribing different objectives, minimum knowledge requirements, structural curriculum components and allocations of time to theory, practice and internship experience. Furthermore, two tourism vocational colleges (Institutions A and B) are under the management of three government authorities. They are directly governed by the Ministry of Cultures, Sports, and Tourism because of their training functions in the area of tourism. As vocational colleges, they are managed by the MOLISA, which strictly controls the content of teaching and learning. In terms of physical location, building sites and actual buildings, they come under the authority of the provincial People’s Committees. The vocational college C, albeit providing similar tourism programs to the two tourism vocational colleges (Institutions A and B), has no relationship with the Ministry of Cultures, Sports, and Tourism. This complexity in state governance of the educational system results in disunity in the design and implementation of WIL initiatives in different types of institutions.
The tourism faculties in this study were only established quite recently, although most of the institutions had existed for over twenty years. All the colleges were upgraded from their predecessor vocational schools only two or three years previously and were still in the developmental stage. The transfer from the previous system required a certain amount of time to be properly set up. The two tourism colleges (Institutions A and B) received a substantial amount of funding from the People’s Committee government for the actual building. They were both being refurbished and enlarged when the researcher visited. Institution E had the oldest tourism faculty in Vietnam. It was also the first non-public university to place an emphasis on tourism training. Therefore, their managerial and academic system was more developed than other institutions. Institution F, despite being more recent, was well developed and had gained a stable position in the tourism training market.

5.3 QUALITY OF THE TEACHING STAFF IN THE SELECTED TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Presented in Table 5.1 is the summary of the number of lecturers in the six tourism faculties in the institutions investigated, and their highest academic qualifications. At the time of the researcher’s visit, the Tourism Faculties of these institutions were staffed by a total of 81 lecturers. Half of the teaching staff had obtained their Masters Degrees, over one-third had Bachelor degrees and approximately 15 per cent held PhDs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Bachelors</th>
<th>Masters</th>
<th>PhDs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Government College</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Government College</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Government College</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Government University</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Non-public University</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Non-public University</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>81</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data show that all of the teaching staff of the six institutions held satisfactory qualifications, according to Vietnamese Education Law which requires lecturers to hold at least a Bachelor degree in a relevant academic discipline and a certificate of teaching. Except for Institution A whose lecturers all held only minimum qualifications required for a lecturing position in the tertiary education system, the others were staffed by lecturers with higher qualifications. The three colleges comprised a total of 31 lecturers, two thirds of whom held minimum qualifications compared with the requirements. Masters degrees were held by only one third of the staff and just one lecturer had achieved her PhD degree. In comparison with the university
lecturers, the number of Masters and PhDs in the colleges was relatively modest. Over half of the university lecturers held Masters degrees and more than one fifth had obtained their PhDs.

Table 5.2 summarises the participating lecturers’ profiles. Across a total of 21 lecturers, almost all (20/21) had earned their highest qualifications in a field related to their teaching areas, less than one third (6/21) had obtained their qualifications overseas or had more than ten years’ teaching experience and less than a half (9/21) had had experience in the tourism industry.

Table 5.2. Qualifications and Experience of Tourism Lecturers Participating in the Study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Highest qualifications in relevant disciplines</th>
<th>Qualifications earned overseas</th>
<th>Teaching experience (more than 10 years)</th>
<th>Experience in tourism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Government College</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Government College</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Government College</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Government University</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Non-public University</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Non-public University</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* until 2012

The lecturers in the government institutions who had gained their academic and professional training overseas were outnumbered by those from the non-public institutions. Financial issues mainly hindered the college lecturers from pursuing study in a foreign country. Compared with the lecturers in the non-public institutions, the government teaching staff was less well off financially due to their lower salaries. They thus hardly had any opportunities to earn qualifications overseas without being subsidised.

The lecturers from the non-public institutions compared favourably with their counterparts in the public sector regarding the level of foreign language proficiency since they had had experience in the particular countries where their qualifications were granted. In Institution F, the lecturers’ proficiency in English was even more important because the university had launched a program in which English was the medium of instruction from 2012. Activities to develop the English proficiency of the staff were implemented. The government lecturers, however, were also made aware of the importance of foreign languages and were self-motivated in upgrading their language proficiency. Specifically, the lecturers in Institution B had degrees
in both the tourism area and in a foreign language. They also claimed to be able to deliver tourism subjects in this foreign language. In Institution C, many of the tourism lecturers had enrolled in a Masters course, which required them to achieve an IELTS score of at least 4.5 to be accepted into the program. Therefore, they could comprehend basic English. In terms of foreign language, lecturers in Institution A were the least proficient and there had been no activities to encourage them to upgrade their learning.

Only one third of the tourism lecturers in the universities had a background in tourism, whilst over half of their college counterparts, particularly from Institutions A and B, had hands-on experience in the tourism industry. Surprisingly, as a vocationally oriented institution, Institution C currently employed no lecturers with tourism working experience. Two non-public universities (Institutions E and F) outweighed the government university (Institution D) in this respect, with nearly 50 per cent of its lecturers having tourism working experience. However, the two Deans of these universities had limited background in this industry.

More than in the colleges, research skills in the universities were better developed where more opportunities and an appropriate environment for their lecturers to do research were offered. National and international conferences and seminars were frequently organised in Institutions D, E, and F. University D published one academic journal quarterly to promote research activities. In Institution F, a department of scientific research had been established to support the research initiatives of its staff and students. In contrast, the colleges were inactive in this area with limited research projects being implemented. One excuse that the lecturers in the college gave for their inability to improve their research skills was their excessive teaching workloads. Due to staff shortages, the current staff in four institutions (Institutions A, B, C, and F) were confronted with heavy teaching loads which exceeded the standard teaching hours per academic years, which normally ranged from 280 to 510 depending on the seniority of the lecturer. The lecturers were assigned to teach various subjects, even those out of their expertise as in Institutions C and F.

All of the institutions exercised policies of professional development. The lecturers were encouraged to upgrade their qualifications. Institutions A and C granted all lecturers who enrolled in a Masters program funding to cover part of the cost. The universities attracted scholarships from outside organisations to ease the burden of finance for their lecturers. Other activities to enhance the quality of the lecturers were peer observation, teaching competitions, academic meetings and feedback from students.
5.4 QUALITY OF STUDENTS AND ADMISSION ISSUES

Compared with the non-public institutions, the government institutions were found to have more advantages. Government institutions attracted students from all financial backgrounds with low tuition fees whilst non-public programs were only affordable to students who are financially better off. In comparison with tuition fees of US$ 25 per month to attend a government institution in 2013, the tuition fees for the two non-public institutions were impossible for a large number of families in Vietnam. Institution E charged between US$ 60 and US$ 95 per month and Institution F charged approximately twice as much as this.

Conversely, there is widespread agreement that graduates from the non-public higher education sector are less academically competent than those from the public higher education sector (Hayden & Khanh, 2010; Hua, 2014). The word “government” in an institution’s name enhances the reputation of an institution. The institutions with the word “private” in their names struggle to assert and maintain their prestige and reputation to appeal to potential students (Hua, 2014). Another disadvantage of the non-public institutions is the quality of their students who generally have lower entrance examination scores and cannot obtain admission to a public sector institution. Compared with the pass rates required to gain entry into the government Institution D in the examination in 2013 (20.5/30), the scores to gain entry into the non-public Institution E and F were much lower (approximately 15/30).

Despite all these advantages, the stronger financial position gives the non-public tertiary schools more opportunities to attract students through advertisements, and investments in quality teaching. The two non-public institutions in this study (Institutions E and F) showed that they had secured a stable position in the educational market thanks to their maintenance of quality and, to some extent, had changed the public prejudice against non-public universities.

Colleges had fewer advantages than universities as they attracted fewer and less able students on entry. The requirements for academic document assessment for the college students were also low. Therefore, with the lower quality of students, colleges faced various obstacles to training and preventing student attrition. The dropout rates in the colleges were higher than those in universities. Some common reasons were academic failure, financial factors, or admission into universities.
5.5 DESIGN OF WIL

This section presents how the WIL processes in the different institutions were designed in terms of outcomes, curricula, materials and facilities.

5.5.1 Claimed outcomes

All six institutions advertised the claimed outcomes for their graduates. Table 5.3 presents the summary of the outcomes of the programs in this study.

Table 5.3. Summary of Outcomes of the Investigated Programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General knowledge about tourism</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist knowledge about tour guiding</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills in tour guiding presentation skills</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial skills in business and tourism</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generic skills</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency in foreign languages</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global perspectives</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 5.3, all of the six institutions promised to equip their students with general knowledge of tourism, generic skills and foreign languages. Three vocational colleges also offered skills in the tour guiding programs. This unity is due to the common training plan approved by the MOLISA applicable to all vocational colleges within the system. University D focused on managerial skills in business in general and in tourism in particular and paid no attention to specialised knowledge and skills in tour guiding. Institutions E and F included graduate outcomes in both specialist knowledge and skills in tour guiding – which are the strengths of vocational colleges – and managerial skills in business and tourism, which university programs in the tourism field normally cover. University F was the only institution that highlighted the global perspectives as one of their outcomes. This specific outcome was embedded in several subjects in the curriculum, namely Customer Services in a Global Environment, Intercultural Communication, Project of Tourist Psychology, and Global Tourist System.

5.5.2 Curriculum design

The curriculum details were publicly available in only three institutions (Institutions C, D and F). The other institutions concealed their curricula and considered them intellectual property.
The researcher had to gain access to these important documents via her personal contacts with the lecturers and staff.

Three colleges and University E applied a fixed semester system (*niên chê*) while universities D and F had transferred to a credit-based system (*tín chỉ*) several years earlier. The main distinctive features of these two systems in terms of curriculum design are summarised in Table 5.4.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Fixed semester system (<em>niên chê</em>)</th>
<th>Credit-based system (<em>tín chỉ</em>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year-based curriculum</td>
<td>Designed based on students’ study time, including time for classroom activities, practice and internship etc.</td>
<td>Designed based on students’ workloads, including classroom activities, practice and internship etc. and particularly, time for self-study and research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students to complete the program by passing all the units allocated in a fixed academic year.</td>
<td>Students to complete the program by accumulating credits in semesters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-study is encouraged but not compulsory.</td>
<td>Self-study is mandatory.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One period lasts 45 minutes.</td>
<td>One period lasts 50 minutes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One credit is equivalent to 15 periods of theoretical delivery, 30-45 periods of practice, experiment, or seminar; 45-90 periods of internship; 45-60 periods of writing, project or capstone minor thesis.</td>
<td>One credit is equivalent to 15 periods of theoretical delivery, 30-45 periods of practice, experiment, or seminar; 45-90 periods of internship; 45-60 periods of writing paper, project or capstone minor thesis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Universities D and F, the credit-based training system had been brought into effect by the time of this research. Although this system had been based on a more logical philosophy, which highlighted the roles of learners, its application to Vietnamese education took some time to be successful with systematic and strategic plans. In the beginning, the two institutions encountered various issues with this reform as the students’ self-study skills were still poor and the lecturers were overloaded due to lack of staff and they were still practising the teacher-centred approach. This system resulted in the students’ lack of deep insight into some particular subjects as they had to study with other majors in the same class. Also problematic was the students’ inability to adapt to the independent learning style (Institution D) and the impossibility of them participating in day-long practical tours due to clashes with other subjects, despite the students’ opportunities to shorten or expand their study time at will (Institution F).

Regarding curriculum design, there was a difference between the colleges and universities. While the colleges strictly followed the training framework administered by the authorised Ministry, the universities were allowed to design a large part of their own training curricula. They could decide on which specialisation subjects to be included in the programs. Therefore, many of the subjects in their curricula were unique to their own institutions, which gave them an
advantage in the highly competitive education market. These institutions included new subjects in their curricula according to the knowledge and experience of their faculty members (Institution E), with reference to the curricula of similar programs in universities in developed countries in the world (Institutions E and F), and in consultation with tourism companies about their expectations of the competency of the graduates (Institution F). University F distinguished itself by offering English as a medium of instruction for the majority of subjects in their curriculum. This institution, albeit encountering a lack of lecturing staff sufficiently competent to teach in English, gave their graduates an obvious advantage over those from other institutions where their English proficiency was a factor for recruitment. Institution F also stood out since they incorporated life skills into the training curriculum such as communication skills, study skills, intercultural communication, and negotiation skills.

The colleges, in contrast, were unable to make significant amendments to the training curricula required by the upper level of management. The design of curricula was actually affected by various factors, including the region or the subjective opinions of the nominated institutions, which might not suit other institutions in other areas. Three vocational colleges encountered these problems when the destinations recommended for practical tours were mainly in northern areas where the curriculum designers are based. Despite being derived from the common training framework, the curricula of the three vocational colleges received contradictory comments from their lecturers in terms of the distribution of theory and practice. Institution A weighed theory against practice which accounted for only one quarter of the curriculum. Conversely, in the curriculum of Institutions B and C, more focus was put on the time allocated for practical activities to enhance specialisation skills than for theoretical delivery. An investigation into the curriculum documents, nonetheless, revealed that more emphasis was placed on the theoretical than practical parts.

Other limitations of the training curricula were addressed by the lecturers in the three colleges: insufficient time for important subjects (Process of Vietnamese History); too much attention given to unnecessary subjects (political subjects like Marxism and Leninism, Philosophy etc., or A General View about Accommodation and Accommodation Services); and content overlap (Process of Vietnamese History versus Vietnamese System of Historic Sites and Scenic Spots, and Travel Skills versus Building Tourism Programs) were other issues mentioned by the lecturers in College A. Some crucial elements tour guiding were excluded from the curriculum such as tourist destinations (Institution B) while some subjects such as Analysis of Trading Activities (Institution C) or Designing Menus (Institution B) were rather redundant in the curricula. The incompetence of some staff in authority and their perfunctory approval of the curricula were to be blamed for the practitioners’ dissatisfaction with the training curricula.
Amendments to unreasonable features in the curriculum were underway but were said to be slow moving.

5.5.3 Evaluation of materials and facilities

The materials and facilities in the universities were better than those in the colleges. Offering services to a larger number of students, libraries in the three universities housed more holdings than the colleges (over 30,000 in institution E, over 25,000 in Institution F, and over 20,000 in Institution D, excluding e-resources). The non-public institutions, in particular, had electronic libraries with a good supply of holdings in different languages and well-equipped amenities. Compared with College A, whose library was neither sufficiently equipped nor effectively used, College B and C had better stocked libraries. Institution C was equipped with a new library with more than 100 reading spaces. Institution B attracted sponsors for library resources from overseas organisations.

Nevertheless, all of the institutions had problems with specialist materials. Even the non-public institutions with large library supplies experienced a shortage of Vietnamese materials since they had introduced many subjects unfamiliar to Vietnamese tertiary education. The lecturers had to compile materials from diverse sources, then translate and create their own in-house materials. They were confronted with another problem of translating terminology which had no Vietnamese equivalent. However, this problem indicated the lecturers’ indifference to exposing the students to authentic contexts of different cultures to improve their global perspectives. The provision of Vietnamese resources, to some extent, discouraged the students from making efforts to understand foreign languages and other cultures in the world.

The colleges mainly depended on materials approved by GDVT, which were reported to contain several mistakes. This authority nominated several institutions to write materials to be used in all colleges within the Vietnamese system, but only materials for some subjects had been completed and the writing was still in progress. Therefore, the three colleges needed to design their own in-house materials autonomously, based on the guidelines required by the authorised ministry. The lecturers in College B were content with their in-house materials, designed according to the guideline of the GDVT with the approval of a panel including academics and people from the tourism industry. In contrast, the lecturers in College A were critical of the professional quality of their internal resources which had been written by people who were not trained as writers. Similarly, the lecturers in Institution C had to write their own in-house materials on the grounds of their dissatisfaction with the materials suggested by the ministry. They argued that the materials written for the Tour Guiding program by the ministry were either
too general because they were written for several majors, or alien to specific features of the Vietnamese context since they were translated from overseas materials. However, the writing of materials was a challenging task due to the lack of reference resources for tourism areas.

All of the institutions were furnished with fixed facilities such as computers, projectors, and microphones. However, the facilities in the government institutions failed to operate satisfactorily sometimes, which had negatively impacted on the quality of teaching in these institutions.

5.6 IMPLEMENTATION OF WIL

The WIL initiatives were implemented through the teaching methods of the lecturers, activities to enhance practical learning within the institutions, internships in tourism companies, as well as activities designed to enhance the students’ generic skills and the assessment processes.

5.6.1 Delivery of Tourism subjects

Despite the shortage of specialist materials, the lecturers in all of the institutions in this study played an active role in not only designing in-house materials for their institutions but also in making full use of existing facilities to apply innovative approaches to deliver lessons. They used lectures to deliver theoretical parts with the aid of technology to show slides or video clips instead of using boards and chalk. Despite their commitment, the lecturers in the government institutions, particularly Institutions A and B, faced a financial predicament since they were not supported financially for making audio-visual teaching aids. This initiative was also time-consuming as the lecturers needed to make clips themselves (Institutions A, B) or subtitle video clips from foreign sources into Vietnamese (Institution C).

To enhance practical learning, lecturers in all institutions applied different methods which will be detailed in the following section.

5.6.2 On-campus WIL activities

Vocational colleges with a more practical than theoretical orientation provided students with more opportunities for specialisation practice, particularly in their Tour Guiding programs. Practical tours were the highlight of these institutions. The students went on approximately five tours ranging from one to ten days or more to various tourist destinations in Vietnam during
their three years of study. They took turns playing the roles of tour guides leading their peers to real destinations. These tours were mainly managed by the tourism lecturers. Experienced tour guides were sometimes invited to accompany the students to simulate real tours. The tourism program in Institution E, with its emphasis on providing the students with tour guiding skills and knowledge, encompassed two practical tours in the first and second year as practical training activities.

Situations simulated from a real work environment were a common classroom technique used by the lecturers in most institutions to give their students practical learning opportunities. Students were required to do role-plays and solve problems through scenarios. Interestingly, Institution F launched large projects that required its students to deal with real world situations by conducting surveys and interviewing tourists (Project 1), and participating in activities organised by a particular company (Project 2). It also had competitions organised as large events to encourage the participation of students in tourism majors to gain more real world experience, which was a distinguishing feature of this institution.

Other activities to enhance practical learning were organised in all of the six institutions. Guest speakers who worked as managers or staff in tourism companies were invited to give talks with the lecturers and students to share information about the tourism industry and the expectations of future employers. Tourism experts were also invited for consultation and feedback on the curriculum design in Institutions D, E and F.

Field trips were sometimes conducted in Institutions C, E and F to places relevant to the content of a particular subject. In Institutions C and E they were planned, organised and conducted by the lecturers of the relevant subject, whose willingness and commitment determined the success of these field trips. Institution F included field trips as mandatory components of the curriculum.

Cooperation with casual lecturers working in the tourism industry was another strategy that all of the institutions employed to enhance practical learning. Experienced tour guides accompanying a practical tour were considered guest lecturers. In Institution E, an experienced tour guide took charge of teaching Tour Guiding Specialisation Skills and he reported spicing up monotonous theoretical lessons with authentic examples through his real life experience as a tour guide. However, while the free style of guest lecturers might not be appropriate in an academic environment, their cooperation was an essential factor in connecting the students with real life. In spite of their importance however, people working full time in the tourism sector often have very busy schedules, so it was not easy to cooperate with them, according to the lecturers in Institution F.
The lack of practical rooms with necessary devices to simulate travel agencies for the tourism programs hindered the effectiveness of practical learning in Institutions A, C and D. The lack of such a simulated room caused annoyance to both the lecturers and the learners as they were obliged to waste time arranging the classroom for practice and cleaning it up for other classes to use afterwards.

5.6.3 Evaluation of the internships

The students were chiefly responsible for obtaining admission to tourism companies as interns. In case of failure, they would be recommended a host organisation for their internship. The three universities took more practical action than the three colleges in providing placement opportunities for their students in tourism companies with which they were connected. Notices of potential internship opportunities were uploaded on their websites for their students to apply for an interview.

Four of the six institutions (Institutions A, B, C, and E) did not sign official agreements with tourism companies with regard to admitting and supervising interns. These institutions mainly based the internship on the personal relationships of the leaders of faculties or the lecturers. The reason given by the lecturers in Institution E for the companies’ refusal to sign internship contracts mentioned was their reluctance to take any legal responsibility. Institution D was underway for an official partnership with one company to provide internship opportunities for the students. In particular, Institution F was affiliated with an overseas organisation to give their students opportunities to do their placements in a foreign country.

The length of the internships varied. Institution A required the shortest internship (four weeks). Institution B and C demanded a three-month internship. Institution B required their students to have an observation period, but the lecturers expressed doubt about its effectiveness when the actual competency of the students did not match the expectations of companies. Companies assumed that the students were ready for work while they were not yet at this stage. Institution D required 15 weeks for the internship in a company and for writing a minor thesis. Usually, the internship in this institution was divided into different stages. The students in Institution E underwent two internships of at least 2 months each in the second and third summers. In Institution F, the students were required to undertake observations for 6 to 8 weeks and a graduation internship of 15 weeks, which means an internship conducted at the final year before the students graduate. Surprisingly, the graduation internship was only one of three options which the students were allowed to choose for their graduation. The internship regulations of
the three universities could be easily found on their websites, which facilitated the process for the practitioners, including the students, lecturers and involved companies.

The lecturers in the three government institutions (Institutions A, C and D) overtly expressed their dissatisfaction with the quality of the internship when interns were admitted. Some tourism companies hesitated to accept interns with the excuse that they might damage the reputation of the companies due to their lack of required knowledge and skills. Many companies, while admitting the interns, did not give them sufficient support during the internship. The interns were only given menial administrative tasks rather than duties related to their majors. Some interns, on the other hand, were considered full time staff and were not able to complete their minor theses to the institutions’ satisfaction, due to lack of time. The effectiveness of the internship, according to the lecturers of these institutions, was thought to be heavily dependent on the support of the companies. In this sense, institutions almost completely denied their responsibility for any ineffectiveness of the internships.

During the internship, academic supervisors in the non-public institutions took on more responsibilities than those from the state institutions. While the lecturers in the government institutions took on supervising tasks informally, those in the non-public institutions were required to be officially involved. Lecturers in Institutions A and B revealed that they were required to contact interns during the internships but they were neither assigned with supervising tasks nor given any guidelines for doing so. They were also not paid for those duties. Institution D assigned their lecturers to supervise the students doing their minor thesis rather than doing the internship. In Institution E, the students were under the supervision of the internship coordinator for its quality and compliance. In institution F, the roles of the academic supervisors were articulated in the internship regulations. During the internship, lecturers or educational advisors were sent into companies to provide supervision and support.

5.6.4 Activities to enhance students’ generic skills

The importance of the students’ generic skills was taken into consideration in most of the institutions. Although the lecturers in Colleges A and B at first criticised their institutions for not organising clubs or events to enhance students’ generic skills, they then mentioned shortages of staff, finance and also the lack of motivation on the part of the students. These lecturers, however, asserted that they were aware of building the students’ employability attributes through practical tours and classroom activities such as role-play, group work, presentations, and problem solving. These curriculum activities were similar to those organised
in the other institutions. Noise, large class sizes and limited space minimised the effectiveness of those activities, and were experienced by most government institutions.

Extra-curricular activities such as competitions, clubs, fairs, and camping were provided in Institutions C, D, E and F. Institution C organised short courses to train students in life skills, but attendance fees applied. In Institutions E and F, clubs were replete with activities for a variety of majors, including those to enhance social skills and academic skills as well as foreign languages. Commendably, these clubs were mainly planned, organised and conducted by the students themselves. Institution D invited speakers to deliver speeches and organise activities to inspire the students to learn and practise life skills. Institution F incorporated life skills into the training curriculum such as communication skills, study skills, intercultural communication, and negotiation skills.

5.7 ASSESSMENT OF WIL

The assessment process was included in the interviews but the results appeared to be described by the participants objectively rather than subjectively or reflectively. Their factual descriptions of the assessment processes revealed that the lecturers took the traditional forms of testing for granted since they showed no creativity in designing tests. A common form of assessment was the aggregation of scores for attendance, participation, mid-term tests and final tests throughout the whole semester. The main method of testing was content-based or knowledge-based rather than competency-based. To appraise the learners’ theoretical knowledge, the lecturers conducted written tests in two forms: multiple choice questions or essays. The practical knowledge and skills were tested orally. The learners were given a topic to prepare in advance. They then sat the test by presenting the prepared topic before a lecturer and then being interviewed. This form was the most common, except for a creative method used by a lecturer in Institution B. She applied various methods of assessment such as group work projects, presentations, and problem-solving skills through role-plays and organisational skills through designing games for tourists. This form of testing encouraged the creativeness of the learners and aimed to test the learners’ competency rather than rote knowledge that most tests targeted. Institution C applied oral tests for their Tour Guiding program conducted bilingually in Vietnamese and English. This had a positive effect since it encouraged the learners to improve their English proficiency.

The procedures for assessing an internship in the three colleges and Institution E were less complicated than in Institutions D and F. Students in the colleges and University E were required to submit a feedback form completed and signed by the company manager, an
internship journal with signatures of the mentor and an internship report. For the other two universities, similar documents were required. In addition, the students in Institution D were requested to write a minor thesis related to the content of the internship and to undergo an oral defence of their thesis. Institution F also required the interns to have an internship oral defence to ensure the results of the reports were from the actual work of the student.

5.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has presented an overview of how the WIL components in the six institutions were developed. The cumbersome and inconsistent governance of tourism training institutions in Vietnam in general caused difficulties for the design and implementation of WIL in the institutions. The management system in the three colleges was less effective than that in the universities due to their recent upgrading from vocational schools.

The colleges were staffed by less credentialed lecturers in terms of qualifications, but they possessed a team of lecturing staff with more experience in the tourism industry. The lecturers in the non-public institutions had more exposure to foreign cultures than those from public institutions thanks to their more affluent background. Their foreign language proficiency, thus, was at a higher level. The research skills of the lecturers in universities were much more developed than those of their counterparts in the colleges on account of a better research environment and their higher qualifications. All institutions were commendably aware of the necessity of professional development with various institutional and national activities.

Regarding their status in Vietnamese society, government institutions had advantages over their non-public counterparts. With inexpensive tuition fees, the state institutions were affordable to a large number of students from various backgrounds, and hence attracted a greater number of enrolments. Their graduates were considered academically stronger because these institutions could attract students with better academic backgrounds on entry. The non-public institutions on the other hand were financially stronger, so they could invest more to guarantee the quality of their graduates. Universities had an advantage over the colleges due to their higher quality students on entry and their reputation in society.

WIL was mainly embedded in the learning outcomes and the training curricula. Students’ general knowledge about tourism, generic skills and foreign languages were the targets of the tourism programs in all of the six institutions. All institutions, except for Institution D, aimed to provide the learners with specialisation knowledge and skills for tour guiding. Three universities
promised to build up their learners’ managerial skills in business and tourism. Only Institution F placed an emphasis on equipping their students with global perspectives.

Institutions D and F applied the new credit-based system while the other four institutions were still committed to the fixed semester system. Despite the merits of this new system, better planning and preparation were required for this to be successful. The curricula of all of the institutions were based on the common framework issued by their authorised ministry. The colleges had to strictly comply with most of these guidelines while the universities were allowed some modifications. Therefore, the curricula of the colleges still had limitations, including an uneven distribution of theory and practice, content overlap, unsuitable time for important subjects etc., whereas the universities could make amendments to deal with these elements in their curricula.

These materials in the universities were more copious and of superior quality than those in the colleges. However, resources for specialist materials, particularly the Vietnamese ones, were still considered scant. Therefore, the lecturers were required to write in-house materials by compiling various resources and translating foreign materials into Vietnamese. However, the quality of these materials was still questionable.

Activities to implement WIL varied. WIL was embedded in classroom activities with the aid of technology and through simulated situations. Practical tours with tourism lecturers and, in some cases, with experienced tour guides were offered by all the institutions except Institution D. Other activities to enhance practical learning at institutional level included field trips, guest speakers and guest lecturers.

Internships were compulsory in all institutions except Institution F, although this university had comprehensive plans and regulations for this. Students were to contact companies and apply for admission by themselves. Most of the institutions did not sign official agreements with tourism companies for the internship, apart from Institutions D and F. The length of the internships varied from one month to four months. The quality of the internship, therefore, also varied. Institutions A, C, and D blamed the companies for not providing expected mentorship for the interns. The academic supervisors in the non-public institutions were more effective than in the public ones thanks to clear and detailed plans.

Finally, the lecturers in all six institutions gave primarily factual information about their assessment process without expressing a personal opinion. The assessment process for tourism subjects was similar in all institutions, which require both oral and written tests. The assessment
of the internship in Institutions D and F was more complicated than the other four institutions because they required an oral defence of the internship in addition to the written components.
Chapter 6: WIL Initiative in the Selected Tourism Training Programs from the Perspectives of Tourism Companies

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings from the analysis of the interview data gathered from the managers of tourism companies and the internship mentors in these organisations towards the WIL components of tourism programs, in particular the internship. The opinions of the participants will be analysed and discussed to give answers to the fourth research question.

The chapter will begin with the profiles of the participants, which are followed by four sections presenting four main themes: (1) the evaluation of the companies of the tourism programs provided by the tourism training institutions; (2) comments on cooperation with the institutions through on-campus activities and the internship; (3) appraisal of the quality of the interns and recent graduates; and (4) expectation of the companies about the quality of the graduates.

6.2 PROFILES OF HR MANAGERS AND INTERNSHIP MENTORS

A total of thirteen HR managers and five internship mentors participated in this part of the research. The HR managers of the tourism companies were recruited on the recommendation of the interviewed lecturers at the selected tourism training institutions and through the researcher’s personal contacts. All of the contacted managers showed their interest in this study, and some were eager to refer the researcher to their staff responsible for supervising interns. These mentors were also supportive of the study. All of the participants were briefed with the primary purpose of the research in order to assist them in answering the research questions. The profiles of these participants are displayed in Tables 6.1 and 6.2.
### Table 6.1. Profiles of HR Managers and Internship Mentors in Tourism Companies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Educational Qualifications</th>
<th>Working Experience in Tourism</th>
<th>Company Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Bachelor in Tourism Studies</td>
<td>Since 1995</td>
<td>A one-member limited liability company with three branches, established in 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dong</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Bachelor in English Teaching, Tour Guiding</td>
<td>Since 1999</td>
<td>A state-owned company, established in 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thy</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Bachelor in Tour Guiding</td>
<td>Since 2005</td>
<td>A limited liability company established in 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinh</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Bachelor in Tour Guiding</td>
<td>Since 2009</td>
<td>A limited liability company established in 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mai</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Bachelor in Tourism</td>
<td>Since 2008</td>
<td>A joint stock company established in 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khang</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Bachelor in Tourism Business Administration</td>
<td>Since 2001</td>
<td>Very large joint stock company with many branches, nearly 1000 staff, established in 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minh</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Bachelor in Business and Tourism</td>
<td>Since 2000</td>
<td>A member of a corporation with five branches, established in 1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chu</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>MBA, graduating in England</td>
<td>Since 1994</td>
<td>A limited liability company, specializing in biking tours for international tourists, established in 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Du</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>MBA</td>
<td>Since 1990</td>
<td>A joint stock company with three branches in three large cities, established in 1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phu</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Bachelor in Foreign Language; Bachelor in Tour Guiding</td>
<td>Since 2002</td>
<td>A large joint stock company with four branches in four provinces established in 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lan</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Bachelor in Tourism Studies</td>
<td>Since 2000</td>
<td>A limited liability company, established in 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanh</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>MBA</td>
<td>Since 1997</td>
<td>A limited liability company established in 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nam</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Bachelor in Law, Diploma in Tour Guiding</td>
<td>Since 1999</td>
<td>A state-owned tourism company, established in 1975 with five branches in large cities in Vietnam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.2. Profiles of Internship Mentors in Tourism Companies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Educational Qualifications</th>
<th>Working Experience in Tourism</th>
<th>Company Descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phuong</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Bachelor in English and Tour Guiding</td>
<td>Since 2002</td>
<td>A one-member limited liability company with three branches, established in 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phi</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Bachelor in Tourism</td>
<td>Since 2009</td>
<td>Very large joint stock company with many branches, nearly 1000 staff, established in 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>PhD candidate in Economics</td>
<td>Since 2000</td>
<td>A joint stock company with three branches in three large cities, established in 1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hai</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Bachelor in Tourism</td>
<td>Since 2007</td>
<td>A limited liability company established in 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kha</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Bachelor in English Teaching, Business Administration and Tour Guiding (short course)</td>
<td>Since 1999</td>
<td>A joint stock company established in 1989</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3 TOURISM PROGRAMS PROVIDED BY TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

The appraisal of the company managers about the tourism training programs is given in Table 6.3 as below.

Table 6.3. Appraisal by Company Managers of Tourism Training Programs (N=13).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage of Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More theoretical than practical</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>69.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not meeting the demands of companies</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interviewees were united in their opinion regarding the imbalance between the theoretical and practical parts of the tourism training programs, especially in state-owned training institutions. While much attention is paid in terms of time to the theoretical aspects, practical issues seem somewhat neglected. Phi contended that students have to spend too much time studying “general subjects and politics” which only need their comprehension and can be absorbed better if they are given materials for self-study. Other experienced tourism workers thought the teaching of specialised knowledge is too “book-based” and conducted by lecturers with “profound theoretical knowledge but lacking in real world experience”. Since so much
time is invested in theoretical parts, time for practice is reduced. Nam was critical: “With only one practical tour a year, what can the students learn from real life experience?” Chu added,

*With such an educational background, it is hard for students to work well in this demanding industry right after graduation, but after six months or one year’s probationary period they can grasp things quickly owing to their good theoretical foundation.*

However, Du asserted that the outcomes depend on different institutions. Those who have graduated from state universities have very good theoretical knowledge but their practical skills are not as good as those from private universities. Phi agreed with this point, further clarifying that private institutions are financially stronger than the government ones. They can afford to invite guest lecturers with rich experience in the industry and provide their students with many opportunities to be exposed to the real world.

Furthermore, over three quarters (76.9%) of the managers commented that the content of the teaching did not satisfy the companies as some of the necessary knowledge and skills required by the companies are not provided to the students in their courses. Du remarked, “*Theory training is rather good but generic skills, especially communication skills, are still a gap*”. Similarly, Nam maintained,

*Students are not aware that they have to deal with different kinds of tourists. They need to use their problem solving skills to satisfy tourists’ curiosity. So I think tourism schools should include psychology as a core subject in their training program due to its significance. A tour which is successful or not depends much on the tour guides’ ability to understand tourists’ psychology.*

### 6.4 COOPERATION BETWEEN TOURISM COMPANIES AND TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN WIL ACTIVITIES

Only one fifth of the managers (1/5) who were simultaneously casual lecturers for some universities and colleges expressed their satisfaction with the cooperation between tourism training institutions and tourism companies. The rest of the interviewees blamed the institutions for not cooperating with them appropriately and were defensive about their activeness in collaboration with tourism training providers. Minh insisted, “*Schools create their ‘educational products’, so they need to be responsible for their training. They need to be active in*
communicating with tourism companies to cooperate with them for training”. Chu was more detailed in his expectations from the training institutions. He stated,

*I think they should be in constant contact and coordinate closely with enterprises regarding the design of the training programs and the implementation of the training. There should be cooperation and communication between educators with the businesses who will use their ‘products’. In other words, there must be an understanding and a close cooperation between ‘suppliers’ and ‘consumers’. The educators must accept feedback from businesses and improve their training programs around which knowledge about tourist destinations they should provide the students with, what English level their students must achieve or how to combine with travel businesses on every field trip to provide a real experience.*

Contrary to the lukewarm attitude of institutions toward cooperation with companies, twelve out of the thirteen managers expressed their enthusiasm about liaison with educators. Mai asserted, “if the institutions come to discuss cooperation with the company, we are willing to assist”. The specific cooperation that these companies claimed will be investigated in depth in the following sections.

### 6.4.1 On-campus WIL activities

When asked about forms of cooperation with tourism institutions, the participants’ opinions diverged. Only one third of the managers confirmed that they or their staff members participate in teaching some subjects that require real-life knowledge and experience in some institutions. Most of the institutions that invite them for casual lectures are private thanks to their financial strength. However, one manager, Thanh, said that he had to prepare the teaching content and materials himself based on the outline given. He was not allowed to know about the training program of the institutions.

Just two managers said they were invited by one or two institutions to give talks in front of the students and share their experience. However, this activity was only occasional, not on a regular basis. Many other managers advocated this useful activity and maintained that institutions should promote it to enhance the quality of their programs.

Regarding the contribution of companies’ ideas to the institutions' programs such as curricula or materials, the majority of participants shook their heads and shrugged their shoulders. Only a
quarter of the managers were invited to give advice from the companies’ perspectives. The invitation was also “once in a blue moon” and after the consultation, these managers did not know if their ideas were implemented or not. One manager, Dong, after participating in some seminars to evaluate tourism textbooks advised,

_I was invited to judge the textbooks several times. I understood that all textbooks must meet the standards of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism or the General Department of Tourism. But in my opinion, the evaluation of materials was not effective. As usual, the institutions give us their curricula and proposed textbooks before the meeting. Then the program designers would give a presentation about the proposed materials in front of us and other experts to receive their feedback. Actually, most college leaders are ready to listen to and accept those ideas, but nobody knows whether their ideas will be used or not. To connect these programs with businesses and the industry, they should have a forum between businesses and educators to discuss and give good projects and solutions to create a more practical training environment._

One manager concluded, “Although institutions are aware that cooperation with businesses will improve the quality of their programs, the cooperation is still formalistic, especially in government institutions. The implementation is not consistent or constant” (Du).

### 6.4.2 Internships

When asked about the attitude of companies towards internships, the vast majority (12 out of 13) of the managers expressed their support for this rewarding training element by admitting interns every year. The number of interns admitted in the companies depends on their size. A large company with numerous branches and various types of services admits hundreds of interns in different specialisations from different institutions each year. An internship mentor in this type of company, like Tu, had to annually supervise nearly forty interns majoring in tourism business, tourism marketing, product orientation, and human resources. Smaller companies also accepted a number of interns within their capacity. Even a very small company with only several staff like Sinh’s also accepted about ten interns each year.

The interviewees cited numerous reasons for accepting interns. The most popular motive was to assess the suitability of interns for future potential recruitment. This saved the companies’ time advertising for new positions, interviewing candidates and training newly recruited staff etc.
Additionally, the companies gained a number of free workers in a particular period of time, especially at the peak periods. Tu explained, “Accepting interns can save our expenses. They can work as casual workers for us. At least they can come for help with menial administrative tasks at our peak time”. Several companies admitted interns simply because of the close relationship between the companies’ managers and college leaders. Phu, who was also a casual lecturer for some institutions, advised that he accepted interns since he felt the responsibility, indeed the necessity, of helping the institutions and the students with their training.

Holding a different perspective, one company in this study did not accept interns. It seemed that the manager of this company, Minh, was doubtful about the quality of the internship and the attitude of the interns towards this compulsory part of their program. When asked questions related to the internship, he kept sighing and shaking his head. He explained frankly his reasons for not admitting interns,

These interns do not bring any help for our company. We have to spend time training them and saving space in the office for them. Our purpose to accept interns is to prepare a potential source for future staff but after some years training, we cannot recruit any interns. I find it a waste of time.

When the demand for workplace internships was higher than the supply, companies had particular criteria to shortlist interns. The interview data showed a wide range of criteria for choosing interns as summarised in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4. Criteria for Choosing Interns (N=13).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for Choosing Interns</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage of Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interns’ matching specialisation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“First come, first served” basis</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interns’ English proficiency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interns’ generic skills (communication skills, confidence …)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companies’ available tasks for interns</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response (*)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (*) One company refused to take interns.

Most companies just received the interns who had the specialisations that matched the operational areas of the companies. Therefore, those who came to a travel agency to work as a receptionist, a waiter, or a housekeeper etc. were refused outright. Some companies approved interns by following the “first come, first served” rule. The students who presented reference letters from their institutions in advance were normally selected. One company that mainly
served international tourists placed great emphasis on the interns’ English proficiency before approving them, with the aim of employing them after the internship if they had excellent language proficiency. Several companies accepted them depending on their appearance, their tour guiding ability, their communication skills and their personality traits (i.e. outgoing, initiative for challenges etc.). The small companies only accepted interns when they had suitable trips for these students to apply what they had learned with the purpose of making use of them at low cost.

The interview data also showed that there was considerable unanimity amongst the managers and mentors with regard to the effectiveness of the internship, as found in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5. Causes of Ineffectiveness of Internships (N=13)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes of Ineffectiveness of Internships</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage of Total No of Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsuitable scheduling of internships</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsuitable duration of internship</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interns’ lack of commitment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both groups expressed their dissatisfaction about the quality of this kind of workplace learning. Several drawbacks of the practicum were brought up by the managers and mentors. Although almost all companies were willing to accept interns, they encountered numerous difficulties which were mainly caused by the lack of cooperation with the training institutions. Firstly, a number of institutions passed the responsibility of finding a workplace for internships to the students themselves, so they did not send their students to the companies which were the most suitable for the topics of the theses that the students had chosen or fitted the students’ specialisation. Consequently, many companies refused to accept interns due to the incompatibility between the students’ demands and their functions. Therefore, these interns all contacted particularly large companies which had different services and could offer various positions for interns to practise. Du gave an example, expressing concern,

This situation causes lots of difficulties to us when the number of interns outnumbers our capacity. We cannot use all their ability while they cannot learn much from us because too many students are present at the same time. So, most of them come only for statistics or our signatures to write reports and submit to the institutions. This makes the internships ineffective.

The best time to send students to companies for internship was another hindrance to the businesses and the students themselves. Phi complained,
The interns normally start their internship after Tet holiday (in around February to April). This point of time is not the peak period when there are many customers for the students to have more opportunities to practise and for the companies to have a good supply of casual workers to serve customers.

It was obvious that the institutions arranged the internship according to their own plans and ignored the requirement of companies.

The length of the internship also had a direct effect on the training quality. Thanh pointed out that the internship was not effective because the interns had little time to practise administrative work, office work or tour guiding. He said, “with only one month’s internship, they just have enough time to get to know about the tasks and cannot be skilled at them just in a limited period of time”. Phu addressed another weak point of the internship as follows,

The interns have to return to their institutions to write theses after the internship and see their academic supervisors, so they do not have much time to concentrate on the work-based training at the company. Many students after working in the company for several days give an excuse that they have to see their supervisors, learn this or that subject... so they just need the company to approve their feedback forms.

The most concerning issue that the interviewees mentioned as a cause of the limitation of internships was the interns’ attitudes toward their learning opportunities at the companies. As a mentor of a large number of interns each year, Tu was very critical of this problem, stating how,

About sixty per cent of the interns come to the company not for learning, but for presence, paperwork and statistics to write reports to submit to the institutions as required. Their internship at the company is only formalistic. We only manage their attendance and do not provide them with real supervision. This is the fault of the institutions when they just manage the students’ reports and ignore what they actually do at the companies.

However, for the interns eager for actual learning, all of the interviewees claimed that they assigned suitable tasks to them, depending on their specialisations and their actual ability. For large companies with many departments with various positions like Tu’s company, the interns were reported to be sent to the suitable department and assigned with duties that matched the topics of their theses and their specialisations.
With regards to the mentors’ duties, all of the mentors claimed that they provided the interns with the necessary information about their companies such as company regulations, requirements of a particular position in a department, and some statistics that did not violate the privacy of the companies etc. They were also required to try to understand the quality of the interns through their attitudes towards the company regulations and their performance of the necessary skills and knowledge that the job required. The summary of the tasks given to the interns is displayed in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6. Tasks Given to Interns (N=18).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks Given to Interns</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage of Total No of Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Menial administrative tasks such as typing, printing,</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>94.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>photocopying etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple tasks such as welcoming guests, carrying guests’</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>luggage, distributing leaflets etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialised tasks such as sales, designing tours, booking,</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contacting tour guides etc. at simple level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following tours to observe</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiding tours</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most common tasks assigned to interns were menial administration tasks such as typing, printing, photocopying, faxing documents, etc. These interns were not allowed to deal with anything related to paperwork because “I am afraid that they will make mistakes” (Hai). They were also given some simple tasks such as welcoming tourists at the airport, carrying tourists’ luggage, helping the elderly to get on or off the company’s shuttles, distributing leaflets to potential customers. They could also join in the company activities such as team building activities. Those who had a good knowledge of their area of specialisation could be assigned tasks suitable for their majors such as sales, designing tours, operating tours, booking, contacting tour guides, checking prices, giving quotes, and preparing documents for coming tours. All of these tasks were normally implemented at a simple level with close supervision. When there were more complicated tasks such as dealing with customers, these interns had to refer the customers to the official staff for consultation. In some companies, they were asked to observe the experienced staff to become familiar with the tasks and then practised themselves under supervision.

For the students whose major was tour guiding, their chances to guide a real tour were quite slim. Approximately half of the mentors revealed that they only allowed the interns to follow a real tour to observe and help with errands during the tour. A typical explanation given by Nam was,
Most of the interns are allowed to accompany our tour guides to observe and help our tour guides with team building activities in order to make a good relationship among tourists, but they are not permitted to hold the microphone to give a presentation in front of the tourists. Our tour guides are not courageous enough to let them present or lead the tour for the sake of the tour’s quality. We are afraid that these interns cannot take charge of the tour well.

Some large companies did not even allow interns to follow a tour to observe, giving the excuse that they had to seek permission from the tourists, and they had to prepare carefully with the tour guides before allowing them to accompany the tours. Some other companies gave the interns a chance to follow only short day tours.

Only one company in this study offered opportunities to interns to guide a real tour. However, the mentors had to prepare the interns carefully and supervise them strictly. Phuong, the mentor, advised,

*I allow them to accompany me. If they know anything, I will support them to present through a microphone. If they do not know, they can sit, listen and take notes. After the tour, they have to write a report. During their presentation, if I realise they have not performed well, I will correct them. For example, how to hold a microphone at the right position, how to have a correct standing posture and how to use their body language when presenting in front of tourists. I guide them in every single detail. The interns take turns to join my tours. They also have to go to the travel office every day to practise how to welcome clients or how to sell tours. These skills can support them a lot when they lead a real tour.*

As the manager of this company, Thu also supported the interns accompanying the tours and also oversaw the supervision of interns. She stated,

*In the placement, we instruct the interns carefully such as arranging their work desk, giving consultation to clients and observing tour organisation. In my opinion, the college trains them carefully in appearance, regulations and with general tourism knowledge, but the interns lack many professional skills. You know, a tour guide is like a teacher when guiding tourists to a strange place and telling them everything about that place. A tour guide is also a servant to the tourists taking care of them for their meals and when they sleep.*
With regard to the support of the institutions for the internship, these tourism managers were highly critical as illustrated in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7. The Preparation of the Tourism Training Institutions before the Internship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Preparation of the Tourism Training Institutions before the Internship</th>
<th>Response pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Well Prepared</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well Prepared</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So-So</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorly Prepared</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Poorly Prepared</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nearly two thirds of the interviewees (66.7%) appraised the preparation of the internship as “poorly prepared” or “very poorly prepared”. They believed that the lack of liaison between the companies and institutions led to a difficult induction and beginnings for the students. The institutions were criticised for not providing proper orientation about the companies. Many students, therefore, contacted the wrong companies for their internships as Phi revealed,

Many students choose companies for their placements due to the reputations of those organisations without equipping themselves with sufficient information about them. Although our company has provided all the institutions in this province with our information, the institutions do not seem to distribute it to the interns before the internship. When their major does not match the companies’ functions, they are obviously rejected. It is a waste of time for them and for the companies.

The interview data also indicated that there had been no official arrangements between the training institutions and the businesses regarding this type of work-based learning. Before the internship, the institutions merely issued a reference letter and a feedback form for the companies’ certification which the students themselves were to present to the companies when they contacted them for their internship. Some institutions gave an outline and their requirements for the mentors to assess students. Therefore, companies did not have a list of expected incoming interns to prepare suitable positions for them. This disorganisation influenced both the activities of the companies and the effectiveness of the internship. It also reflected the lack of responsibility of the institutions towards their own students. Some institutions arranged a lecturer to take the interns to the companies to communicate about the internship. However, the number of institutions like these was limited. A few institutions had official contact with the companies through the personal relationship of their leaders with the
company managers. Therefore, before each internship, the leaders phoned the companies and notified them about the number of incoming interns and asked for the company’s support. One typical procedure was as follows,

Students just give me their college’s reference letters when I approve them for internship at our companies. Accepting interns is part of our usual work every year. Therefore, we already know the exact period of time when students come to our place for internship. We collaborate with institutions depending on our relationship. There has been a conversation between us about our capacity to take interns and the requirements of institutions. Then, students just need a reference letter when they see us. However, there is no commitment between us and their institutions regarding this kind of training. (Dong)

When asked about the support of the institutions during the internship, all of the interviewees expressed their disappointment. Once the interns were admitted into the companies, the institutions gave no further support for the interns or the companies. They even neglected the role of academic supervisors and never contacted the companies to check up on the performance of their students. A few lecturers contacted the companies to inquire about the students’ attendance or performance just because of their personal relationship with the students. All of the activities of the interns were only managed by the companies. Consequently, the institutions neither controlled the actual doings of the interns nor ensured the effectiveness of the internship.

One of the managers voiced his expectation of the institutions to make the internship more effective as follows,

Institutions should make a detailed plan about where to send their students for an internship, contact the companies to inform them of the quantity of incoming interns and provide the companies with a clear outline of an internship such as how many hours for an internship, what activities the interns must perform, etc. During the internship, they should communicate directly with the companies to supervise the activities of the interns to reduce the chance that the interns just come for signatures. (Minh)

Regarding the requirements of assessing interns given by institutions, the interviewees expressed a neutral attitude. The most common form of assessment of the internship was through the feedback sheets, the internship journals and the internship reports for which templates were provided to the companies by the institutions. Normally after the period working
for the companies as interns, the students needed to write a journal about their daily activities and asked the companies for certification. They also had to write a report about the companies and the internship with feedback from their mentors and submitted these documents back to their institutions for marking. Some institutions gave very simple feedback forms, so if the companies were enthusiastic, they required the interns to take some extra steps to be assessed. For example, according to Nam, every intern had to submit a report to him after each tour that he or she had followed. A few companies had a clear procedure to assess interns. For instance, according to Dong, his company assigned staff to work as internship supervisors and reported on the interns to the manager every week. The mentors were asked to watch and assess the interns based on the company’s regulations such as punctuality or wearing uniforms because they treated them like regular employees. The manager also set up the company’s own assessment standards for the mentors to assess the interns.

One manager, Minh, disagreed with the procedure of assessing interns generated by the institutions. He insisted,

*Companies themselves should be the assessors of all the performance of the interns with regard to their workplace learning. Now, many students are given maximum marks in their theses or internship reports but when they come to work in my company, they do not know how to do things properly.*

Although the interview data revealed some negative views of the managers and mentors about the whole practicum, there were some bright aspects that the internship brought to the interns. Many mentors agreed that if the interns were serious about their learning, many of their skills would be improved. Phi said fifty per cent of the interns developed and improved both specialisation skills and generic skills, particularly their communication skills. Hai admitted that although she did not allow the interns to work directly with customers, the students were able to improve their basic knowledge on sales after their internship through observation. They were also more confident than during their first few days. Sinh also confirmed that his interns improved their confidence. He thought they were also able to improve their teamwork skills after cooperating with other tour guides in tour operating. As a result of one internship, he employed two interns who were working as apprentices for his company and he was very satisfied with them. Having an opportunity to prove their ability with potential employers was another benefit of the internship. However, all of the managers emphasised that only competent interns had any chance of future employment. Thanh said, “in some cases, I hired them as part-time employees in the peak season if they did their internship well.” Phu put more emphasis on the interns’ English proficiency for the chance to be recruited after their internship. He had
employed just two interns to work for him but, tellingly, neither of them was from a tourism institution.

6.5 QUALITY OF INTERNS AND RECENTLY GRADUATED STAFF

The quality of interns and graduates encouraged the most detailed comments from the participants. Their remarks seemed to be more negative than positive. Many of the managers expressed their disappointment when they could not recruit quality candidates for their companies. Phu commented, “about forty per cent of the graduates cannot meet the recruitment criteria of my company”. Similarly, Minh had to seek staff from other companies for the same reason. Dong had spent almost three months looking for suitable workers for his new company but his efforts seemed in vain.

Below were the views of the interviewees about the interns’ and recent graduates’ specialisation knowledge and skills. Generally speaking, the interns and graduates were thought to lack the necessary real world knowledge that the industry needs. According to Kha, when asked about any matters related to the specialisation knowledge that should be taught at school, many interns gave answers which were hesitant and confusing. Phi added,

When the interns in the position of a salesperson were provided with information about the marketplaces, sources of customers, types of tours, destinations, routes, which seasons for local customers, which for international customers etc., they listened with surprise. Therefore, they often contacted potential customers at the wrong time. For example, the first quarter of the year is holiday time for government officers, the second quarter for schools or hospital officers, the third quarter for individual customers and the fourth quarter for people working in the building or agriculture sectors. All of this information the interns seem not to be taught at their colleges or universities.

Thu gave a clear example regarding the quality of interns majoring in tour guiding as follows,

I have approved a lot of interns into my company, and my conclusion is that they just learn very little knowledge of the basic steps in a real tour. The knowledge they learn is not enough for them to operate or even lead a simple tour. In their internship, I myself urge and encourage my experienced tour guide staff to help them with every single step as well as to give them a
chance to practise. They have to learn everything from small tips to administrative skills. For example, what they need to prepare for a tour such as water, tissues, medicine, etc.; what time they need to be present at the travel agency which is at least forty five minutes earlier than the departure time; how to arrange essential tour guides’ belongings from sticking the company’s logo on the bus or preparing the flag of the company etc. to welcome and receive guests. In addition, they must know how to organise tourists on the right bus according to the prepared lists in the case of a large tour, in order of priority such as the elderly, pregnant women, children. All of those steps they have not been taught in their training institutions.

As an experienced manager and lecturer, Khang’s opinion of the tourism students’ quality was, “The four-year degree students have basic knowledge but they are rather rigid and impracticable. The three-year [degree] students are inflexible in the application”. Thy suggested,

The students need to work after school to learn more practical knowledge and gain more experience. In this province, there are many opportunities for the students to work part time, and many chances to be in contact with all types of tourists, particularly international tourists.

In addition to the specialisation knowledge, the interview data demonstrated that the generic skills of the interns and graduates also needed to be improved. Many of the soft skills were mentioned as important skills in this industry that the interns lacked. Firstly, almost all of the participants found the students were devoid of communication skills. The interns were not only weak at dealing with customers, but they were also poor at working with their mentors or colleagues. Their communication skills were reflected through their writing skills as well. According to Lan, one graduate of hers could not write emails to customers properly during their first working days. Kha complained that she had to correct many mistakes in expression that the interns made when they created brochures or quotes. Secondly, recent graduates were weak at problem solving. Minh gave a typical example,

I still remember a tour with a group of Malaysian tourists. They specially ordered varied menus without beef. But when the restaurant sent menus to a newly recruited tour guide, he did not check. When the tourists complained, he did not know how to solve the problem tactfully to satisfy them. These tourists complained to me and insisted on being compensated.
Similarly, Sinh admitted that he seldom allowed interns or recently graduated staff to answer clients’ questions about tour prices or some confidential issues for fear of losing customers due to the lack of problem solving skills of his staff. Thirdly, their teamwork skills were also problematic. When working in teams, the interns normally passed the majority of duties to the team leader. The division of tasks among team members lacks equality. When it comes to skills in using computers and the Internet, the interns were thought to be good and fast at searching for information but weak at processing information. According to Chu, when asked to design tours, many interns normally searched for information, then cut and pasted it without modifying the details to match the situation of the company and meet the demands of the tourists.

The interview data were confirmed by the survey data shown in Table 6.7. In general, the table shows that the managers were not satisfied with the interns’ generic skills since the total mean score of 2.75 is about average. The survey data indicate that the interns’ skills related to dealing with others such as Teamwork and Cooperation (mean = 2.6), Relationship Building (mean = 2.3), Customer Service Orientation (mean = 2.2), Developing Others (mean = 2.1) and Written Communication (mean = 2.4) were assessed as not very good. Similarly, the cognitive skills such as Analytical Thinking or Personal Planning and Organisational Skills have low mean scores of 2.3 and 2.4 respectively. However, some skills related to technology such as Computer Literacy (mean = 3.3), Information Seeking (mean = 3.6) were appraised as relatively good. When answering these questions, Nam humorously added that the interns were even faster than him in ‘Googling’ information.

With regard to the interns’ attitude during their internship, some of the managers and mentors gave positive comments such as “well-mannered”, “obedient” and “disciplined”. The survey data also reflected that their organisational awareness such as understanding the company’s regulations, knowing constraints etc. was comparatively good (mean = 3.4). However, the majority of the interviewees reflected that the interns were too “passive”, “timid”, “lacking in confidence”. The interns’ self-confidence was confirmed by the managers to be low according to the survey data (mean = 2.3). In Thanh’s opinion, “most of the interns do not know what to do. They always wait for me to assign tasks for them”. Another comment was that the interns were not well prepared for their future career. Therefore, they were disillusioned when they actually engaged in the real world of work.
Table 6.8. The HR Managers’ Rating of the Interns’ Different Generic Skills (N=10).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generic skills</th>
<th>Very Good (5)</th>
<th>Good (4)</th>
<th>So-So (3)</th>
<th>Not Very Good (2)</th>
<th>Poor (1)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teamwork and cooperation (fosters group facilitation and management, conflict resolution, motivation of others, creating a good workplace climate)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Flexibility (adaptability, perceptual objectivity, staying objective, resilience, behaviour is contingent on the situation)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Relationship building (networking, establish rapport, use of contacts, concern for stakeholders (e.g., clients))</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Computer literacy (able to operate a number of packages and has information management awareness)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Conceptual thinking (pattern recognition, insight, critical thinking, problem definition, can generate hypotheses, linking)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Technical expertise (job related technical knowledge and skills, depth and breadth, acquires expertise, donates expertise)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Organisational awareness (understands organisation, knows constraints, power and political astuteness, cultural knowledge)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Concern for order, quality and accuracy (monitoring, concern for clarity, reduces uncertainty, keeping track of events and issues)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Impact and influence on others (strategic influence, impression management, showmanship, persuasion, collaborative influence)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Initiative (bias for action, decisiveness, strategic orientation, proactive, seize opportunities, self-motivation, persistence)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Customer service orientation (helping and service orientation, focus on client needs, actively solves client problems)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Developing others (training, developing others, coaching, mentoring, providing support, positive regard)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Directiveness (assertiveness, decisiveness, use of power, taking charge, firmness of standards, group control and discipline)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Team leadership (being in charge, vision, concern for subordinates, builds a sense of group purpose)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Analytical thinking (thinking for self, reasoning, practical intelligence, planning skills, problem analysing, systematic)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Self-control (stamina, resistance to stress, staying calm, high Emotional Quotient, resists temptation, not impulsive, can calm others)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Organisational commitment (align self and others to organisational needs, business-mindedness, self sacrifice)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Ability and willingness to learn (desire and aptitude for learning, learning as a basis for action)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Interpersonal understanding (empathy, listening, sensitivity to others, diagnostic understanding, awareness of others’ feelings)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Self-confidence (strong self-concept, internal locus of control, independence, positive ego strength, decisive, accepts responsibility)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Personal planning and organisational skills (ability to organise self and others, effective time management, organises and completes tasks effectively and efficiently)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Written communication (relevant skills/appropriate use of emails, internal memos, internal and external reports, letters to clients)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Information seeking (problem definition, diagnostic focus, looking deeper, contextual sensitivity)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Achievement orientation (task accomplishment, seeks results, employs innovation, has competitiveness, seeks impact, aims for standards and efficiency)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL MEAN SCORE 2.75

Missing values: 3
Nam explained,

Some interns choose the job because of the high salary and travel opportunities without foreseeing the difficulties and feel discouraged when they are actually engaged in it. They do not make enough effort to cope with the obstacles and fail to meet the demands of our company.

Phu added,

Many interns have vague ideas about their future career. Most graduates do not have a proper vocational orientation. In a class that I teach as a casual lecturer, only several students are keen to work in their specialisation field after graduation.

A number of interns showed their disinterest in the internship. Kha was upset, revealing, “Some students quit their shift without notice. These students also reported to the institution that the company did not assign tasks for them to do.” Chu concluded, “Only thirty per cent of interns really concentrate on every detail. They listen carefully, take notes while being instructed and completed the tasks satisfactorily. The rest do jobs reluctantly”. The majority of the interviewees expressed their discontent with a number of interns who only came for paperwork and attendance, not for actual learning.

6.6 TOURISM COMPANIES’ EXPECTATIONS OF TOURISM GRADUATES

The interview data provided advice on essential knowledge and skills with which tourism training institutions should equip their students to make them stand out in the crowd of candidates for employment. Recruitment in the companies in this project had a number of things in common. Most of the big companies advertised the required positions in the media while the smaller companies based their decision on the recommendation of their acquaintances. Sinh revealed, “I always pay special attention to the graduates who are recommended by some specific teachers with expert ideas about their ability”.

Qualifications and working permits were a basic condition for companies to shortlist candidates. Mai said,

In recruiting tour guides, we need a professional degree in tour guiding and a tour guiding permit. To be eligible to apply as an international tour guide,
candidates must hold an international tour guiding permit, a foreign language certificate and a professional degree.

However, several managers affirmed that the qualifications were not a determining element. The candidates had to go through interviews or tests of their knowledge and skills to be considered for the advertised positions. The companies’ expectations about the candidates’ specialisation knowledge and skills varied depending on the different fields. For travel management, the employers required specialised knowledge such as how to design a tour which suits particular kinds of tourists. Basic requirements for a tour guide were professional tour guiding skills and the geographical and historic knowledge of places of interest.

Almost all companies needed candidates who were well experienced in their specialisation. Thu insisted,

>This industry needs excellent staff with a lot of tour guiding experience. We do not recruit newly graduated candidates since we have to train them with a lot of practical experience. We find that their colleges did not provide them with sufficient practical skills. Sometimes we need to cooperate with local tour guides for training because of their knowledge of the tourist destinations.

Sinh’s viewpoint was similar, “I hire a tour guide based on how much experience and passion they have. With recent graduates, I judge their competence based on the number of trips they have attended as tour guides.” Phuong backed up this opinion with the following information,

>All of the tour guides in our company have at least three or more years’ experience. As you know, recent graduates do not stay long because of the job’s high requirements. We used to employ some newly graduated tour guides but we discovered that we lost customers due to their incompetence. We also needed to retrain them for at least a year before allowing them to guide tours solo.

Generic skills were other criteria that companies required from candidates and their recently graduated staff. The data showed that communicative skills were highly emphasised. Good communication skills, according to two thirds of the managers, were the tact and diplomacy of a tour guide to please the customers and build a good image of the company. Thu illustrated her comment with an example,
Sometimes customers request an illegal pleasure such as eating sea turtle’s eggs. We cannot supply them with such an illegal demand. Nevertheless, we cannot frankly say ‘no’ to them but need to guide their appetite to safe food. This requires much tactful skill of a tour guide.

Furthermore, a tour guide with good communicative skills also needed to be self-controlled and calm in unexpected situations. Dong supported this idea with an example,

In some cases, tour guides probably meet disrespectful clients who insult their knowledge, their human dignity or their appearance. They have to control themselves well or else they will ruin their career and their company’s reputation immediately. They must calm clients down and reassure them in the event of unavoidable accidents such as air crashes, disasters, etc. during the tour. They also need to resist the temptation to take bribes from low quality suppliers that can affect the quality of tours.

Another requirement of a tour guide was the care of order, quality and precision. Phu clarified this expectation,

They must give correct information about tourist spots. For example, when tourists ask about the history of a place that is beyond the knowledge of the tour guides, they should not invent stories but they should give common history or postpone answering them to have time to search for the exact information. Also, tour guides must report to the tour operator the exact information about the services of the company’s partners such as restaurants, hotels, transport etc. to have timely adjustments to avoid complaints and protect the reputation of the company.

Some other skills were mentioned as being important such as persuasion skills, public speaking skills, problem solving skills etc. Personality traits such as being hard working, flexible, active and especially passionate for working as a tour guide were also expected from the graduates.

Finally, foreign language skills were considered to be the determining element that was expected from the majority of managers. Not only international tour guides but also other positions such as sales staff or tour operators needed good English language proficiency to work well in this industry. Sinh said, “For me, English is the basic element for staff recruitment. My staff has to communicate with clients who mostly use English through emails or online tour
transactions.” Therefore, according to Thy, the graduates from foreign language universities with a certificate in tour guiding have an advantage in finding employment over those who graduate from tourism training institutions.

The above-mentioned expectations indicated that the jobs in the tourism industry were challenging and the staff needed to be constantly trained to meet the changing demands of their customers and employers. The companies in this research varied in their professional development. Phu’s company assessed staff through some activities such as multiple-choice tests, team-building activities, and feedback forms collected after each tour to provide further training based on their results. Thy addressed some areas requiring training such as the companies’ regulations, use of the company database, teamwork skills, customer care services, individual image as the symbol of the company etc. Some companies organised staff training courses in sales, tour guiding, marketing, English etc. These classes were normally held in low-peak seasons. Some other companies trained their staff by putting them in teams in which the experienced staff trained the novice ones by giving them tasks to do and asking them to report when they finished. For some small companies, training seemed to be impromptu. It could be done by the manager or supervisors at any time when staff made mistakes. New staff or recent graduates were asked to follow experienced tour guides or staff to observe for some time before they could work independently.

6.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The interview data indicated that overall the companies held a relatively critical perspective towards the elements of WIL in tourism institutions. The programs in general were assessed as more theoretical than practical. They also lacked emphasis on training the students on some knowledge, skills and attributes that the companies required.

The cooperation between training institutions and companies through the internship and other cooperative activities was reflected as a mere formality. With regard to some cooperative activities between the companies and the institutions such as giving talks to share industry experience with students, teaching as casual lecturers and contributing ideas to the design of curricula or materials etc., only a small number of managers confirmed that their staff participated in these activities. The internship, in particular, was thought to be mostly ineffective due to the lack of detailed preparation, timely support or sound management from the institutions, although the majority of the companies declared that they were willing to assist with this professional learning by annually accepting the interns to do their work placement in their companies. The preparation was mainly appraised as poor since there had been no official
arrangement between the companies and the institutions. During the internship, the institutions passed all the responsibilities to the companies and the students themselves without supervision or support. Therefore, they could not ensure the internship was of quality.

The institutions then were blamed for creating graduates without work readiness as required by the industry. The interns’ and graduates’ specialisation knowledge and skills were commented to be at a basic level only and the recently graduated staff needed to be trained further by the companies to satisfy the industry requirements. Some generic skills such as communication, teamwork, analytical thinking etc. were also lacking. The interns and graduates were only thought to be good at computing skills and information searching. Nor were their attitudes deemed satisfactory. The interns were evaluated as lacking confidence and being passive, although most were obedient and well disciplined. A small number of interns who had insincere attitudes towards the work-based learning caused disappointment and irritation to the companies. This was this reason why one company insisted on refusing interns.

However, the data revealed that the companies were also responsible for the unsatisfactory quality of graduates. Although they claimed that the majority of companies were willing to admit interns, they did not assign suitable tasks to the interns for their improvement. Despite having a pool of free workers, the companies mostly gave interns trivial tasks and rarely assigned them tasks related to their specialisations with the excuse that these inexperienced workers might destroy their reputation.

Finally, the companies expressed their expectations of tourism graduates to suggest some guidance to institutions for their effective training. In addition to the prerequisite of specialisation knowledge and skills, the generic skills and English proficiency were two indispensable elements for recruitment.
Chapter 7: WIL Initiatives in the Selected Tourism Training Programs from the Perspectives of Students

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The two previous chapters examined the perspectives of academics and tourism companies towards the WIL initiatives in the tourism programs. This chapter presents the views of WIL of the graduates and current students via two research strategies: surveys and interviews, so as to create a triangulation against the other two participating groups. Questionnaires were distributed to fourteen recent graduates and two hundred and sixty six current final year students in the six selected tourism training institutions. The research participants were asked to rate (i) the quality of their lecturers, (ii) the materials and facilities, (iii) the curriculum, (iv) the assessments and (v) the internships on a series of items using a 5-point Likert scale from “strongly agree” (5) to “strongly disagree” (1).

The data for each topic was summarised in tables (Tables 7.1, 7.3, 7.5, 7.7, and 7.10) displaying the percentages for each sub-scale and the mean score calculated on each item for the two groups. An independent samples t-test was then employed to find out whether the difference in the mean scores of the data according to gender and types of institutions (private versus government and colleges versus universities) was statistically significant. Reports of the t-test results will also be presented in Tables 7.2, 7.4, 7.6, 7.8, and 7.11. Since there was no statistically significant difference in the mean scores of any item for males (N = 84) and females (N = 182) (p > .05), the reports of t-test results for gender will not be displayed. Furthermore, the participants were required to give a self-assessment of their generic skills by choosing among twenty-four listed skills the ones that they thought they were equipped with after pursuing the program. A table summarising the data (Table 7.9) will also be presented. The graduates were then invited to join in interviews to clarify their answers given in the questionnaires.

7.2 QUALITY OF LECTURERS

Both recent graduates and current students were asked to evaluate the quality of their lecturers in terms of expertise, commitment and teaching methods. In general, they gave similar results. Table 7.1 details their ratings.
Table 7.1. Students’ Ratings of Quality of Lecturers (N_{RG} = 14; N_{CS} = 266) (in percentages).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Ratings of Quality of Lecturers</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (5)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Not Sure (3)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RG</td>
<td>CS</td>
<td>RG</td>
<td>CS</td>
<td>RG</td>
<td>CS</td>
<td>RG</td>
<td>CS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tourism lecturers were competent in their expertise.</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tourism lecturers were committed to their teaching.</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Their teaching methods were interesting.</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: RG = recent graduates; CS = current students

The survey data show that the participants seemed satisfied with their lecturers overall. Regarding their expertise, the lecturers were appraised as knowledgeable and skilled (mean_{RG} = 4.0 and mean_{CS} = 3.8). However, the interview data revealed that not all the lecturers met the students’ expectations of teaching quality. According to Duyen, a graduate from a public college, her lecturers had graduated from the University of Economics specialising in Business Administration but they taught her Tourism subjects. She added, “I think this was unreasonable because their degrees have nothing to do with my major in tourism. At least, they should have a degree in tourism.” Hong, Quyen, Kha and Di held the same view that their lecturers were book-based rather than industry experienced. Kha complained,

“Our lecturers taught us cursorily. We had to search for the specialisation knowledge ourselves. They only provided us with impractical knowledge that we could not apply to the real tours. They were quite academic and inflexible because they did not have industry experience.”

Phuong suggested, “The lecturers should spend time guiding real tours before engaging themselves in a teaching career. They must have certain industry practical knowledge for the teaching position. If not, they can only teach general knowledge, not tour guiding skills.”

Regarding the lecturers’ commitment to their teaching career, the questionnaire and the interview data were convergent, indicating that both the graduates and current students were content with their lecturers’ dedication to teaching them, with 85.7 per cent and 80.8 per cent expressing agreement respectively.

In terms of the lecturers’ teaching methods, nearly half of the students (42.8% of recent graduates and 44.7% of current students) expressed their satisfaction and the others (42.9% and...
42.1% respectively) expressed a neutral perspective. This divergence of views was also demonstrated in the interview data. Several graduates made positive comments about their lecturers. Huong explained,

*Our lecturers’ teaching method was flexible combining theory and practice well. The lectures especially prioritised the practical parts in their delivery. It is very useful for our tour guiding skills. Some teachers required of us history and geography knowledge to help us deepen our knowledge. I used to be taught by a practical teacher. He required us to write a hand-written report for preventing duplication. That also helps me much when I guide tourists because I can remember clearly every single detail in that report although I struggled with it when I was at school.*

Another graduate also gave her lecturers a complimentary appraisal,

*The teaching method for both specialisation subjects and English subjects were good because our lecturers forced us to search for information and present it in front of the class. This method can improve our independence and presentation skills as well as analytical thinking thanks to open-ended questions that I was asked after my presentations.* (Lien)

On the other hand, many graduates criticised the lectures as “very boring sometimes” (Phi), “dry” (Linh), or “ineffective” (Duyen). Phong said “The lecturers delivered lessons without caring how much students could absorb. It was kind of one-way teaching. There was no interaction between the teachers and the students or the students themselves.” Kha commented that,

*The teaching method was boring in general subjects. For the specialised subjects, the lecturers just showed PowerPoint slides and preached. It was merely theoretical. I just got to know more about the specialisation knowledge when I went to work. Those who did not do part time jobs found it hard to understand the specialisation concepts.*

Whilst the data showed the majority of the students thought their lecturing staff was competent and committed, only half of them were impressed by their teaching methods.
Table 7.2 compares the perspectives of the current students towards the quality of lecturers, and whether the difference in their views was statistically significant, according to whether the students were from universities versus colleges and from public or non-public institutions.

The students from universities (mean = 3.8) were slightly less positive about the lecturers’ competence than those from the colleges (mean = 3.9). This difference was statistically significant (t (264) = -2.079, p < .05). Similarly, the results showed that there was a significant difference in the mean scores for private institutions (mean = 3.7) and public institutions (mean = 3.9) with t (264) = -2.568 and p < .05. This means that the students considered the lecturers from non-public institutions as less academically competent than those from public institutions.

Table 7.2. Reports of Mean Scores and T-test Results for Quality of Lecturers (N= 266).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Ratings of Quality of Lecturers</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Mean scores</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The tourism lecturers were competent in their expertise.</td>
<td>Universities (N= 150)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>-2.079</td>
<td>.039*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges (N=116)</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions (N=116)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>-2.568</td>
<td>.011*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government institutions (N=150)</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tourism lecturers were committed.</td>
<td>Universities (N= 150)</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>-1.745</td>
<td>.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges (N=116)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions (N=116)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>-2.342</td>
<td>.019*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government institutions (N=150)</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Their teaching methods were interesting.</td>
<td>Universities (N= 150)</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges (N=116)</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions (N=116)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.901</td>
<td>.508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government institutions (N=150)</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* < .05

While there was no significant difference in the perspectives of the students from universities and colleges about the commitment of their lecturers, the lecturers from government institutions (mean = 4.1) were considered to be more committed than those from the private ones (mean = 3.8) because the variance in the mean scores was statistically significant (t (264) = -2.342, p < .05).

The teaching methods of the lecturers were rated less favourably (means ranging from 3.3 to 3.5), yet the differences in the mean scores of the two groups in the two categories were not statistically significant (universities versus colleges: t (264) = .016, p > .05; private versus government institutions: t (264) = 1.901, p > .05).
7.3 PROGRAM CURRICULA

The graduates and students’ perceptions of the design of the program curriculum are presented in Table 7.3, addressing the balance between the theoretical and practical parts of the curriculum and the general and specialised knowledge of tourism, as well as the specialised skills that the programs provide. The two groups of participants differed slightly in their ratings.

Table 7.3. Students’ Ratings of Program Curricula (N\textsubscript{RG} = 14; N\textsubscript{CS} = 266) (in percentages).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Ratings of Program Curricula</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (5)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Not Sure (3)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The amount of theoretical and practical parts was balanced.</td>
<td>RG: 7.1 CS: 4.9</td>
<td>RG: 28.6</td>
<td>CS: 49.2</td>
<td>RG: 14.3</td>
<td>CS: 28.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program provided sufficient knowledge about tourism in general.</td>
<td>RG: 7.1 CS: 4.9</td>
<td>RG: 71.4</td>
<td>CS: 70.3</td>
<td>RG: 0.0</td>
<td>CS: 21.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program provided sufficient knowledge about specialisation.</td>
<td>RG: 21.4 CS: 7.1</td>
<td>RG: 42.9</td>
<td>CS: 62.0</td>
<td>RG: 21.4</td>
<td>CS: 26.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program provided sufficient specialisation skills.</td>
<td>RG: 14.3 CS: 10.2</td>
<td>RG: 35.7</td>
<td>CS: 57.9</td>
<td>RG: 21.4</td>
<td>CS: 23.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: RG = recent graduates; CS = current students

The survey data indicated variance in the perspectives of recent graduates and current students in regard to the distribution of theory and practice. About half of the current students (54.1% to be exact) agreed that the theoretical and practical parts were equally distributed, whilst the graduates who expressed disagreement (50%) outnumbered those who exhibited agreement (35.7%). The interview data show that the graduates from vocational colleges seemed more satisfied with the balance of theory and practice than those from the universities, commenting that more attention was paid to the practical parts. Lien showed her satisfaction,

*Because my college is a vocational training college, the program gave more priority to the practical than the theoretical parts. This was one of the most advantageous features that the college could provide me with in this program because tour guiding really needs practice in real tours for experience. Additionally, my lecturers taught us every single detail that was essential for our professional skills. Only finances restricted our chances for practical trips as some students who came from low income families could not afford to*
travel. If they had been sponsored by school or businesses, they could have attended more practical tours.

Another graduate from a vocational college also expressed his supportive attitude towards the curriculum,

*My college is a vocational training college, so we were provided with really practical knowledge relevant to real life situations. There were more practical periods than theoretical ones. We had lessons that required us to present on PowerPoint slides and guide in practical tours.* (Thi)

Interestingly, unlike his peers, one graduate from the same vocational college was dissatisfied with the emphasis on practical lessons. He maintained that “*There was an unreasonable distribution between theoretical and practical periods. We only had two classes of theory compared with ten classes of practice. We actually needed to be equipped with more theoretical knowledge for efficient practical trips*” (Phong).

In contrast, the graduates from universities were displeased with their university curriculum since the practical parts did not receive enough attention. Hai mentioned how,

*The majority of periods were theory, so I think the curriculum lacked a reasonable division of theoretical and practical parts. We had only three practical trips in our course. We were taught many subjects which were useless for the real work such as some political subjects.*

Nghi revealed that he had to attend theoretical classes most of the time in his course and he only had one practical trip in his program.

When asked to appraise whether sufficient knowledge of tourism in general had been provided, the majority of participants expressed their satisfaction (78.5% of recent graduates and 75.2% of current students). Linh gave examples of some subjects that provided her with tourism knowledge in general such as Tourism Geography, Tourism Psychology, Hospitality, Travel Management, and Maths for Tourism etc. She added, “*In general, I am totally satisfied with the knowledge which the college provided*”. On the other hand, 21.4 per cent of the graduates showed their disapproval and 24.8 per cent of the current students were reluctant and doubtful in this regard. These numbers indicated that the level of tourism knowledge needs to be improved to some extent as Hai suggested,
It would be more useful for us if the university program gave us more practical knowledge about tourism. What we have learned is somewhat removed from what we need in our job. Some tourism subjects need to update their information.

Concerning the tourism specialisation knowledge and skills that the tourism programs provided, the current students and the graduates appeared to be rather positive – the mean scores ranged from 3.4 to 3.7. From the interview data, it was obvious that ideas of the graduates from colleges and that of those from the universities varied. Several graduates from vocational colleges were pleased with the knowledge they had obtained. Linh said she owed her tour guiding skills and knowledge to her lecturers since they instructed her carefully, especially the presentation skills. Thi was positive in his comment that “The program prepared me well for my future career and educated me with my essential fundamentals or professional knowledge”.

Phong mentioned some subjects that were useful for his tour guiding job such as Tourism Regulations, Politics, Tourism Marketing etc.

However, one college graduate from Institution C was critical about the knowledge and skills that the program provided although she had previously agreed that the program was more practical than theoretical. She stated,

I preferred practising at tourist spots to practising in our class. You know, there were several limitations such as limited time for presentation, or lack of real experience when we just practised with Power Point slides. During three years, we went to practise at three tourist sites. We took turns to present in front of tourists for only five minutes due to the lack of knowledge. I found the practical tours very useful but they were conducted ineffectively. There was an unbalanced selection of presenters. Some students had more opportunities to be called for presentation than others. Our college invited an experienced tour guide for each field trip, but we could not learn much from them since they repeated the knowledge what we already knew instead of giving what we did not know. (Duyen)

Every graduate from the universities seemed doubtful about the quality of specialisation knowledge. Hai expressed her disappointment,
Because I registered for the wrong specialisation which was Travel Management instead of Tour Guiding when I enrolled in the university program, I had only seventy-five periods about tourist sites in the southern region and thirty periods of tour guiding. I think the program was not effective for tour guiding.

Kha encountered a similar situation, regretting that “the training program did not provide me with specialist knowledge. My major was Tourism, but I had to acquire knowledge from Business and Commerce textbooks in four years”. Another university graduate was satisfied with the subjects that she covered in her course because they provided her with knowledge of the field in which she was interested. However, these subjects merely provided her with very simple professional knowledge instead of enhancing her hospitality related skills.

In short, while the current students were reasonably satisfied with the distribution of theoretical and practical parts in the program, the graduates were more critical. The survey data showed that both groups were relatively favourable towards the provision of general and specific knowledge of tourism as well as the specialisation skills they had gained. The interview data, in contrast, revealed that the college programs provided more specialist knowledge and skills than the university ones.

The perspectives of the current students towards their program curricula were further investigated via an independent sample t-test, the results of which are displayed in Table 7.4.

The university students (mean = 3.3) were significantly less pleased with the distribution of theoretical and practical parts in the curricula than their college counterparts (mean = 3.6), (t (264) = -2.648, p < .01). Similarly, the students from the government institutions (mean = 3.3) were significantly less satisfied with this distribution than the ones from the non-public institutions (mean = 3.5; t (264) = 2.123, p < .05). The results of the question concerning sufficient specialisation skills also revealed significant variance (t (264) = -2.240, p < .05) in the perspectives of the university undergraduates (mean = 3.6) and college students (mean = 3.8). The college curricula seemed to include more specialisation skills than the curricula of universities. The comparison of the perspectives of the students about other issues pertaining to the program curricula revealed no significant differences (p > .05).
### Table 7.4. Report of Mean Scores and T-test Results for Program Curricula (N = 266).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Ratings of Program Curricula</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Mean scores</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The amount of theoretical and practical parts was balanced.</td>
<td>Universities (N= 150)</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>-2.648</td>
<td>.009**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges (N=116)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions (N=116)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government institutions (N=150)</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.123</td>
<td>.035*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program provided sufficient knowledge about tourism in general.</td>
<td>Universities (N= 150)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>-0.928</td>
<td>.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges (N=116)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions (N=116)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>-0.236</td>
<td>.814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government institutions (N=150)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program provided sufficient knowledge about specialisation.</td>
<td>Universities (N= 150)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>.987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges (N=116)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions (N=116)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.639</td>
<td>.102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government institutions (N=150)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program provided sufficient specialisation skills.</td>
<td>Universities (N= 150)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>-2.240</td>
<td>.026*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges (N=116)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions (N=116)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.443</td>
<td>.150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government institutions (N=150)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* < .05; ** < .01

### 7.4 EVALUATION OF MATERIALS AND FACILITIES

Table 7.5 presents the ratings of the materials and facilities. Both groups of participants sang a similar tune in this regard.

### Table 7.5. Students’ Ratings of Materials and Facilities (N<sub>RG</sub> = 14; N<sub>CS</sub> = 266) (in percentages).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Ratings of Materials and Facilities</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (5)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Not Sure (3)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The materials and facilities were sufficient.</td>
<td>RG</td>
<td>CS</td>
<td>RG</td>
<td>CS</td>
<td>RG</td>
<td>CS</td>
<td>RG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: RG = recent graduates; CS = current students

The majority (64.2% of the graduates and 70.7% of current students) agreed that the facilities were sufficient as provided by their institutions, but 35.7 per cent of the graduates were not sure and 9.4 per cent of the students expressed disagreement. The interview data indicated an explanation for this. Huong explained that her institutions only supplied projectors and speakers, while the lecturers or the students themselves had to supply other necessary equipment such as flip charts, laptops, microphones etc. Hong and Quyen revealed that several classrooms were well equipped, while the equipment in others was broken or deficient. Therefore, the lecturers had to teach without microphones and projectors or the whole class had
to move to another classroom. They also complained that they had submitted enquiries to their college to replace the equipment several times but their request was ignored. Thi added, “I am not sure about supporting equipment because there was no equipment for us to give presentation on tour buses.” Nghi confirmed that his university supplied enough learning facilities, but he was doubtful about the materials since dated textbooks published in 1999 or 2000 were still being used. In summary, the equipment and materials, albeit sufficiently equipped, were not actually of satisfactory quality when closer examination into some institutions was conducted.

The materials and facilities in universities and colleges as well as in private and government institutions were then compared via a t-test as shown in Table 7.6. The result shows that there was no significant difference in the perspectives of the students in the universities (mean = 3.7) and the colleges (mean = 3.6) since $t$ (264) was 1.008 and $p$ was greater than .05. The comparison of the mean scores of the private institutions (mean = 3.9) and government institutions (mean = 3.5) revealed that the facilities and materials in the non-public organisations were much more available than those in the public ones in the eyes of the students ($t$ (264) = 3.672, $p < .001$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Ratings of Materials and Facilities</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Mean scores</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The materials and facilities were sufficient.</td>
<td>Universities (N= 150)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.008</td>
<td>.314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges (N=116)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions (N=116)</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.672</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government institutions (N=150)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** < .001

### 7.5 EVALUATION OF THE INTERNSHIPS

The student evaluations of the internships are presented in Table 7.7. The participants were asked to appraise the ease of finding an internship place, the tasks they were assigned during the internship, the attitudes and competency of their mentors and the support of their academic supervisors. The ideas of the two participating groups seemed dissimilar.

The graduates agreed that they easily found a workplace for their internship (mean = 4.1 with 50% “agree” and 35.7 % “strongly agree”), while the current students’ perspectives were a little less positive (mean = 3.6). The interview data also confirmed this. Most of the graduates had found the internship places themselves. For those who could not, their institutions supported
them in contacting the companies. A graduate commented positively, “Finding a place for the internship was no problem to me. The companies welcomed me warmly. For my friends who could not find a workplace, my lecturers referred them to the companies that they had communicated with” (Lien).

Table 7.7. Students’ Ratings of Internships (NRG = 14; NCS = 266) (in percentages).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Ratings of Internships</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (5)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Not Sure (3)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It was easy to find a workplace for the internships.</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The intern was assigned duties relevant to his or her specialisation.</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mentors were enthusiastic in their supervision.</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mentors had good specialisation skills and knowledge.</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The intern received good support from the academic supervisors.</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: RG = recent graduates; CS = current students

Regarding their duties relevant to their specialisations in the internship, the answers in the questionnaires and interviews were convergent. The survey data showed that more than fifty percent of the graduates were displeased with the duties they had been assigned, and about one third of the research participants were not sure whether the duties were related to the specialisations. The current students were a little more neutral in this respect but the mean score of 3.1 also reflected their highest level of dissatisfaction in comparison with other matters related to the internship. According to the interview data, the majority of the interns were only given menial administrative tasks or some simple duties related to their major. As Hai recounted, she and most of her classmates who did the practicum in the same company were assigned some tasks such as distributing leaflets, answering the phone, typing or faxing documents, etc. Some other graduates shared the same experience, saying that they were asked to observe their mentors only and just helped them when required. Disappointingly, several graduates neither had mentors nor were assigned any tasks. They only came for the companies’ confirmation to complete the paperwork submission as required by the institutions although they really wanted to learn something. Phong expressed his disappointment by sharing,
For me, the internship was really boring because I did nothing related to my specialisation except for office duties such as photocopying or filing documents. It seems to me that the staff was doubtful about my ability and did not give me specialised tasks in tour guiding. We [he together with other interns practising in the same company] rarely accompanied the company tour guides on real tours. We just observed the office staff. So I came to the company only once a week and got the manager’s confirmation.

What needed to be taken into account in Phong’s disclosure was why his institution accepted the internship result while he did not complete the required number of hours in the workplace. It was even more alarming that there was a significant number of students who could graduate based on the confirmation of the companies like this, as he revealed. Another graduate gave a general comment as follows,

The effectiveness of the internship depends on different companies. Some students doing the internship in big tourism firms did not improve much. They were asked to just do some trivial tasks like distributing leaflets or even did nothing. In some cases, apprentices were allowed to join in a few big tours with more than one hundred tourists for helping the main tour guide. On the contrary, the interns who practised in some small firms could improve their guiding skills. These firms lacked staff, so they gave the interns the tour documents and let them handle those tours. That experience could do some good for the students. (Phuong)

Phuong was correct in her comment. Just a small number of the graduates were fortunate enough to be given some tasks related to their major. However, their duties were restricted to working with documents related to tour guiding such as translating brochures and leaflets to English, preparing equipment for tour guides and tourists before each tour, managing the company websites, keeping tour records etc. Only one graduate, Di, was allowed to guide two city day tours and contact restaurants or hotels for reservations. Notably, all of these graduates did their practicum in small companies.

The mentors’ enthusiasm in the supervision generally satisfied the current students, while it gave many graduates a feeling of disappointment, with 50 per cent disagreeing and strongly disagreeing and nearly 30 per cent not sure on the item, “The mentors were enthusiastic in their supervision”. The dissatisfaction was clearly illustrated in the interviews. Several confirmed that there were no appointed internship mentors at the companies assigned to supervise them. They
were asked to follow the command of all the staff in the companies. Some graduates did their internships during the off peak tourist season from September to November, so there were few tasks to do, which meant the internship mentors had nothing to instruct the interns on. On the other hand, some graduates who were sent to companies at peak season for placement, particularly in May and June, were not supervised satisfactorily. Linh commented,

*My internship supervisor was not really enthusiastic. Because my internship was carried out in May and June – the peak tourist season of the year, all of the company staff were too busy to supervise me. Therefore, I just asked them for figures and information of the company. Then I copied them and completed my internship report at home by myself.*

Some other graduates also complained that internship mentors hesitated to help them but they did not directly address the reasons for that attitude. Only one graduate revealed that his mentor was not paid for the supervision, which he assumed was the reason for the indifference.

Only about one fifth of the graduates (21.4%) received enthusiastic supervision from their mentors. The mentors were said to support them in giving them information about the company, writing internship reports and assigning them some tasks related to the specialisation. Lien recounted, *“The company staff always helped me enthusiastically. They explained what I did not know carefully and allowed me to accompany them on some tours”*. Di was also satisfied with the supervision, emphasising that her mentor’s enthusiasm resulted from her initiative and activeness in asking questions.

Although the graduates did not receive satisfying support from their mentors, half of them agreed that the mentors had competent specialisation skills and knowledge. The number of current students who made a similar appraisal was even higher (79%). This finding was also confirmed by the interview data. However, several graduates were not sure about their mentors’ competency since there were no mentors in the companies and nor did they have any contact with mentors to appraise them.

Approximately two thirds (74.4%) of the graduates expressed a positive attitude towards their academic supervisors. The current students were slightly less positive (68%) but they still expressed their satisfaction. However, according to the interview data, the graduates only gained academic support for their minor theses rather than in the internship. Huong revealed,
It seemed that my academic mentor was assigned to supervise my minor thesis only, not the internship. So she did not give any support to me during my internship. Also, the results from the internship were not counted for credits but to provide me with the information and figures to write the minor thesis which accounted for my GPA [General Point Average]. That is probably the reason why less emphasis was put on the internship.

The majority of the graduates conceded that their academic supervisors rarely contacted them or the companies during the internships. Quyen reported that

My academic supervisor did not come to our workplace during the internship. She just contacted us through e-mails or phone, but rarely. If we needed help, we would contact her, especially when we worked on our internship reports or our minor theses.

Some graduates were supposed to ask the supervisors for help but they did not do so. Therefore, their academic supervisors did not take any supportive action during the internship. Some other graduates explained that their academic supervisors could not give satisfactory guidance since they were in charge of a large number of students.

In short, the students confirmed that they could easily find an internship workplace but criticised the negligence of the companies since often they were neither assigned tasks related to their specialisation nor enthusiastically instructed by their internship mentors. Notwithstanding, they were quite satisfied with their mentors’ competency. They also agreed that their academic supervisors were supportive but the assistance was actually given to their minor theses for graduation rather than to the internship.

Table 7.8 shows the results of the comparison of two different types of institutions to see if the perspectives of the students towards their internships were significantly different or not. Overall, the students from the various groups did not differ considerably in their ideas about most aspects of the internships (p > .05). The only exception was for the last item, where the students from the private institutions (mean = 3.6) were significantly less positive about the support of their academic supervisors than those from the public institutions (mean = 3.8; t (264) = -2.363, p < .05).
Table 7.8. Report of Mean Scores and T-test Results for Internships (N =266).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Ratings of Internships</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Mean scores</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It was easy to find a workplace for the internships.</td>
<td>Universities (N= 150)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>-.464</td>
<td>.643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges (N=116)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions (N=116)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government institutions (N=150)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The intern was assigned duties relevant to his or her specialisation.</td>
<td>Universities (N= 150)</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>-.737</td>
<td>.462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges (N=116)</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions (N=116)</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government institutions (N=150)</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mentors were enthusiastic in their supervision.</td>
<td>Universities (N= 150)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>.423</td>
<td>.672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges (N=116)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions (N=116)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government institutions (N=150)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mentors had good specialisation skills and knowledge.</td>
<td>Universities (N= 150)</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.675</td>
<td>.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges (N=116)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions (N=116)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government institutions (N=150)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The intern received good support from the academic supervisors.</td>
<td>Universities (N= 150)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>-.686</td>
<td>.493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges (N=116)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions (N=116)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government institutions (N=150)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* < .05

7.6 STUDENTS’ SELF-EVALUATION OF GENERIC SKILLS

Table 7.9 presents the participants’ self-appraisal of the generic skills that they believed they were equipped with during their tourism programs. The findings show that the graduates were more confident than the current students about their generic skills. About ten out of twenty four soft skills were believed to be improved by over fifty per cent of the graduates, while only three skills were selected by more than half of the students.

Computer Literacy and Information Seeking were the skills most chosen by the graduates (92.9%) while these skills equally received only 44.7 per cent of the students’ selections. The graduates confirmed in the interview that they could improve these skills thanks to searching for information and preparing Power Point slides as required in some subjects. Several graduates attributed the development of these skills to the internships when they were assigned to type documents.

Ranked equally third on the recent graduates’ list were Teamwork and Cooperation as well as Relationship Building (78.6%). On the current student list, the former was the most selected (70.3%) but the latter was not highly ranked (38.7%).
Table 7.9. Student Appraisal of Generic Skills Learned during Tourism Programs (\(N_{RG} = 14\); \(N_{CS} = 266\)).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generic skills</th>
<th>Number of Responses (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Computer literacy (able to operate a number of packages and has information management awareness) | RG 92.9  
                           CS 44.7 |
| 2. Information seeking (problem definition, diagnostic focus, looking deeper, contextual sensitivity) | RG 92.9  
                           CS 44.7 |
| 3. Teamwork and cooperation (fosters group facilitation and management, conflict resolution, motivation of others, creating a good workplace climate) | RG 78.6  
                           CS 70.3 |
| 4. Relationship building (networking, establish rapport, use of contacts, concern for stakeholders (e.g., clients)) | RG 78.6  
                           CS 38.7 |
| 5. Self-confidence (strong self-concept, internal locus of control, independence, positive ego strength, decisive, accepts responsibility) | RG 71.4  
                           CS 53.8 |
| 6. Written communication (relevant skills/appropriate use of emails, internal memos, internal and external reports, letters to clients) | RG 71.4  
                           CS 50.0 |
| 7. Concern for order, quality and accuracy (monitoring, concern for clarity, reduces uncertainty, keeping track of events and issues) | RG 64.3  
                           CS 42.1 |
| 8. Customer service orientation (helping and service orientation, focus on client needs, actively solves client problems) | RG 64.3  
                           CS 43.2 |
| 9. Achievement orientation (task accomplishment, seeks results, employs innovation, has competitiveness, seeks impact, aims for standards and efficiency) | RG 64.3  
                           CS 29.3 |
| 10. Team leadership (being in charge, vision, concern for subordinates, builds a sense of group purpose) | RG 50.0  
                           CS 29.3 |
| 11. Flexibility (adaptability, perceptual objectivity, staying objective, resilience, behaviour is contingent on the situation) | RG 42.9  
                           CS 38.0 |
| 12. Ability and willingness to learn (desire and aptitude for learning, learning as a basis for action) | RG 42.9  
                           CS 41.0 |
| 13. Interpersonal understanding (empathy, listening, sensitivity to others, diagnostic understanding, awareness of others’ feelings) | RG 42.9  
                           CS 41.4 |
| 14. Personal planning and organisational skills (ability to organise self and others, effective time management, organises and completes tasks effectively and efficiently) | RG 35.7  
                           CS 32.7 |
| 15. Conceptual thinking (pattern recognition, insight, critical thinking, problem definition, can generate hypotheses, linking) | RG 35.7  
                           CS 37.6 |
| 16. Impact and influence on others (strategic influence, impression management, showmanship, persuasion, collaborative influence) | RG 35.7  
                           CS 38.0 |
| 17. Initiative (bias for action, decisiveness, strategic orientation, proactive, seizes opportunities, self-motivation, persistence) | RG 35.7  
                           CS 35.7 |
| 18. Directiveness (assertiveness, decisiveness, use of power, taking charge, firmness of standards, group control and discipline) | RG 35.7  
                           CS 30.8 |
| 19. Self-control (stamina, resistance to stress, staying calm, high Emotional Quotient, resists temptation, not impulsive, can calm others) | RG 35.7  
                           CS 34.6 |
| 20. Technical expertise (job related technical knowledge and skills, depth and breadth, acquires expertise, donates expertise) | RG 28.6  
                           CS 36.5 |
| 21. Organisational commitment (align self and others to organisational needs, business-mindedness, self sacrifice) | RG 28.6  
                           CS 29.3 |
| 22. Organisational awareness (understands organisation, knows constraints, power and political astuteness, cultural knowledge) | RG 21.4  
                           CS 34.0 |
| 23. Analytical thinking (thinking for self, reasoning, practical intelligence, planning skills, problem analysing, systematic) | RG 21.4  
                           CS 34.6 |
| 24. Developing others (training, developing others, coaching, mentoring, providing support, positive regard) | RG 7.1  
                           CS 18.8 |

Notes: RG = recent graduates; CS = current students
Although over three quarters of the students ticked the above two skills, the interview data revealed that these skills were not actually developed through the training programs but in other contexts. Duyen shared,

*I could improve teamwork skills thanks to the activities in the Youth’s Strength Club of which I was a member. For example, when we went on a voluntary trip to a highland hamlet, we did lots of things in groups such as teaching ethnic people, helping them to eliminate weeds and cooking meals etc. We felt very mature after such activities.*

Several graduates challenged the idea of class-based group activities in enhancing the students’ teamwork skills. They suggested that they were asked to work in groups for assignments but each member did separate parts or some members were reluctant to cooperate and passed most of the tasks to the team leaders. For presentation tasks, normally the group leaders or its dominant members took the initiative to give presentations rather than sharing the opportunities to all members due to the lack of time or the big class size. As a result, teamwork skills could not be developed through such class activities. However, for the active and motivated students, they could make progress through working in teams since they could learn from their peers.

Concerning relationship building, several graduates believed that they could make a good impression on others, especially customers. They thought some subjects like Cultures, Tourism Psychology or Communication provided them with knowledge about diverse cultures so as to communicate with tourists from different cultures efficiently. Some graduates supposed that the contact with experienced industry workers in the internship could help them improve this skill. At equal fifth position on the table were Self-Confidence and Written Communication (71.4%). These two skills were also perceived as well developed by the current students (53.8% and 50.0% respectively). The interview data placed more focus on clarifying the choice of Self-Confidence than Written Communication. Several graduates believed that they improved their confidence thanks to presentation tasks. Linh said, “*As required in many subjects, we must give presentations in front of the class. These tasks encouraged us to be more confident in public speaking.*” Some interviewees, particularly those assigned to specialised tasks during the internship, took the placement into consideration when asked about the factors influencing their confidence. However, seemingly contradictorily, many graduates admitted that they were still very nervous when speaking in front of a class or attending recruitment interviews. They could only gain more confidence when they started working.
Over sixty per cent of the graduates believed they were equipped with Concern for Order, Quality and Accuracy, Customer Service Orientation and Achievement Orientation. A few graduates said they were able to increase these skills from the internship. According to Hai, after the internship, the administration skills such as “answering the phone effectively, prioritising tasks, focusing on the customers’ needs etc.” had been improved. For some other graduates, the program included some useful subjects which helped equip them with these skills such as Communication in Business or Psychology. Nonetheless, “it is a pity that these subjects were just taught as theory rather than in practice” (Nghi).

Although half of the graduates thought they had Team Leadership skills, their self-assessment of Developing Others, which has something in common with leadership, very surprisingly was rated the lowest (7.1%). On the current students’ list, these two skills received almost equally low rankings, with 29.3 per cent for the former and 18.8 per cent for the latter. Other skills related to dealing with others such as Interpersonal Understanding together with Impacts and Influence on Others also did not receive high ratings from the graduates (42.9% and 35.7% respectively) nor from the current students (41.4% and 32.7% respectively). It seemed, therefore, that the graduates were quite doubtful about their management skills. The interview data revealed that many were not really sure about their leadership skills when they had not been the leaders of any teams. Some graduates who had led some teams in class were not happy with their roles since their peers were “stubborn” and refused to follow their instructions (Hong). Some team leaders complained that if they were assigned any tasks, the team leaders themselves were to complete the tasks rather than the team members. Other graduates believed that their leadership skills were developed by themselves, not by the training program. Thi was confident,

*About leadership skill? I developed it myself. We often distributed our duties by ourselves for group assignments. Our lecturers did not instruct us how to encourage or support each other. There were no subjects that particularly provided us with that skill.*

Several cognitive skills received just a few ticks from the two groups of graduates and students (Analytical Thinking with 21.4% and 37.6% and Conceptual Thinking with 35.7% and 34.6% respectively). According to the interview data, the graduates said that due to the lack of time, the lecturers normally read the content from books to let them take notes rather than give them questions for them to struggle for answers. Some graduates asserted that these skills were only developed when they commenced working. However, for a few graduates, class presentations...
accounted for the development of these skills when they had to argue with their classmates to solve problems.

Similarly, the skills involved in organisation were also not highly ranked by the two participating groups: graduates and current students (Organisation Commitment with 28.6% and 29.3% and Organisation Awareness with 21.4% and 24.0%). Some other skills, namely Flexibility (42.9% and 38.0%), Ability and Willingness to Learn (42.9% and 41.0%), Personal Planning and Organisation Skills (42.9% and 32.7%), Initiative (equally 35.7%), Directiveness (35.7% and 30.8%), Self-control (35.7% and 34.6%) and Technical Expertise (28.6% and 36.5%), were also below average in the ranking. The interview data demonstrated that many graduates emphasised the significance of these skills but they were disappointed that the training programs did not pay enough attention to them. For instance, in Thi’s opinion,

*The Personal Planning and Organisation Skills are very important since they can help me to manage my time successfully while dealing with various tasks. However, I have only developed these skills at work. My lecturers at the college never taught me to make plans or organise time.*

In a similar vein, talking about Technical Expertise, Quyen commented:

*During some of my first days at work, I could not use office equipment such as the fax machine, photocopy machine, etc. properly. The experienced staff in my company trained me how to use them and prepare them when they are broken. At the college, we had no opportunities to use real equipment, not to mention how to repair it.*

Only 35.7 per cent of the graduates believed they were equipped with Initiative since they were not strongly encouraged to seize opportunities. Hong gave an example, “*When there was a special event such as welcoming foreign visitors, only a small number of good students were chosen to join the activities. The college indirectly limited the opportunities for the students to use their initiative*”.

### 7.7 ASSESSMENT OF WIL

The ratings regarding assessment are presented in Table 7.10. The participants seemed to be positive towards the assessments; more than half of them agreed that the assessments were well designed and implemented. However, there was a noticeable level of disagreement where 28.6
per cent of the graduates selected “disagree” and 34.6 per cent of the current students were hesitant in their ratings.

*Table 7.10. Students’ Ratings of Assessments (N_{RG} = 14; N_{CS} = 266) (in percentages).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Ratings of Assessment</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (5)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Not Sure (3)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The assessments were well designed and implemented.</td>
<td>RG CS</td>
<td>RG CS</td>
<td>RG CS</td>
<td>RG CS</td>
<td>RG CS</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>3.4 3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: RG = recent graduates; CS = current students

The interview data also confirmed the survey results. Di praised the assessment tests as fair and said they could measure the students’ knowledge and skills effectively by requiring the students to give presentations and solve problems. She added, “*By this method, the students could not cheat. We must perform our actual skills in front of the lecturers and friends. We must also apply all the knowledge we had learned to solve given situations*”. Hong and Quyen were also supportive of the assessments conducted in her college. Hong detailed, “*The theory tests were conducted in various forms: multiple-choice or written essays. The test content was closely related to the knowledge we had learned.*” Quyen continued,

*In the practical examinations, the examiners required each of us to solve a problem through role-plays. This kind of test truly reflected what we normally do in the real job. The examiners were always fair with everyone in the tests.*

However, through the interviews, it was revealed that many participants were not satisfied with the assessment for several reasons. Phi thought assessments were unable to classify the students clearly due to their non-practical design (i.e. too theoretically focussed). Hai objected to the testing method that required presentations in every mid-semester and final examination. She argued, “*This type of assessment took us much time to do while it was applied simultaneously in all subjects, which made the students overloaded and stressed.*” Linh recounted how,

*We were sometimes given such complicated tasks that we could not do well to get high marks. For example, in the Tourism Psychology subject, we were asked to perform customer service skills but we ended up with arguments. Our teacher divided the class into two groups, one of which played the role as strict clients and the other played as tour guides. We pretended to have an argument because the tourists gave unreasonable requests but we really took it too far*
Kha criticised the kind of assessment that encouraged rote-learning. She explained,

*The content of the tests was too close to what we had learned. We were normally required to memorise the knowledge in the books and reproduce it in the closed-book examinations. Only those who learned by heart well would get high marks.*

Phuong revealed that the students normally had negative attitudes towards examinations due to the unreasonable requirements. She explained “*Many lecturers gave us assignments as a form of assessment after each lesson at the same time. Due to the time constraints, we normally copied the information from the Internet or duplicated our friends’ work.*”

Despite the fact that a number of students were satisfied with the design and implementation of assessments via both survey and interview data, several unexpected outcomes of these assessments were discussed by the graduates to explain the dissatisfaction or neutral opinions of other participants.

As presented in Table 7.11, the comparison of the perspectives of the students about the design and implementation of assessments did not show any significant differences (p > .05).

*Table 7.11. Report of Mean Scores and T-test Results for Assessments (N = 266).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Ratings of Assessments</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Mean scores</th>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Government institutions (N=150)</td>
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### 7.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has evaluated the tourism training programs with their WIL components from the perspectives of the recent graduates and current students. The participants’ appraisals of six areas of the programs namely (1) quality of their lecturers, (2) the materials and facilities, (3) the curriculum, (4) the assessments, (5) the internships and (6) their generic skills developed.
after the course were measured through the questionnaire and then detailed with the graduates’ interview responses. Overall, the two participating groups held similar perspectives in these regards. The lecturers were thought to be committed to their teaching career and well-qualified for their teaching positions although some were considered to be more book-based than practical. Their teaching methods did not really appeal to the graduates and students when they were evaluated as more theoretical than practical in delivering lessons. The teaching facilities were generally satisfactory in quantity but their quality was still questionable. The university curricula were more theoretically than practically focused, while the college curricula were seen to put more emphasis on practical skills and knowledge. The programs were thought to provide sufficient knowledge about tourism in general. However, the specialisation knowledge and skills were perceived as more satisfactory in the college than the university programs.

The assessments, on the one hand, were evaluated to be relatively well designed and implemented in two main formats: oral presentations and written tests. On the other hand, they seemed to encourage rote learning rather than promote the students’ creativity and critical thinking.

The ideas of the two groups started to diverge slightly around the internship. The graduates agreed that they could easily find a workplace to do their internship while the current students were not really sure about this. The graduates, disappointingly, did not feel that they received satisfactory supervision from their mentors when they were not assigned suitable duties related to their specialisation, although their mentors were thought to be competent industry workers. The current students were quite neutral about the tasks given but rather satisfied with the mentors’ enthusiasm and competency. Both groups agreed they were supported by their academic supervisors but they only received their lecturers’ supervision for their minor theses to be eligible for graduation rather than during the internships.

The participants then appraised their own generic skills by selecting the ones they believed to be developed on a list of twenty-four skills. The graduates appeared to be more positive than the current students in their ratings. According to the graduates, the most developed skills were the ones related to technologies and the least developed were those involved in developing others. The current students thought their teamwork skills, self-confidence and written communication were their three most improved skills. Skills related to leadership and developing others received the lowest ratings.

Finally, the mean scores of the data were compared via t-tests to see if the students from the different types of institutions held significantly different ideas or not. Generally, the students’
perspectives were relatively similar. However, several items in the survey received significantly different appraisals from the different groups of students. Colleges were thought to have more competent lecturers than universities; their curricula were thought to better distribute the theoretical and practical parts of knowledge and skills; and they were seen to provide the students with more specialisation skills than the universities. Private institutions were considered to have less academically competent, less committed lecturers, and less supportive academic supervisors for internships than the government ones, but were thought to be equipped with better facilities and more materials, and their curricula were thought to be designed with a more balanced distribution of theory and practice.
Chapter 8: Foreign Language Teaching and Learning in the Six Selected Tourism Training Institutions from the Perspectives of the Stakeholders

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will present the findings concerning foreign language teaching and learning in the selected tourism training institutions from the perspectives of the triad of stakeholders: lecturing staff, companies and students. The data were collected from interviews with the lecturers, HR managers, internship mentors and recent graduates. The results were then correlated with the survey data conducted on fourteen recent graduates and two hundred and sixty six current students and the follow-up interview with the graduates. These findings will be confirmed by the data derived from the appraisal of thirteen graduates’ English proficiency when speaking English in tour guiding settings and at the travel agencies as assessed by an English native speaker.

The findings will be presented thematically. Firstly, the current laws and regulations that influence the issues of teaching and learning foreign languages in tertiary institutions will be addressed. Secondly, the perspectives of academic staff regarding the current state-of-play of the foreign language teaching and learning in the six case studies will be discussed. The case study descriptions will be followed by the perspectives of the companies on this same issue. The students’ perspectives will be presented afterwards based on the survey and interview data, followed by the result of the appraisal of the students’ English proficiency.

8.2 INFLUENCE OF VIETNAMESE LAWS AND REGULATIONS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

According to Article 73, Chapter 7 of the Tourism Law 2005, which was in effect at the time of this research, the following conditions were required to be met to issue an international tour-guiding permit:

- Minimum Bachelor degree in Tour Guiding; or
- Bachelor degree in another major and a certificate in Tour Guiding granted by an authorised organisation; and
- Evidence of proficiency in a foreign language.
This regulation partly affected the quality of foreign language teaching and learning in the colleges. Firstly, it created an attitude of indifference toward the quality of foreign language training and learning among lecturers and students. Secondly, it created a paradox that the three-year bachelor graduates from a Tour Guiding program were considered less competent than a four-year bachelor graduate in another major holding a certificate in Tour Guiding. Although three-year bachelors awarded with a satisfactory certificate in a foreign language, they were not deemed eligible for the permit. As a result, not only were tourism training providers and students affected, it was also problematic for the tourism companies, since, in reality, the professional quality in tour guiding of three-year tour guiding majors surpassed the certificate holders. Details of these influences will be presented in the next sections.

8.3 FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF ACADEMIC STAFF

This section reflects the views of academic staff on the foreign language teaching and learning in the six selected institutions.

8.3.1 Tourism Training Institution A: Government tourism vocational training college located in a coastal city

The Vietnamese Tourism Law 2005 mentioned earlier was partly responsible for the lack of focus on EFL teaching and learning in this college. The interview data with the EFL lecturers and the documentation data further revealed that foreign language teaching was neither satisfactorily designed nor implemented.

All EFL lecturers were unified in commenting that although the students were required to reach an advanced English level on their graduation, the majority only satisfied the English proficiency requirement on paper, not in practice. As the Dean of the Foreign Language faculty remarked, “the students can only produce English at a very simple conversational level. After graduation, they cannot communicate in English satisfactorily enough to meet the employers’ expectations”. Most students lacked confidence in using English to communicate. The researcher invited five recent graduates to join the project by playing the role of a tour guide and using English to speak to her. At first, they all agreed and asked her to give them several days to prepare for the task. But just one day before the appointment, they all cancelled with similar excuses that they could not remember their parts and were not confident enough to speak.
Several reasons for this problem were detected through the interview data. Inadequate time allocation for this subject in the curriculum was one factor. In the three-year program, there were a total of 750 English periods of 45 minutes each according to the training framework. In the first four semesters, students learn 210 periods of general English and in the last two semesters they learn 540 periods of specific English for tourism. All of the EFL lecturers agreed that such an amount of time for this subject was not sufficient to help students meet the desired outcomes. Comparing the current teaching English as a foreign language program with the past, the Dean of Faculty of Foreign Languages stated,

*In the past, the English proficiency of the students was much better. The number of periods for this subject was enormous. Time for English is too limited now. The college neglects English and places more emphasis on specialised subjects, notwithstanding its significance to tour guides. A director of a travel agency I know said that these days, he had hardly found a graduate from our college who could guide an international tour. Some are excellent tour guides but just in Vietnamese, not in English.*

Furthermore, the lack of cohesion at the leadership level in the design and implementation of the English teaching content was a factor. As La revealed, the English syllabus was entirely determined by the Faculty of Foreign Languages without consultation with the Faculty of Tourism. It had not been evaluated at any level for improvement. The lesson plans were not supervised either. Each lecturer could arbitrarily deliver the content as long as all the required units in the textbook were covered. This lack of management did not guarantee the quality of EFL teaching and learning in this institution.

Another reason came from the teaching materials. The textbook selected for general English was *New Cutting Edge* with two levels: Elementary and Pre-intermediate, and for specific purpose English *Going International* at upper intermediate level. This second one was assessed as exceeding the students' level of proficiency. After consultation with the lecturers, the Dean decided to lower the level of difficulty by changing this intermediate textbook to *English for Tourism*. He clarified this decision by stating that:

*The English lecturers are allowed to choose the materials based on students' levels through individual tests and observation during their delivery. Through their feedback and proposal of new material, I will make a decision and report it to the board of principals for their approval to put the new material into use. The current materials are still on trial.*
This adjustment on the one hand motivated the students to learn what was appropriate to their actual level, but on the other hand, it made them lag behind the standard level and failed to meet the English outcome at the end of the course. This also reflected the inaccurate assessment of the students’ eligibility for entry into the program. This can be the case when the number of applications for the course is actually lower than the target enrolments.

There was a discrepancy in the perspectives of the EFL lecturers, concerning the quality of materials. Ba and Ho, two senior lecturers with more than twenty years’ teaching experience, tended to pay more attention to the linguistic aspects such as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation rather than the function of English in the tourism major when they commented on the content. They both agreed that the current materials were satisfactory. Ba, the Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Foreign Languages, was especially positive when asked for his evaluation of the materials. He said,

*The materials were designed by English people. There is no need to comment and no need to evaluate. Many international universities have been using them. Now we need not do anything but apply them in practice. We chose these materials because we felt them suitable. They are easily found in bookshops and reasonably affordable.*

Nonetheless, the perspective of a young lecturer, La, was that the content of the materials only met ten to fifteen per cent of the requirements of the vocabulary and skills in the English for Tour Guiding program. He maintained that a standard course book for tour guiding should provide general knowledge, tourism terms, and generic skills useful for tourism such as skills in guiding tours, selling products, team building skills and etiquette so as not to offend international tourists. However, since the current materials did not cover these elements, he had been forced to search the Internet for information about this etiquette to share with the students, despite the fact that this research was time-consuming.

Moreover, chances for the students to be exposed to an English-speaking environment were relatively slim. There used to be an English-speaking club but it had not been successful. Ho gave as explanation for this failure the fact, “*Many students were busy with their part time jobs. Many others lacked motivation to join it*”.

Assessment was the only motivation for the students to learn English and to practise using this language. The tests included reading comprehension together with writing, listening and oral
tests. The oral test was conducted as follows: students were given a list of topics to prepare about one week before the examination date. On the test date, students drew lots to choose one topic among the given list and presented it from memory. The lecturers also interviewed them to test their actual responses using impromptu English. Marking criteria were decided by the Dean of the foreign language faculty. For example, 40 per cent was for presentation (in which ideas accounted for 12 per cent; and pronunciation, intonation, accuracy in vocabulary and grammar 28 per cent). The remaining 60 per cent was for an interview. A good point of this test was to motivate the students to communicate in English. However, this one occasion hardly created sustainable motivation to improve the students’ English proficiency.

8.3.2 Tourism Training Institution B: Government tourism vocational training college in a central province

This college offered both English and French as foreign language subjects within the Tourism Guiding and Travel Management programs. Although it listed foreign language proficiency as a highlighted outcome of both programs, an investigation into the teaching and learning of these two foreign languages revealed a different picture.

Most lecturers showed their indifference to the focus on the foreign languages. Typically, Hoai was asked to recommend some graduates to the researcher for interview and observation. However, this lecturer, after giving her a list of the students, strongly recommended her to contact one of the best students whose English proficiency was at the advanced level. She then commented, “The other students were not confident to communicate in English. They did not learn to work with international tourists, why do you ask them to speak English to guide you? Only this student is competent enough for your task”.

Furthermore, all of the tourism lecturers held the view that English was allocated an excessive amount of time during the whole course. According to Thu, Hai and Hoai, despite such generous time allocation, the results were not satisfactory. The number of students who can use English to communicate after graduation is still limited. Personally, the researcher contacted eight students from the list that Hoai gave, but only two of them agreed to participate in the project. The rest frankly refused for the same reason that they were not trained to guide international tourists and could not use English to guide the researcher, irrespective of her persuasive attempts.

One main reason for this result was the lack of opportunity for students to practise their communication skills in English, especially with foreigners. There were no English-speaking
clubs or any extra-curricular activities to enhance the students’ practice of foreign languages. According to Hong, the college sometimes greeted delegations of visitors from Thailand and China where students had an opportunity to use their English for communication. However, in Thu and Hai’s opinions, the language they used on these occasions was only limited to common greetings or simple exchanges and the students who had such chances to have contact with these guests were only the good or excellent ones.

Another cause for the dissatisfactory outcome seems to have been the students’ low level of English proficiency at entry although they had learned English for seven years at secondary level, as Hong suggested. A large number of students had lost their confidence in using English for this reason. However, this lecturer was still positive in her comment on this issue stating,

But from my observation, the students who are attentive to their study by attending classes frequently and joining extra English classes in foreign language centres have many opportunities to be employed after graduation. Our city attracts a wide range of local and international tourists annually. Therefore, many travel companies have been established and frequently recruit staff. Now, I am teaching third year students. Many active students are doing part time jobs as tour guides with pay of about 600,000 VND (US$30) a day. Our college has just appointed two students to join the contest “National Excellent Tour Guides”, and they both received second prizes. They had good knowledge and skills in tour guiding in both Vietnamese and English.

French was the second foreign language taught in this college. At the time of the interview, only general French was being taught, while the content of French for Tour Guiding and Travel Management programs was still in preparation. According to the French lecturer, Tra, it was a real challenge for the French lecturers to design materials for this subject due to the lack of reference materials available in the field. Furthermore, the number of periods for this subject was not many – only 270 periods for the whole program, sufficient only for the lecturer to introduce some basic vocabulary and structures and to give the students some grammatical practice. The speaking and listening skills were, hence, neglected. The outcome of these language classes was therefore limited to just a basic understanding of French and simple exchanges in communication.
It was noticeable that neither English nor French received proper attention from the lecturers with the knowledge that the students would not apply these languages in their future career due to the restriction of the Vietnamese Tourism Law.

8.3.3 Tourism Training Institution C: Government vocational training college in a coastal city in southern central region of Vietnam

English was the only foreign language subject taught in this college. The English outcomes of vocational college students at their graduation were expected to be 300 TOEIC points or IELTS 3.0, according to the requirement of the Ministry. Furthermore, the students were also expected to be able to communicate fluently in English in daily conversations and present an introduction of a tourist destination to visitors in English. The lecturers asserted that English was given appropriate concern and investment in this college, although there was not sufficient support from the institution or guidance from the Ministry.

All of the EFL lecturers were united in their comments that the curriculum for English subjects was suitably and logically designed. The amount of time allocated for English was sufficient, with 120 periods for General English and 600 periods for specific English for Tourism, of which 300 periods were for basic and 300 periods for intensive specific English for tourism. Uyen added,

> Although some of the required content in the training frame focuses only on presenting destinations and not on communication skills with customers or in social situations, it is still acceptable since the college can modify 30 per cent of the framework to suit the features of their students and the requirements of the lecturers.

With regard to materials, the EFL lecturers had to design their own teaching materials since there was a lack of standard materials suitable for the level of the students. Sen described the details of the design as follows: the discipline leader was in charge of the design with the consensus of an academic board, including experts from the Department of Education, and EFL lecturers from universities of pedagogy. For the 300 periods of basic specific English, the lecturers compiled the materials from various available resources such as: *Welcome, Hello, Add your Service, English for International Tourism*. For the 300 periods of intensive specific English, the lecturers had to design the materials themselves based on the framework of the General Bureau of Vocational Training. Li added that the lecturers also needed to design practice assignments, and tests and compile CDs. CD making was the hardest and most
challenging job for unprofessional CD makers like the lecturers. They had to invite the
volunteer foreign lecturers to read the scripts, then record and burn CDs. Li and Sen remarked
that the in-house materials helped the lecturers to be active in their teaching and motivated the
students, thanks to updated content and suitability of the level.

According to the English outcomes which focused heavily on speaking and listening skills, all
lecturers claimed that they used the communicative approach in their teaching. Li said that she
conducted many practice tasks through role-plays. Uyen gave her students preparation tasks at
home and then they came to class to work in pairs or groups to perform the tasks. The lecturers
also made full use of facilities to help the students communicate well. However, in contrast to
the other two ESL lecturers, Li remarked that the facilities were not sufficient. She explained
that the number of students in one class was always over 50, and yet there were no
microphones. Also, all the equipment such as computers, projectors etc. was placed in one room
and advance bookings for use were required. However, it was not always available.

Most lecturers agreed that the chances for English speaking practice were limited to classroom
activities, infrequent college-wide contests or talks with invited English speaking guests who
were leaders of the resorts. Uyen and Sen also added that the students used to have an
opportunity to learn with foreign volunteer lecturers who were in charge of 35 to 50 per cent of
the allocated English periods. However, as Uyen explained, this was terminated due to
complicated administrative procedures required by the government to invite such volunteer
lecturers.

The assessment procedure for English was agreed upon by all the EFL lecturers of the faculty:
an oral test was the only format used for English evaluation. The students were given a list of
topics to prepare before an exam. In the exam, they had to present one topic in the list and were
interviewed with related questions afterwards.

8.3.4 Tourism Training Institution D: Government university in a coastal city in
the southern central region of Vietnam

Both the interviewed EFL lecturers from this institution commented that the students in the
Tourism Business Management program were weak and lacked confidence in their
communication skills in English. This was the result of many years of learning English at high
schools where listening and speaking skills were neglected. However, these lecturers also
admitted that the EFL training at the university was unable to improve the students’ English
much further. The score of the English proficiency test required for graduation is 500 TOEIC
points or the B1 certificate according to the Common European framework. “This could only be achieved by taking exams in English centres or in the university”, Tan asserted. She added, “There are limited numbers of students with a high enough proficiency and most of the students must retake this exam several times before they receive the certificate”. Furthermore, many of the graduates of the tourism program could not find jobs in their major due to their lack of English competence.

One of the obvious reasons for this unexpected outcome was the curriculum, according to both EFL lecturers. General English was allocated seven credits which are equivalent to 105 periods and English for Tourism with three credits, equivalent to 45 periods for the whole program. According to Tan, “This amount of time is not adequate for the students to acquire sufficient vocabulary, structures and proper pronunciation, let alone improve the four skills required to be confident in communication”. Tu added, “We suggested increasing the amount of time for English, but the university’s policy is to let the students improve their English outside in English language centres. This is beyond our control, so we have to accept that”.

Another reason given was the students’ attitudes towards their English learning. There was an English club operating every two weeks with no admission fees thanks to the Student Union which was instrumental in asking for sponsorship from companies to raise funds for this club. However, Tu stated,

Only the self-motivated students participate while the weaker ones are not interested in this activity. There is also a public speaking contest to encourage the students to improve their English, but again, it only motivates the good students to join in.

The actual chances or opportunities for using English were rather limited for the students. There were no opportunities to communicate with foreigners. Therefore, the lecturers themselves must create their own environment in the classroom to interest the students. Tu commented,

We normally require the students to prepare a topic at home beforehand and then they come to class to work in groups or pairs for discussion about such topics. Moreover, we also organise oral tests in the final exams to give the students a real reason to practise their speaking skills. However, our effort seems not to be effective.
The credit-based system was also to be blamed for the ineffectiveness of EFL teaching in this university. Students of differing proficiency levels were mixed in the same class, which was a real challenge for the lecturers to deliver the training effectively. Tan estimated that about 30 per cent of the students were too weak, while 20 per cent of the students were too strong for the level. Therefore, the more challenging tasks which were interesting for the good students did not motivate the weaker ones, and vice versa, the easier tasks were too dull for the stronger students. This lecturer suggested that it would be ideal if the levels of the students were separated out. However, she was not confident in this solution because the students could choose to study a subject at their own convenience, and so it was hard to enforce a proficiency-based classification of students due to insufficient students for one class.

8.3.5 Tourism Training Institution E: People-founded university in a metropolitan city

The university offered both English and French as the core foreign language subjects. For the students who selected French, they were enrolled in an affiliate program between this university and a famous university in France. Though they paid twice the tuition fees for this scheme in comparison with those for a regular program, they received substantial benefits. They were in a smaller class with approximately twenty-five students, rather than in a regular class with up to fifty students. They also had more opportunities to be taught by native teachers from the Association of Universities of the Francophonie to improve their communication skills in French. In particular, they would be granted a double degree on their graduation, one by the host university and one by the affiliated internationally recognised university in France. This offered the students more choices in their career pathway after graduation.

Irrespective of the benefits the French program could bring, its tuition fees were not generally affordable. Therefore, the enrolments were considerably outnumbered by those enrolling in English as the main foreign language. Different from the dual program whose enrolled students were all French beginners, the normal program admitted students at diverse levels of proficiency in English, so placement tests are required at the beginning of the course to classify the students’ English levels. According to Hai,

The classification can assist the teachers in customising activities and the learners in acquiring the language appropriate to their level. The more proficient students are grouped in one class and taught with more challenging communicative activities such as role plays, information
exchange or discussion in simulated environments: either in the normal classroom or in practical rooms for tourism purposes.

For the less proficient students, Nho added,

_Different teaching methods are applied such as repetition and substitution drills to improve the students’ accuracy rather than fluency to boost their confidence. After one or two semesters, when the students can catch up with the pace and become accustomed to the learning style in the university, they will be given more communicative tasks to practise their speaking skills._

English was allocated seventy-five periods per semester, in which sixty periods were for face-to-face learning and fifteen periods for self-study via an e-learning system. According to Nho, the amount of time was adequate. However, Hai asserted that the fifteen periods for self-study should be converted into face-to-face learning to give the students more opportunities for communication practice. She insisted, “_self study is only useful for doing grammatical exercises while the tourism major students need more opportunities to communicate._”

The materials for the English subject were not only varied and sufficient in quantity but also rich and interesting in content. This course was delivered from semester one to semester six, using the _English for International Tourism_ textbook from level Pre-intermediate to Advanced as the required material and _Oxford English for Careers in Tourism_ as the supplementary material for the course. These materials provided contexts which were close to the tourism major and included various teaching aids to facilitate teaching and learning such as workbooks, online tasks and a teacher’s book in which there was information about history and extra knowledge related to tourism. The choice of these materials had received unanimous approval from the EFL staff in the faculty, the Dean and also from the students themselves. In the seventh semester, the students were trained with TOEIC practice tests to enable them to gain a minimum of 450 TOEIC points to be eligible to take the graduation examination.

The students' level of English language was evaluated quite frequently and effectively, according to Nho and Hai. There was one progress test after every two lessons, one mid-term test and one final test. In the final test, the students were orally assessed through their PowerPoint presentations prepared in advance. They were marked according to the following criteria: pronunciation, fluency, manner, confidence, PowerPoint design, ideas and responses to spontaneous questions. The criteria were agreed on by all the EFL teachers in the academic meetings.
The opportunities for the students to practise their English were claimed to be varied. There were English club events organised every two weeks to create a fun English speaking environment for the participants. Likewise, the faculty often invited English speaking general managers of tourism organisations to have talks with the students. In most of the tourism subjects, the students were also required to conduct surveys with foreign tourists. This was a challenging activity but rewarding in English practice. Particularly, the internship was also a real opportunity for the students to apply their English knowledge and skills in communication. They could work in four or five star hotels where they frequently encountered foreign tourists. However, despite all this, “the number of graduates who could use English to communicate well was not as satisfactory as expected”, admitted La.

8.3.6 Tourism Training Institution F: Private university in a metropolitan city

Foreign languages were claimed to be a high priority in the Tourism Faculty of this university. English was also the main foreign language to be taught. The students were required to achieve a satisfactory outcome equivalent to 650 TOEIC points to be eligible for graduation. Furthermore, since 2012 the major subjects had been compulsorily taught in English. Therefore, “it is the students’ duty to equip themselves with English competence in the first and second year to be able to continue the rest of the course in English”, according to Long.

In response to the university’s policy of offering English-medium tourism programs, the lecturers’ proficiency in English was particularly taken into consideration. Commendably, the majority of the economics lecturers in the faculty were able to use English to teach satisfactorily because most of them had obtained their MBA in foreign countries or in transnational Masters classes. For the subjects in tourism, hotel and restaurant disciplines, it is harder to find lecturers with qualified English proficiency. Therefore, there was a requirement that the lecturers upgrade their English proficiency themselves in a given period of time to meet the standard of the university to maintain their positions. The faculty also supported them by organising an English class taught by foreign teachers for them to enrol.

An English centre was established to facilitate the English learning of the local students. From its website, it was known that an English program had been designed particularly for university students of all majors at different levels corresponding to the students’ levels based on their program of study and measured by placement tests on entry. The details of the English course structure are presented in Table 8.1.
Table 8.1. English Syllabi of Tourism Programs in Institution F.

| English Syllabus Designed for Students Following Programs Delivered in Vietnamese |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| MODULES                       | CREDIT POINTS | PERIODS (45 minutes each) |
| Pre-intermediate              | 05             | 117                |
| Intermediate 1                | 05             | 117                |
| Intermediate 2                | 05             | 117                |
| Upper-intermediate            | 05             | 117                |

| English Syllabus Designed for Students Following Programs Delivered in English |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| MODULES                       | CREDIT POINTS | PERIODS (45 minutes each) |
| Intermediate 2                | 05             | 117                |
| Upper-intermediate 1          | 05             | 117                |
| Upper-intermediate 2          | 05             | 117                |
| Pre-advanced                  | 05             | 117                |

<table>
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<th>English Syllabus Designed for Students Unqualified for the above Programs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MODULES</td>
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<td>Preparation 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Various extra-curricula activities such as an English club and English competitions etc. were offered to create an enjoyable learning environment for their students. The tourism major students were required to interview tourists for one of their compulsory projects, which meant they were given a practical opportunity to communicate in English when they encountered international tourists. The university also had an affiliation with some international organisations within Vietnam and in nearby nations that offered opportunities for the students to use their English for internships or for study tour programs. However, the financial issues and the number of students taking those opportunities were neither addressed on the university website nor through interviews.

Facilities and materials in English were reported to be sufficient and of satisfactory quality. As mentioned earlier in the case studies, the library holdings of this university were rich in materials for all majors in various languages, including English. The library stocks were increased annually because the university encouraged lecturers to recommend materials of interest to staff and students.

Compared with the previous case studies, the foreign language teaching and learning in this university had some outstanding features. The offering of English-medium tourism programs
was considered a highlight in this case study. The university proved that they had carefully prepared to make this initiative successful with highly qualified teaching staff, sufficient facilities and materials, as well as a language environment for the students to practise using English. Nonetheless, the picture of this program was disappointingly incomplete since some English lecturers in the Faculty of Tourism refused to participate in this project.

8.4 ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF TOURISM COMPANIES

With regard to the foreign language proficiency of tourism graduates and interns, managers and internship mentors were critical and largely negative. The great majority of the participants (15/18) were unanimous in their assessment of the graduates’ and interns’ low level of English, particularly their unsatisfactory speaking skills. For instance, Dong expressed his disappointment by shaking his head and saying,

As I already know, there is a huge distance between the English teaching in tourism training courses and real life. The graduates are not good enough in English to present comprehensibly in front of foreign tourists. There have been no interns with English proficiency satisfying us, truly speaking. They need to better their English if they are actually determined to be professional tour guides.

Similarly, Phuong heaved a long sigh when asked. She commented,

The interns’ English is not good, actually. We used to give them opportunities to communicate with foreigners freely. They did not talk fluently enough to give presentations about tourist destinations. They were also afraid of communicating with foreigners for fear of making mistakes, although I encouraged them that I would help them when they could not express themselves properly.

Thu made a comparison between the recent graduates from a local college and the tour guides who had graduated several years before, paying the graduates of the past a compliment. She said,

I cannot understand why recent graduates are weaker in English than those who graduated several years ago. The inbound tours which need fluent English
speaking guides are now undertaken by experienced tour guides who graduated from the same college several years ago. I have not been able to recruit any new tour guides for these inbound tours recently.

Sharing Thu’s thoughts about the quality of job applicants for tour guiding positions, Mai said,

Most of the candidates cannot communicate in English satisfactorily in interviews. We have recently recruited only one tourism graduate because of his excellent tourism knowledge only. With regard to his proficiency in foreign language, he is below our required standard. We assigned him to guide domestic tours only.

Another manager, Thanh, thought that only the students coming from universities majoring in foreign languages were highly rated in English. He maintained that those from tourism training institutions barely met his company’s requirement in foreign language competence.

Complaining about the quality of the graduates and interns in using foreign languages, a vast majority of the participants did not allow the interns to communicate with foreign tourists during the internships. They justified their lack of support on the grounds that the under-qualified interns might damage the reputation of their companies if they communicated awkwardly with foreign tourists. On the other hand, the cautious attitudes of the managers towards the interns discouraged the students from improving their English proficiency and made their own companies end up with difficulties in finding qualified staff in the future.

Only two managers acted in support of the interns by giving them opportunities to have contact with foreign tourists by allowing them to follow inbound tours for observation. Chu answered the interview question with a firm nod of his head saying,

The interns in my company are allowed to communicate with foreigners. I let them accompany our experienced tour guides in big inbound tours. I asked them to sit in the back row of the bus where they could observe easily and clearly. Therefore, they occasionally had opportunities to converse with the tourists.

Similarly, Dong was supportive of giving interns opportunities to practise their English by letting them escort international tourists in inbound tours although he was critical of their English proficiency,
You know, there was an Australian military base in our local province. We constantly operate tours for New Zealand and Australian tourists every day, and students are allowed to undertake those tours as helpers for our tour guides. I want to give them some chances to be in contact with international tourists to gain more confidence in using English.

In brief, the managers did not highly rate the tourism interns and graduates’ proficiency in foreign languages, especially the speaking skill. Although they were in partnership with institutions in tourism training through internships, most of them did not give the interns opportunities to improve their foreign language skills through communicative activities with international tourists. The two exemplary managers, Chu and Dong, in their support for interns in this regard needed promoting.

8.5 FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING FROM THE STUDENTS’ PERSPECTIVES

The appraisal of foreign language teaching and learning from the students’ perspectives was made through surveys with recent graduates and current final year students and then confirmed by interviews with some of the graduates. Both groups of participants expressed relatively similar opinions about four aspects of the foreign language teaching and learning, as detailed in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2. Students’ Ratings of Foreign Language Teaching and Learning (NRG = 14; NCS = 266).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Ratings of Foreign Language Teaching and Learning</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (5)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Not Sure (3)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The program provided communicative competence in foreign languages.</td>
<td>0.0 5.3 42.9 27.8 28.6 30.5 14.3 28.9 14.3 7.5 100.0</td>
<td>3.0 2.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The foreign language lecturers were well qualified.</td>
<td>14.3 6.0 28.6 24.8 28.6 28.2 28.6 33.5 0.0 7.5 100.0</td>
<td>3.3 2.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The amount of time for foreign language subjects in the curriculum was appropriate.</td>
<td>14.3 4.9 42.9 45.9 28.6 23.7 14.3 21.1 0.0 4.5 100.0</td>
<td>3.6 3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The interns had opportunities to communicate with international customers.</td>
<td>0.0 3.0 28.6 21.8 0.0 34.6 42.9 29.3 28.6 11.3 100.0</td>
<td>2.3 2.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: RG = regent graduates; CS = current students
Generally, both groups of participants disagreed when asked if the programs provided them with communicative competence in foreign languages. In more detail, the number of current students who expressed their disagreement (36.4%) was greater than those who demonstrated their agreement (33.1%). The graduates appeared more positive with 42.9 per cent in agreement. However, a considerable number of those who were not sure (28.6%) or disagreed (28.6%) indicated that the graduates were somehow dissatisfied with foreign language teaching. The interview data clarified their attitude. According to Nghi, he could only communicate in English for common daily encounters but had trouble expressing himself with foreign tourists at work due to the lack of vocabulary in the tourism specialisation. With the same opinion, Huong reflected how, “We learnt English in three semesters, but I don’t think I can communicate well. I can only use simple language, not specific English for tourism.”

One of the frequent reasons for the above-mentioned outcomes was the teaching materials. They were thought to put more emphasis on general English communication rather than English for specific purposes. Di revealed, “The English textbooks were created by our English lecturers, so there were some limitations in their content. They did not focus on English vocabulary for tour guiding majors.” Similarly, Hai thought the textbooks were of low quality because her university used one English textbook to teach all majors. Some other graduates criticised the meagre resources for this subject at their institution.

The amount of time for foreign languages in the curriculum also accounted for the results of the foreign language teaching and learning. In response to the question whether the time for foreign language subjects in the curriculum was appropriate, 57.2 per cent of the graduates together with 50.8 per cent of the current students expressed their agreement. However, the students interviewed expressed satisfaction with the time allocated for general English only. Quite a few of the interviewees made complaints about specific English for Tourism. Nghi commented, “I only learnt 30 periods of specific English for Tourism. I think that was definitely not enough for us. The University intended to change the specific English into an optional subject. It is extremely unreasonable”. Similarly, Huong showed her discontent as follows,

The English periods in the curriculum were quite few in number. We didn’t have enough time to practise using English for communication. We mainly acquired English in theory. We definitely needed more English vocabulary or expressions in tourism contexts to apply in our workplace environment.

Hong added,
In my college, specific English for tourism was taught cursorily. The training program should be redesigned with more time for the English subject. It should give us more time for practice and provide us with more vocabulary for tourism contexts.

As the second foreign language, French was even more neglected than English, the main foreign language. According to Quyen and Hong, their college only “gave this subject a once-over”. The amount of time allocated for it was just adequate for the students to “get to know about French” and “hard to use it for communication in real life”.

The quality of lecturers was another factor that influenced the students’ language proficiency. Only 30.8 per cent of the current students manifested satisfaction, compared with 41 per cent who did not. The graduates were more positive about their lecturers’ expertise and teaching approach with 42.9 per cent in agreement. However, the disapproval rates were quite noticeable at 28.6 per cent. The interview data with the graduates gave a deeper insight in this regard.

Hong and Quyen described their French lecturers quite differently. According to Hong, her lecturer was “easy-going and sympathetic” with the students because “she understood that French was not considered as the main foreign language”. Hong detailed how,

She taught us a very basic knowledge of French, so I found it easy to understand. She gave us many exercises to practise carefully before the tests. She reduced the difficulty of the content, only focusing on basic knowledge which would be necessary for us to pass the tests to be competent for this subject.

The teacher’s action of lowering the level of difficulty for her students to pass the tests easily was highly appreciated by the students. However, it would consequently prevent the students from acquiring a satisfactory command of the target language.

In contrast, Quyen’s French lecturer was thought to be quite “rigid”. She described one teacher's lack of commitment as follows,

She gave us too many new words and she taught grammar fast. You know, French grammar is very complicated to understand. Consequently, most of us could not remember or use what she taught. I think her teaching method was
only one-way and book-based. She taught as if she wanted to finish the syllabus as quickly as possible. She did not care how much we acquired.

English lecturers also received diverse comments from the graduates with regard to their expertise and teaching methods. Over one third of the graduates (4/14) complimented their lecturers’ English proficiency. Phong talked about his lecturers with pride: “My English teachers had a good command of English in tourism contexts thanks to their experience as real tour guides. We benefited quite a lot from their knowledge.” Linh also expressed her satisfaction with her English lecturers, emphasising that their native-like pronunciation and good knowledge of this language inspired her to learn English. To the contrary, half of the graduates (7/14) expressed a negative attitude towards their English lecturers’ proficiency level. Several graduates sounded critical about the pronunciation of their English lecturers. Duyên regretted,

If I had had a chance to be taught by a teacher with good pronunciation or a teacher who used to study abroad, my English would have been better when I graduated. Lately, I have realised my English is much improved because I am attending an English course at a University of Foreign Languages. The teachers there have great pronunciation. They used to study abroad and communicate with native speakers. I don’t mean my college teachers were not good. They tried their best to teach us well but it was beyond their ability. I learnt with two English teachers during three years, but only one was good at pronunciation.

Some other graduates complained that their English lecturers lacked knowledge in tourism, so they could not satisfy the students’ enquires about expressions in tourism contexts.

Praise for the English lecturers’ teaching methods was overwhelmingly outnumbered by the critical feedback. Just two out of fourteen graduates expressed their satisfaction. According to Hai, she was impressed by the way her lecturers used interesting activities such as games or listening to songs to motivate the students in English lessons. In Linh’s opinion, her English lecturers were “dedicated” and “meticulous”. She explained how,

Our English lecturers taught us in English for real tours enthusiastically. They also asked us to present in front of the class and interact with other students to complete speaking tasks. Particularly, one English teacher willingly explained to us all what we were concerned about, such as how to distinguish American English and British English. This lecturer also taught us intonation carefully.
In contrast, approximately two thirds of the graduates showed their disappointment with the teaching methods of their lecturers. Huong was disapproving, “My English teacher was quite passive. She rigidly followed the content of the books and never assigned us communicative tasks. I think that was a one-way teaching method. In English lessons, she normally talked more than we did”. Another graduate, Thi, was more general in his comment,

My English teachers realised that we were only allowed to guide domestic tours after graduation. That is why they taught us just enough English knowledge for general communication instead of specific English for a tour guide. The practical parts did not focus on improving our communicative skills but only on grammatical exercises. Even though we had many practical English periods, our English proficiency could not be boosted. So, learning English in the college only was not enough. I myself have improved my English in many different ways such as attending English courses in English language centres and practising with foreign tourists in order to increase my fluency in English.

Lien made an important point when she compared her college English lecturers with the voluntary foreign lecturers. She said,

Without the appearance of two voluntary foreign teachers in the first and the second year, my English after three years learning at the college seemed useless. These teachers taught us only once a week but I found their way of teaching much more effective than my college teachers. They taught us communication skills through interesting activities.

Additionally, the environments for the students to make use of their command of foreign language should be taken into consideration. Even though the institutions facilitated English learning by providing sufficient materials, an adequate amount of time for English subject and well-qualified lecturers, the students were not able to improve their language proficiency without an environment in which to use it, as Phuong concluded from her own experience,

I found the English teaching in my college was all good. We had good English textbooks which provided us with enough knowledge for common communication. Our teachers were enthusiastic and had good expertise.
However, we still had trouble when communicating with foreign tourists in real life because we had to deal with lots of situations outside the textbooks.

The interview data confirmed the lack of an English environment for the students in some institutions. Duyen gave a detailed comment,

Actually, my English skill improved thanks to my part-time job at a bar where lots of foreigners communicated with me in English. At the school, I spent more than 200 periods on the Basic English subject and 360 periods on the Tourism English subject with Vietnamese teachers. Fortunately, there was a foreign volunteer who was a teaching assistant helping us by reading lectures loudly, so we could hear his voice and correct our pronunciation ourselves. However, we had no opportunity to communicate with him. I attended an English club but it was not effective, truly speaking, because we usually communicated with each other in Vietnamese. The college also organised some English contests but they were not effective either because only good students were eligible to participate. The college should have organised contests on a large scale for all students rather than restricting the number of applicants.

From another college, Quyen recounted,

We rarely practised communication, just in the oral exams when we were interviewed by our examiners. We took part in group activities in which we were asked to talk with each other. Nevertheless, some excellent English students normally dominated the conversations and that means the less eloquent students had no chances to practise speaking. Neither did we have chances to have contact with foreigners. We once welcomed a group of Thai visitors but we just exchanged some simple greetings in English. That’s it. There were no English clubs in our college at all. That’s a pity, I think.

Hong suggested that her college should organise more extra-curricular activities for students to communicate with foreigners in real life. She gave an example “We can play roles as reporters and conduct a survey with foreigners. Activities such as this will surely improve students’ speaking skills.”
On a positive note, Kha and Hai confirmed that their universities occasionally organised such extra-curricular activities. They were also required to write reports on what they had done. Likewise, Linh highly appreciated the opportunity to communicate with voluntary foreign students coming to her college. She said,

> Our college invited some international students into our school. We had an opportunity to talk with them freely. They also helped us enthusiastically by correcting our mistakes. They created a specific theme every month for us to discuss. From those conversations, I learned much and my English knowledge was improved.

From the comments above, it seemed that all of the institutions in this study were aware of the importance of creating an environment for the students to practise their foreign language. However, in certain circumstances, some of them could not succeed in providing stimulating communication activities.

Ideally, the internships were designed to give the interns opportunities to improve their foreign language by communicating with tourists in the real world. However, in reality, those chances were quite slim. The survey data revealed the disappointing result that 71.5 per cent of the graduates and 40.6 per cent of the current students confirmed that they did not have opportunities to communicate with foreign tourists. The interview data clarified that although several interns (4/14) were fortunate to come into contact with foreigners at their work places, they just exchanged simple greetings or made small talk with them rather than working with or for them. As Di recounted, “During my internship, I communicated with foreigners twice; once for street directions and the other time for small talk. But neither of the conversations was related to my specialisation.” The other graduates revealed that there were no international tourists visiting their companies or they were not assigned tasks which involved dealing with foreigners.

Finally, the assessment of foreign language proficiency in the selected institutions was taken into account in order to complete the appraisal of the foreign language teaching and learning. Overall, to be competent in foreign language subjects, students underwent both written and oral tests, according to the interview data. The written forms included multiple-choice tests or essay writing tests. The oral tests required students to give a presentation on a topic prepared in advance and to be interviewed by an examiner afterwards. Many of the graduates were critical of the results of both forms of assessment. For instance, Hong criticised the fact that,
The English tests did not truly reflect the students’ knowledge of English. We often learnt by heart model sentences and wrote them in exam papers. Actually we mechanically copied them without thinking. If the tests were designed differently from what we had learned, we failed to give correct answers.

Another graduate, Kha also mentioned the negative side of English tests,

The lecturers brought exactly the knowledge we had learnt in class into tests. I think that was not good because this way of testing only encouraged rote learning. We could achieve high marks in English tests but failed to communicate in English well in real life.

Table 8.3 presents the comparison of the opinions of university versus college students and students from public versus non-public institutions about the quality of foreign language teaching and learning.

Table 8.3. Reports of Mean Scores and T-test Results for Foreign Language Teaching and Learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Ratings of Foreign Language Teaching and Learning</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Mean scores</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The program provided communicative competence in foreign languages.</td>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>-1.521</td>
<td>.129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public institutions</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The foreign language lecturers were well qualified.</td>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>-3.910</td>
<td>.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public institutions</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The amount of time for foreign language subjects in the curriculum was appropriate.</td>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>-2.306</td>
<td>.022*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>.935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public institutions</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The interns had opportunities to communicate with international customers.</td>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>-1.483</td>
<td>.629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-public institutions</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>.598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public institutions</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
<td>.550</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* < .05 ; *** < .001

While the university students thought the tourism programs did not satisfactorily provide them with communicative competence in foreign language (mean = 2.9), their college counterparts were slightly more positive (mean = 3.1). In a similar vein, the students from public institutions (mean = 2.8) were rather more critical about this than those from the non-public institutions (mean = 3.1). Regarding the quality of foreign language lecturers, the statistics showed that the university or non-public lecturers were significantly less qualified than those from colleges or
public institutions (t (264) = -3.910; p < .001 and t (264) = -3.526; p< .001 respectively). When asked whether the amount of time for foreign language subjects in the curriculum was appropriately allocated, the university students were significantly less favourable than their college counterparts (t (264) = -2.306; p < .05) whereas the investigation of the non-public and public students showed no significant differences. The students from all institutions expressed similar disappointment about the few opportunities to communicate with international customers that the tourism programs brought to them (means ranged from 2.7 to 2.8).

### 8.6 AN APPRAISAL OF TOURISM RECENT GRADUATES’ ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

As seen in Table 8.4, the English language proficiency of thirteen recent graduates evaluated by an English native speaker mirrored the actual quality of the English language teaching and learning which was derived from the three stakeholders’ perspectives presented in previous sections. The appraisal was based on four assessment criteria including discourse elements and three linguistic aspects of English: vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. The ratings were conducted on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 5 (excellent) to 1 (poor).

**Table 8.4. An English Native Speaker’s Appraisal of Recent Graduates’ English Language Proficiency (N = 13) in Percentages.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Excellent (5)</th>
<th>Good (4)</th>
<th>Average (3)</th>
<th>Fair (2)</th>
<th>Poor (1)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fluency and Coherence</td>
<td>• Speaks fluently without frequent repeating or making self correction; any hesitation is content-related rather than to find words or grammar&lt;br&gt;• Speaks coherently with fully appropriate cohesive features&lt;br&gt;• Uses a range of connectives with flexibility</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Range and Word Choice</td>
<td>• Uses a wide range of appropriate vocabulary with precise word choice&lt;br&gt;• Uses idiomatic language naturally and accurately</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical Range and Accuracy</td>
<td>• Uses a wide range of grammatical structures flexibly&lt;br&gt;• Produces accurate structures</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>• Produces comprehensible pronunciation&lt;br&gt;• L1 accent has minimal effect on intelligibility</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall, the assessment was more skew towards the negative end of the scale. No graduate was appraised as “excellent”, while some graduates (11.6%) were evaluated as “poor” on all criteria. The majority of the graduates (76.9%) were ranked “average” or below on most of the criteria.

In respect to fluency and coherence, although 30.8 per cent of the graduates were appraised as quite fluent and coherent, nearly half (46.2%) of the graduates were thought to be only average speakers of English and 23.1 per cent assessed as unsatisfactory. The assessor also commented that these graduates “lacked confidence”, had “long silences” and “pauses”, expressed “hesitation”, used a lot of “umm ahh”, “repeated themselves” and gave only “simple agreements” like “yes”. From the researcher’s observation during the recording, it was true that many of the graduates (8/13) paused for quite a long time (more than ten seconds) to think of appropriate phrases to express themselves. The researcher had to wait or prompted them with expressions to keep the discourse going. Half of the graduates admitted frankly to the researcher that they were not confident in speaking English and that they had never spoken English to guide tours as such before. The graduates’ facial expressions also showed that they were afraid of making mistakes, and needed the researcher’s encouragement. One graduate even provided the researcher with misleading historical information when introducing a tourist attraction due to her nervousness. As the graduates had been informed of the role-play in advance, three of them had prepared a presentation at home and while talking with the researcher, had to refer to their notes for ideas and expressions. One third of the graduates doing a role-play as office staff in travel agencies read from the leaflets and brochures instead of talking to the researcher about the tours. Several graduates (4/13) failed to understand some of the researcher’s questions, so to keep the conversations going, she had to paraphrase, use simpler words and slow down her speech to make herself understood.

With regard to lexical range and word choice, 38.5 per cent of the graduates were evaluated as “good” while nearly half of the graduates (46.2%) were thought to be “average” and 15.4 per cent “fair” and “poor”. These figures reflect the fact that most of the graduates had a limited range of vocabulary. The assessor confirmed that some graduates needed “prompts for appropriate terms”. In particular, in two situations when the researcher roleplayed with two graduates consecutively, the signals for prompts from their peers were conspicuous. While one graduate was performing the role-play, the other was sometimes requested to prompt through eye contact. During the presentation, a large number of the graduates (10/13) used Vietnamese words and asked the researcher for their equivalents. They were not only stuck on specialised terminology such as architecture, stalagmites, altar, agricultural museum, or mausoleum but also on very simple words like snakes or transport. Almost no idioms were produced by the graduates.
Only a small number (15.4%) of the graduates were appraised as “good” at making grammatically accurate structures while approximately 85 per cent were marked as “average” and below. In an education system which highlights the mastery of grammatical knowledge in a foreign language as in Vietnam, this result was surprising and disappointing. However, it was somewhat understandable when the students focus so much on writing and do not have many opportunities to apply the grammatical knowledge to actual communication. Many expressions sounded clumsy and awkward due to grammatical errors. Examples for grammatically impaired sentences were replete, mainly including the wrong use of word class, confusion of plural or singular forms, and incorrect conjugation of verbs as follows: We will can organise a tour for you; Buddhism is always follow us, you and me to the good thing although they have scare or the ugly face or some body is not nice; ...you can see the mountain have symbol like this; You don’t can play game at village; There’s seven floor; If you in here, you see glass colourful; It transport from French etc. These sentences sounded more akin to pidgin English than the standard English that the graduates were taught in their mainstream training institutions.

The graduates’ pronunciation was the most unsatisfactory aspect of the criteria. The number of graduates who were assessed as “good” at pronunciation was very low (7.7%) whereas the number of graduates who were marked as “average” (30.8%) and particularly “fair” and “poor” (61.6%) was significant. The assessor further commented that the graduates were strongly influenced by their first language. The researcher’s notes echoed this evaluation. The graduates either lacked final sounds or incorrectly added final sounds such as married(s), lady(s); or great(s). Most of them neglected intonation in their speech. Some words were even mispronounced, which distorted their meaning and rendered them incomprehensible. For example, chime was pronounced /ʃɪm/ instead of /ʃaɪm/; pour as /pʊə(r)/ instead of /pɔː(r)/; or relics as /relɪk/ instead of /ˈrelɪk/; heaven as /ˈhɪəvn/ instead of /ˈhevn/ etc. Some words were not stressed in the right position such as elephant pronounced as /ˈɛlɪfənt/, not /ˈelɪfənt/ or harmonious as /ˈhɑːməˈnɪəs/, not /ˈhɑːmənɪəs/ etc., which might also lead to incomprehensibility. Many unfamiliar sounds to the Vietnamese phonetic system were not correctly pronounced such as /θ/ in everything or /ð/ in although. In particular, one graduate kept adding unnecessary schwa sounds into words, for example, “sculpture” pronounced as /ˈsʌklɪpʃə/. Several graduates, for some reasons, spoke much more slowly than a natural speed, which caused discomfort to the listener.

Table 8.5 summarises the overall ratings of the graduates’ proficiency in English arranged in a descending order. The four criteria were equally weighed and the average score of each graduate was calculated.
Table 8.5. Average Scores of Graduates’ Proficiency in English (N=13).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Average Scores (/5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quyen</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phong</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duyen</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trung</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thi</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lien</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phi</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nghi</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linh</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hai</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huong</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kha</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: A, B, C, and D are public institutions. E and F are non-public institutions.

The graduates receiving above average ratings mainly came from Institutions B, C and F. Although the two private institutions, E and F, were well evaluated by the lecturers and students, the English proficiency results of their students were somewhat disappointing. The one graduate, Trung, from Institution F, which places great emphasis on English development, did not rank highly. In particular, the graduates in Institution E ranked almost last in the list of the appraised participants.

8.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has presented the views of the stakeholders towards the teaching of English and French in the six institutions. English prevailed in all of the six tourism training institutions as the main foreign language. The second foreign language to be taught was French but in only two institutions, B and E.

The lecturing staff and the students in institution B agreed that the attention to French was limited when the allocated time for it only sufficed to provide students with basic French knowledge to create simple exchanges. The French lecturers, from the graduates’ perspectives, were from two extremes: one was too rigid and demanding but neglecting the students’ needs, while the other was too easy-going and caring about students’ needs but neglected the academic rigour of this subject. Neither attitude was pedagogically appropriate, which could explain the students’ indifference toward this subject and unsatisfactory outcomes. In institution E, French was well developed as it was the main language of instruction resulting from the university’s affiliation with a prestigious French university around a joint internationally recognised degree.
However, this program was only limited to a small number of students who had financially strong backgrounds.

Although English was the main foreign language in all institutions, its teaching and learning, particularly in government institutions, did not satisfy all of the stakeholders. Both the educators and the industry practitioners converged in their dissatisfaction with the students’ level of proficiency in English, especially the listening and speaking skills. All of the institutions measured their students’ level of English proficiency based on international language tests such as TOEIC or IELTS etc. Many students had difficulties in achieving the required scores in this subject to be eligible for graduation and many graduates failed to meet employers’ requirements for English proficiency, particularly where their speaking skills were concerned. The appraisal of the graduates’ level of English proficiency through role-plays with the researcher reiterated the unsatisfactory outcomes of the English teaching and learning at their tertiary institutions. The majority of the graduates were evaluated to be at average or below level. Among the four criteria of evaluation, the graduates’ pronunciation was considered the least satisfactory. Several factors which explained this situation were identified by the three stakeholders.

The students’ low level of English proficiency on entry to the institutions was one common cause for their failure at the graduation stage. This could be traced back to their secondary education at which English is taught rigidly using the grammar translation method whilst communication skills are still something alien. Several years at the tertiary institutions were not able to improve the situation as the students seemed to “start from scratch”. Paradoxically, the proficiency evaluation revealed that a large number of graduates produced grammatically incorrect sentences although they had already been provided with grammar exercises at their secondary schools.

Moreover, the lecturing staff and the students agreed unanimously that the role of English in the four government institutions received less attention from the lecturers and leaders than in the two private ones. In particular, in the three government colleges - due to the Tourism Law which did not allow college graduates to work as international tour guides - EFL was not highlighted. The indifference to this subject was most clearly expressed by the lecturers in the second case study.

The quality of the lecturers might also be an element in these unexpected outcomes. A very low number of graduates were satisfied with the lecturers’ proficiency, while a large number of the students expressed their doubt and dissatisfaction with the quality of the lecturers. Criticism was specifically given to their pronunciation, their lack of knowledge about their tourism discipline.
being such that they were unable to integrate this in their lesson delivery and, notably, their teaching methods.

The allocation of time for English, especially English for Tourism, in the programs was thought to be inadequate in Institutions A and D. The lecturers in Institutions B and C claimed that this subject was given sufficient, not to say excessive, time but disappointingly, they were also unable to improve their students’ English proficiency. The appraisal of the graduates’ English competence confirmed this. For the two private universities, the amount of time allocated for English satisfied the lecturers. However, the graduates’ competency in English was also not high. In the last case study, English was employed as the main language of instruction for specialisation subjects. This innovation motivated the students to equip themselves with English competence and also created an impetus for the lecturers to upgrade their English proficiency to be able to deliver lessons satisfactorily in the target language.

Materials and facilities were another reason given for the unsatisfactory outcomes of English proficiency in the state-owned institutions. The lecturers all commented that there were no standard materials for the English subject and the lecturers themselves had to decide on their own materials. In some institutions, the lecturers made use of existing materials available on the market while in other institutions, the lecturers wrote the materials themselves based on the guidelines of the Ministry. The graduates, however, did not give high rating to the in-house materials. Some lecturers revealed that they needed to adjust the level of material to suit the students’ actual level. On the one hand, this adjustment enhanced the students’ motivation to study this subject, but it caused failure to upgrade the students’ level to meet the requirements for graduation on the other. As the lecturers in institution A revealed, the material lacked practical knowledge in the students’ specialisation, focusing on grammar and vocabulary rather than on functional language. Teaching facilities were reported to exist but were not as adequate as in the private institutions due to financial limitations.

In particular, the lack of an environment for the students to practise English was a noticeable feature conceded by all three stakeholders. In comparison with the two private institutions which organised various activities on a regular basis such as English clubs, talks with English speaking people or English competitions to encourage their students to communicate in English, the four government institutions provided fewer opportunities to communicate with foreigners. In the three colleges, there were not even any English speaking clubs. Even in the workplace-learning phrase, opportunities to lead international tours, to accompany experienced tour guides on those tours and to communicate or deal with international tourists were said to be lacking.
Finally, of all the aspects of English teaching to be examined, the assessments received the most divergent opinions from the lecturers and students. According to the academic staff, assessments were appraised as the most effective. They acted as a stimulus to the students’ awareness of improving their English proficiency to complete the subject competently. The tests were mostly conducted orally to test the students’ ability to use English for public presentation and personal communication. However, the students complained that the assessments were more focused on rote-learning than on creative and critical expressions.
Chapter 9: Discussion and Conclusions

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In the current era of on-going socio-economic globalisation, international travel and the tourism industry have grown exponentially. This as a consequence generates the requirement for sufficient human resources with relevant qualities and attributes to meet the demands of international tourists. The Vietnamese tourism industry, on the way to integration into the globalisation patterns, annually welcomes approximately 7.5 million international tourists (General Statistics Office, 2013) but is currently confronted with a shortage of skilled professionals in the travel sector (Khanh 2012; Thao, 2012; Vi, 2010). Specifically, employees in this sector, including tour guides, tour operators and travel agents, are still lacking in specialised knowledge and skills, foreign language proficiency and life skills that tourism companies and tourists expect from them (Linh, 2014a; Loc, 2012; Nguyen, 2012).

According to the literature, the HE and VET sectors in Vietnam, which were deemed as mainly responsible for their incompetent graduates, were problematic in many aspects, including governmental and institutional management, the quality of lectures and students, the design, implementation and assessment of curriculum, and foreign language teaching and learning (Dinh et al., 2014; Hayden & Thiep, 2010; Hong, 2011; Minh, 2014; Thanh 2011a, 2011b; Tong, 2013; Tran, 2014). Although WIL initiatives, including the internships and other forms of practical learning, are incorporated into the curricula of tertiary institutions (Ngo, 2010; Tran, 2014; Women of Ho Chi Minh City, 2010) and English is a compulsory subject in both of the educational sectors, their effectiveness in providing the graduates with the necessary employable skills required by employers in the globalisation era is still questionable.

Despite some literature on VET and HE sectors in Vietnam in general, to date there has been no empirical research evaluating tourism programs in particular from the perspectives of stakeholders. The central objective of this thesis was to examine the effectiveness of the WIL process and foreign language training in tertiary tourism programs in selected universities and colleges in Vietnam, in particular in providing employable graduates to meet the needs of international tourists. This effectiveness was evaluated from the perspectives of (a) lecturing staff; (b) managers in tourism companies and internship mentors; and (c) current students and recent graduates. The significance of this thesis, hence, lies in its originality. It is hoped that the findings of this study will serve as guidelines for better practice for the stakeholders of WIL, including (1) curriculum designers, related authorised ministries and leaders of tourism colleges.
or universities, (2) internship mentors and lecturers in tourism institutions together with their students, and (3) employers along with their international customers.

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, a multi-faceted research design was created under the umbrella of evaluation research where the case study was the core methodology. Four instruments of data collection, responding to five research aims (*semi-structured interviews, document analysis, role-plays, and questionnaire surveys*) were then employed as shown in Table 9.1.

**Table 9.1. Summary of Research Aims, Methods of Data Collection and Participants.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Aims</th>
<th>Methods of Data Collection</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To examine the current state-of-play of WIL in selected representative universities and colleges in Vietnam from the perspective of teaching staff.</td>
<td>Document analysis of the curriculum of each selected institution Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>3 Deans and 3 Deputy Deans of Tourism Faculty in 6 institutions 15 tourism lecturers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To study the attitudes of managers of tourism companies and internship mentors towards (i) tourism education programs; (ii) the internship; and (iii) the tourism specific attributes, and generic competencies of the graduates.</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>13 HR managers 5 internship mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To study the perspectives of current students and recent graduates towards the tourism education programs and the WIL initiatives in the selected tourism training institutions.</td>
<td>Questionnaire surveys Follow up semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>266 current majors in Tour Guiding and Travel Management programs 14 recent graduates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To study the design and implementation of English and French sequences in tourism training institutions from the perspectives of the stakeholders.</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews Survey</td>
<td>3 Deans and 3 Deputy Deans 11 English lecturers 1 French lecturer 13 HR managers 5 internship mentors 14 recent graduates 266 current students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To evaluate the recent tourism graduates’ communicative competence with international tourists in English.</td>
<td>Role-plays</td>
<td>13 recent graduates 1 native English speaker as an assessor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data collected were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively to investigate their relevance to the research problem and associated research questions. The key findings analysed in the previous four chapters will be recapitulated and discussed in this chapter with links to the relevant literature in order to answer the research questions and the above aims. Three major findings responding to the research questions include: (1) the influential factors impacting on the quality of tourism training programs in Vietnam; (2) the design, implementation and assessment of WIL in six selected Vietnamese tourism training institutions from the
perspectives of stakeholders; and (3) the appraisal of the internationalisation of tourism education in Vietnam from the perspectives of stakeholders. Recommendations with specific roles of the parties engaging in WIL processes will be proposed in relation to the relevant literature reviewed in Chapter Two. Finally, limitations and recommendations for further research will also be addressed.

9.2 INFLUENTIAL FACTORS ON THE QUALITY OF TOURISM PROGRAMS

Three main factors influencing the design, implementation and assessment of an educational program were identified as government management, quality of lecturers and quality of students on entry. In this study, these three elements were clearly found to be critical.

9.2.1 Laws and governance

The design, implementation and assessment of WIL are regulated by Vietnamese laws and controlled by the authorised ministries. Therefore, a sensible law, straightforward guidelines and sound management by the government authorities were found to be strongly influencing the success of the WIL processes. The findings revealed that the expectations of educators, students, and industry practitioners in vocational training areas in general and tourism training in specific were not being met by the Vietnamese government. The laws and regulations were still loose and divorced from reality, causing difficulties to the practitioners. Cumbersome and inconsistent governance of tourism training institutions in Vietnam in general, and the tight control that MOET and MOLISA exercised over the operating system and the curriculum design of the institutions in particular were found to minimise the success of the WIL processes in the institutions. These findings were consistent with the comments of Hayden and Thiep (2010) and Tong (2013).

As complicated as the governance was, the role of government as liaison between the companies and institutions in work placement was almost invisible. All of the participants conceded that there had been no legal system to control the compliance of the WIL activities in the host organisations or to protect the students’ rights. However, companies were still reluctant to sign official arrangements with the institutions in accepting and supervising interns to avoid the risk of liability for the interns they admitted. Furthermore, there had been no governmental policies to promote those linkages, particularly in regard to companies.
In contrast, some laws were passed without considering the actual requirements of the tourism sector. A conspicuous example found in this study was the Vietnamese Tourism Law passed in 2005 which required an international tour guide permit holder to have evidence of foreign language proficiency and either a four-year Bachelor degree in Tour Guiding, or in any other major, together with a certificate in Tour Guiding. According to this law, college graduates with a three-year bachelor degree were not eligible for guiding an international tour even though they had advanced proficiency in a foreign language. As a consequence, college students and even college lecturers are rather indifferent attitude towards foreign language learning and teaching even as the demand for graduates with foreign language competence is still soaring.

Another example of the separation of government policies from the reality were the laws concerning salary levels for lecturers, particularly those in government institutions. The full time permanent lecturers were not paid according to their qualifications and ability but according to their seniority of age, which was also in line with the findings of Hayden and Thiep (2010). This regulation would neither appeal to potential lecturers with a strong reputation or academic background nor motivate existing lecturers to upgrade their qualifications and improve their competencies. Furthermore, it resulted in the shortages of staff and the brain drain of lecturers from government institutions to non-public institutions where salaries are higher and paid in a more equitable manner. The quality of lecturers as a consequence of the salary conditions will be detailed in the next section.

9.2.2 Quality of lecturing staff

The current students’ evaluation about the quality of their lecturers via questionnaire was, to some extent, contradicted by the interview data drawn from the graduates. Although students generally expressed their satisfaction with their lecturers in the survey, appraising them as knowledgeable and skilled, the interviewed graduates revealed that not all lecturers met the students’ expectations of teaching quality. On the surface, most of the teaching staff of the six institutions held qualifications in compliance with Vietnamese Education Law passed in 2005. However, the qualifications of many lecturers, according to the graduates, actually did not match the area that they were teaching. The lecturers when interviewed echoed this, explaining that many lecturers were assigned to teach different subjects, even those outside their expertise due to staff shortages. The discrepancy in the opinions between the graduates and current students might stem from their working experience and their current relationship with the lecturers. Since the graduates had left the institutions and had experience in the real world of work, they expressed more critical viewpoints of the lecturers who they felt should have prepared them better for their careers. In contrast, the current students were not yet exposed to
the reality of the workplace and were having dependency relationship with their lecturers, so they seemed to be more reluctant to give negative feedback.

Although the number of lecturers holding Masters and PhDs in the universities was greater than those in the colleges, the students from universities were slightly less positive about the lecturers’ competence in their expertise than those from the colleges. This finding probably resulted from the fact that the tourism lecturers in the universities with hands-on experience in the tourism industry were outnumbered by their college counterparts. As a result, they could not impart as much practical knowledge to the students as the college lecturers. They revealed that there were no official requirements that the lecturers in discipline-specific majors have updated industry experience. Those who had experience in the tourism industry either used to work in the industry or were doing part-time jobs for extra earnings rather than for the training benefits, which was in tune with the findings of Thanh (2011a).

The college lecturers, in contrast, possessed fewer research skills since they were offered fewer opportunities and a less appropriate environment for research than their university counterparts. The lecturers justified their failure to undertake research as due to excessive teaching loads. However, the lecturers revealed that it was the lack of self-motivation and incentives from the institution leaders that really hindered them from engaging in research work. This result aligns with the previous findings in the literature (Dao & Hayden, 2010; Hayden & Lam, 2010; Tong, 2013).

The students did not rate favourably the teaching methods of the lecturers although the interviewed lecturers claimed that they normally innovated their teaching delivery with technological devices, particularly projectors, computers and power point slide shows. The learners actually expected more than “just slide shows” and “preaching”. This means that the application of technology needed to be “innovative” in an actual sense. It shows that the lecturers had not improved much upon the “gurus” who simply spoon-fed students in the teacher-centred approach found in the literature (Thanh, 2011b; Tran, 2014). Despite their critical comments, the students acknowledged the lecturers’ efforts in applying innovative approaches to lesson delivery, and design of in-house materials.

All of the institutions implemented policies of professional development with various activities, namely encouraging their staff to upgrade their qualifications, organising teaching competitions, reciprocal peer observations etc. However, these activities in some government institutions were thought to be a formality and their actual quality was questionable.
9.2.3 Quality of students on entry

The quality of students on entry was measured by the results of the entrance examinations or high school profiles and was influenced by some social and financial factors. Government students were considered to be academically stronger than their non-public counterparts, since government institutions attracted students from all financial backgrounds with low tuition fees, whilst non-public programs were only affordable to affluent students. Furthermore, due to the influence of the reputation of the institutions, higher quality students enrolled in government institutions. Therefore, a majority of students who had lower entrance examination scores and could not obtain admission to a public sector institution pursued their programs in a non-public one.

Comparing universities to colleges, university students were deemed more qualified than their college counterparts on entry. Normally, the students enrolled in colleges after being rejected by universities, particularly by government universities. Once again, due to the emphasis that Vietnamese society places on qualifications, a university degree holder had more advantages than a college bachelor on the Vietnamese employment market. For those aiming for an international tour-guiding permit, this distinction was strongly influential, as shown by Vietnamese Tourism Law 2005 mentioned earlier. Therefore, the university graduates obviously possessed competitive advantages over the college graduates.

In summary, the prior knowledge and skills that the students had achieved at the secondary level of education would somewhat influence the performance and results they gained at the tertiary level, as outlined in Hong (2011) and Tran (2014). The students in the government university were evaluated as having the strongest academic profiles on entry. Ranked second were the students in the non-public universities. The students from the colleges were appraised as the least academically strong as measured by university entrance exams and high school graduation profiles.

9.3 DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT OF WIL IN VIETNAMESE TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTIONS FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF STAKEHOLDERS

The WIL processes encompassed three main phases: design, implementation and assessment. In order to evaluate the design of WIL, this study examined what outcomes were claimed by the institutions, how the curriculum of tourism programs was designed and how facilities and
materials were prepared to facilitate the WIL initiatives. The second phase examined how WIL was implemented, including the investigation of campus-based activities to enhance practical learning, the internship, and the activities to develop students’ generic skills. The final phase was to evaluate the WIL processes.

9.3.1 Design of WIL

A well-conceived design of WIL serves as a thorough preparation for the students before undertaking their roles in actual practical learning. The investigation into their curricula, teaching materials and facilities compared with the program outcomes showed that the outcomes claimed by the institutions were not wholly achieved and the students were relatively ill-prepared for the practical learning phase.

9.3.1.1 Claimed outcomes

The outcomes of the tourism programs claimed by the institutions were triangulated with the actual outcomes of these programs from the perspectives of the students and companies. All of the six institutions claimed that the aims of the tourism programs were to provide their students with general knowledge and skills about tourism and generic skills. These claimed outcomes were consistent with the suggestions of WIL experts in the literature (Fleming et al., 2009; Morgan, 2004; Orrell, 2004; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005; Yorke, 2006).

The students agreed that sufficient knowledge of tourism in general had been provided. They also responded that the college programs provided more specialised knowledge and skills than the university ones whereas all institutions, except for D, aimed to provide the learners with specialisation knowledge and skills, particularly for tour guiding. The three universities also promised to build up their learners’ managerial skills in business and tourism. The companies, however, refuted those claimed outcomes, blaming the institutions for creating graduates without work readiness as required by the industry. The interns’ and graduates’ specialised knowledge and skills were appraised to be at a basic level only and the recently graduated staff needed to be trained further by the companies to satisfy industry requirements.

9.3.1.2 Curriculum design of tourism training programs

There was inconsistency in the application of the credit-based and fixed-semester systems across the institutions. Three colleges were still operating under the fixed-semester system.
Three universities within the same management system were applying two different teaching and learning frameworks. While Institutions D and F had switched to the credit-based system, Institution E was still following the traditional one. The incongruence was a challenge for the students who required credit-transfer from one institution to another.

Although the credit-based system was considered a breakthrough in reforming the quality of education since it emphasises students’ autonomy and focuses on learner-centeredness, its application took time and required systematic and strategic planning to be successful. Two main obstacles in the transition stage were the teachers and the learners. The lecturers were expected to have more preparation time and to apply innovative teaching methods (i.e. the learner-centred method), while they were limited in time due to staff shortages and could not escape from the in-grained teacher-centred teaching styles which Thanh (2011b) and Tran (2014) had identified. Likewise, the students were not able to adapt to the new system in a short span of time since they were evaluated to be lacking in independent learning styles, similarly as Hong (2011) and Thanh (2011b) also maintained.

The findings also showed that the curricula of the two different educational systems (i.e. HE and VET) were designed according to different philosophies. The curricula of the university programs were more liberally than vocationally oriented, while the college programs were highly vocational. In more detail, the university students were significantly less pleased with the distribution of theoretical and practical elements in the curricula than their college counterparts. The results of the questionnaire similarly indicated that the college curricula were found to include more specialised skills than the curricula of universities. From the companies’ perspectives, the HR managers and internship mentors interviewed felt that there was an imbalance between the theoretical and practical parts of tourism training programs, especially in the universities. While much time is spent on theoretical aspects, practical issues seem somewhat neglected. The interviewees also commented that the teaching content did not provide the students with the necessary knowledge and skills required by the companies.

Although the curricula of colleges were more vocationally designed and preferred by the students and companies, they contained plenty of shortcomings due to the tight control of the authorised bodies. The colleges had to strictly comply with most of the guidelines issued by MOLISA and the GDVT despite the fact that these guidelines were still under development, as also outlined in Dinh et al. (2014). The lecturers revealed that due to the lack of staff, the authorised body that approved the training framework for tourism programs did not have the relevant expertise. Therefore, the curricula of the colleges still had limitations, including an uneven distribution of theory and practice, content overlap, insufficient time for important
subjects etc. The universities, despite being too academic and theoretical, were allowed some modifications, so they could make amendments to deal with these questionable elements in their curricula. Commendably, the two non-public universities, and in particular Institution F, were very innovative when they included new subjects in their curricula. Compared with the findings of Hayden and Thiep (2010), universities were given some more autonomy than they had been in the past.

Therefore, autonomy in curriculum design is highly recommended and a better model would be a balance of both vocational and academic outcomes as Tribe (2002, 2005) also proposed.

Despite the dissatisfaction of the stakeholders, after being put into practice, the curricula were not officially evaluated at the national level, whereas the WIL experts suggested that there should be both formal and informal mechanisms for gathering feedback (Patrick et al., 2008). Nor were the curricula proposed by the institutions, especially the universities, systematically appraised due to the lack of guidelines from the upper level of management.

9.3.1.3 Evaluation of materials and facilities

Both the lecturers and the students concurred in the evaluation of the materials and facilities of the institutions. They agreed that materials in the universities or non-public institutions were more copious and of superior quality than those in the colleges or government institutions. In terms of quantity, universities accommodated libraries with larger holdings than colleges. Regarding the quality, while the universities had more freedom in the choice of materials, the colleges were restricted by the regulations of the authorised ministry which enforced the application of suggested training materials written by nominated institutions. However, these materials were appraised as too general or theoretical and even error-prone.

Furthermore, all of the institutions investigated encountered a shortage of resources for specialist materials, particularly Vietnamese ones. Therefore, the lecturers were required to write in-house materials by compiling various resources and translating foreign materials into Vietnamese. Nevertheless, the quality of these materials was still questionable. Taking the quality of the lecturers, particularly those from colleges, whose qualifications and research skills were found to be limited, into consideration, the quality of the materials written by them cannot be highly valued. Another point is that no validation had been officially conducted. Regarding the focus of internationalising tourism training and providing the students with the opportunity to improve their foreign language proficiency, the insistence of lecturers on providing Vietnamese materials for the students to read seemed unconvincing, compared to the
suggestions of Edward et al. (2013). Furthermore, the findings also indicated that the habit of using textbooks as the main sources of information, as criticised by Thanh (2011b), was still continuing.

The facilities in non-public institutions were thought to be more plentiful than those in their government counterparts. Despite being renovated and furnished with fixed facilities such as computers, projectors, and microphones, those facilities in the government institutions failed to operate satisfactorily sometimes, which negatively impacted on the quality of teaching. The lack of practical rooms or specialist equipment in some government institutions was also an issue raised by both participating groups.

9.3.2 Implementation of WIL

Types of WIL were rather varied, ranging from activities carried out on campus to internships at work sites. Despite the variety, many of these activities were not deemed productive.

9.3.2.1 On-campus WIL activities

The lecturers asserted that all of the institutions in this study incorporated campus-based activities for practical learning in their programs such as practical tours, simulations, field trips, invitation of guest speakers and lecturers from the industry. These strategies were highly recommended in the literature (Fleming et al., 2008; Hoek et al., 2011; Jackson, 2014; Patrick et al., 2008). However, the in-depth investigation showed that there was still room for improvement.

The colleges gave their students more opportunities to journey on practical tours than the universities. They were vocationally oriented and were applying a fixed semester curricula, which allowed all the students in one intake to go on tours concurrently. In this sense, the credit-based system hindered many universities from arranging an appropriate time for excursions that last for several days. Field trips were sometimes conducted in some institutions but they were reliant on the initiatives of the lecturers delivering relevant subjects rather than being included as mandatory components of the curriculum, except for Institution F.

Situations simulated from a real work environment such as role-plays and problem-solving scenarios, as proffered by Fleming et al. (2008) and Lateef (2010), were a common classroom technique used by the lecturers in most institutions to give their students practical learning opportunities. The students, in contrast, countered that the group activities were not effective
due to the unequal distribution of tasks among members. While some could benefit from these activities, many others barely got involved except to satisfy the academic formalities.

Projects were recommended by Coll and Zegward (2006) as a strategy to enhance WIL effectiveness. However, only Institution F stood out in this respect. It organised annual projects and large events to encourage the participation of students in tourism majors to gain more real world experience.

Guest speakers from the tourism industry were invited to share information about the tourism industry and the expectations of future employers with the lecturers and students. Tourism experts were also invited for consultation and feedback on the curriculum design in three universities. Nonetheless, only a small number of company managers confirmed that their services were utilised and whether or not their ideas were used was not clear.

Finally, the recruitment of guest lecturers working in the tourism industry was mentioned by the lecturers as another strategy that all of the institutions employed to enhance practical learning. But only some company staff interviewed confirmed their engagement in teaching positions in tourism institutions. However, they expressed their dissatisfaction when they had to prepare the lessons by themselves without adequate support from the institutions. They also revealed that they only worked for non-public institutions since they were paid more thanks to their stronger financial position.

In brief, practical tours were the highlights of college programs since they applied the vocational philosophy and fixed-semester system. Except for this, they were weak at organising other on-campus WIL activities. Non-public institutions, particularly Institution F, were noticeable when they embedded field trips and projects into their curricula. Other activities such as simulations or inviting guest speakers and lecturers were not highly valued by the participants.

9.3.2.2 Evaluation of internships

The topic of internships received the most contradictory appraisals from the three parties of stakeholders. The two training providers, institutions and companies, all passed the responsibilities onto each other. The lectures assumed that the effectiveness of the internship was heavily reliant on the support of the companies. In this sense, the institutions denied responsibility for any ineffectiveness of the internships despite the fact that it should be the institutions that should accompany the students and workplaces across all stages of the WIL
process, as suggested in the literature (Cooper et al., 2010; Fleming et al., 2008; Harvey et al., 2009; Pegg et al., 2012).

All participants agreed that the students themselves were responsible for obtaining admission to tourism companies as interns. However, the institutions did not prepare the students well with internship application strategies except for a short induction before the internship. The graduates did not find much trouble gaining admission into a workplace for their internship but the current students were experiencing some. In fact, the universities took more practical action than the colleges in providing placement opportunities for their students in the tourism companies with which they were affiliated. Notices of potential internship opportunities were uploaded onto their websites for their students to apply for an interview. However, most of the institutions organised the internship around personal contacts of the leaders of faculties or the lecturers, rather than signing official agreements with tourism companies with regard to admitting and supervising interns. This was due to the companies’ reluctance to take any legal responsibility. Furthermore, the lecturers blamed the companies for not accepting their interns, and giving the excuse that they might damage the reputation of the companies due to their low level of required knowledge and skills.

From the perspective of the companies, although they did not have any official arrangement with the institutions, the majority of the managers confirmed their support for this rewarding training element by admitting interns every year. However, both managers and internship mentors expressed their dissatisfaction with the quality of this kind of workplace learning. They addressed three causes of ineffectiveness of internships, namely inappropriate preparation, unsuitable scheduling of internships, inappropriate duration of internship, and interns’ lack of commitment. Some institutions were said to give only cursory instructions to the companies about the internship and no induction was given to the mentors for assigning tasks and supervising the interns. Although most institutions allocated approximately three to four months to the internships, the companies were still dissatisfied, expecting a longer time. Furthermore, the institutions sent their interns at various times of the year, but the peak time for internships (normally February to April or September to November) did not coincide with the peak season for tourism in May and June, which is when the interns could benefit most and support the companies most as well. The graduates, however, countered that even at the peak season, they were not supervised well since their mentors were too busy to help. Some interns were reported not to take the internship seriously but undertook it only for the company’s certification.

During the internships, many of the lecturers expressed their dissatisfaction with the quality of training that the companies provided their students. Many companies, after admitting the
interns, did not give them sufficient support during the internship. The companies agreed that
the interns were mostly assigned menial administrative tasks such as typing, printing,
photocopying etc. Only a small number of interns were given specialised tasks such as sales,
designing tours, booking, contacting tour guides at a basic level; or simple tasks such as
welcoming guests, carrying guests’ luggage, distributing leaflets or shadowing experienced tour
guides. The number of interns who were given an opportunity to guide tours was limited. These
findings correlated with the students’ discontent with the duties they were assigned in their
work placements. Furthermore, although the interns recognised the mentors’ competent
specialisation skills and knowledge, they were not satisfied with the support from their mentors,
citing their lack of enthusiasm in their mentorship.

However, when asked about the support of the institutions during the internship, all of the
interviewees in the companies expressed their disappointment. They criticised the institutions
for giving no further support for the interns or the companies during the internship. Academic
supervisors were blamed not to take on sufficient responsibilities. The lecturers, particularly in
the government institutions, only took charge of supervising tasks informally. The students
expressed a positive attitude towards their academic supervisors through the survey and
interview, but their positive evaluations actually referred to their assistance with minor theses
for graduation rather than with the internship.

In summary, three essential aspects of successful placement preparation, including organisation,
communication and documentation, as recommended by Ring et al. (2008) did not work well
when it came to the internships in the tourism programs. All parties were neither provided with
sufficient information nor given appropriate support. Therefore, students were “thrown in at the
deep end” as Long et al. (2001) had warned the WIL stakeholders not to do once they aimed to
optimise the WIL practice.

9.3.2.3  Activities to enhance students’ generic skills and their outcomes

As one of the key outcomes of WIL, generic skills are required to be embedded not only in any
one module but must be embedded throughout the curriculum at all levels, as advised by Hind et
al. (2007). The investigation into the provision of generic skills showed that the lecturers sang a
completely different tune to the companies and students. While lecturers confirmed that the
importance of the students’ generic skills was taken into consideration, the tourism companies
and the students themselves were not satisfied with how institutions dealt with this issue.
The university lecturers said their institutions paid more attention to developing the students’ life skills than the colleges. Extra-curricula activities such as competitions, clubs, fairs, and camping were provided. Experts in soft skills were also invited to give speeches. Institution F, particularly, incorporated life skills into the training curriculum such as communication skills, study skills, intercultural communication, and negotiation skills. The college lecturers, albeit criticising their institutions for not organising clubs or events to enhance students’ generic skills, justified this negligence on the grounds of shortages of staff, lack of finance and also the lack of motivation of the students. On the other hand, they asserted that they were aware of building the students’ employability attributes through practical tours and classroom activities such as role-play, group work, presentations, and problem solving. However, the effectiveness of the incorporation of such activities was minimised by noise, large class sizes and limited space.

A cross-check with the tourism companies and the students revealed that the activities organised by the institutions to provide the students with generic skills were not as effective as expected. From the companies’ perspectives, the interns and graduates’ generic skills were, generally speaking, unsatisfactory. Skills related to dealing with others such as teamwork and cooperation, relationship building, customer service orientation, developing others, and written communication, were assessed as not very strong. Similarly, cognitive skills such as analytical thinking or personal planning and organisational skills were not deemed satisfactory by the companies. The interns and graduates were only thought to be good at computing skills and information searching. Nor were their attitudes deemed satisfactory. They were evaluated as lacking confidence and being passive, although most were obedient and well disciplined. A small number of interns who showed a lack of commitment towards the work-based learning caused disappointment and irritation to the companies. The companies’ assessment matched totally with the graduates’ self-evaluation of their generic skills. The current students, in contrast, rated their teamwork skills, self-confidence and written communication as most developed, and skills related to leadership and developing others were most in need of improvement.

**9.3.3 Assessment of WIL**

The WIL process was evaluated in two main stages: within the classroom settings and after the internships at the placement site.

With regard to the assessment of classroom based learning, only factual descriptions were provided by the lecturers. A common form of assessment was the aggregation of scores for
attendance, participation, mid-term tests and final tests throughout the whole semester. To appraise the learners’ theoretical knowledge, the lecturers conducted written tests in two forms, multiple choice questions or essays. Practical knowledge and skills were tested orally. The main method of testing was actually content-based or knowledge-based rather than competency-based. The graduates confirmed this, stating that the assessments seemed to encourage rote learning rather than promote the students’ creativity and critical thinking.

One creative method of assessment generated by a lecturer in Institution B particularly impressed the researcher. She applied various methods of assessment such as group work projects, presentations, and problem-solving skills through role-plays and organisational skills by designing games for tourists. This form of testing encouraged the creativeness of the learners and aimed to test the learners’ competency rather than rote knowledge that most tests targeted. However, the implementation of this kind of test requires much time, effort and willingness on the part of the assessors or lecturers. Therefore, the feasibility of the application was still a questionable issue.

Another form of assessment implemented in Institution C deserves special mention and should be encouraged. This institution conducted oral tests for their Tour Guiding program bilingually in Vietnamese and English. Although this test was time consuming and required effort, it had a positive effect since it also encouraged the learners to improve their English proficiency.

The procedures for assessing an internship in all institutions were overall rather similar and quite limited in variety. The students were required to submit a feedback form completed and signed by the company manager, an internship journal signed by the mentor, and an internship report on the completion of the internship. The three participating groups of stakeholders showed no objection to these assessment strategies, as also supported in the literature (Martin & Leberman, 2005; Patrick et al., 2008). Beside those, most of the institutions required the students to write theses based on the findings collected from the internship. However, the companies thought that the minor theses created a distraction for the interns from the tasks in the workplace. There is also a risk that students could “copy and paste” from the work of previous interns. Some institutions requested that the students undergo an oral defence of their thesis, which was deemed necessary to minimise plagiarism and should be promoted.

In summary, although the lecturing staff and institution leaders appraised the WIL initiatives in their tourism training institutions as effective to some degree, the other parties evaluated them as unsatisfactory due to the lack of close partnership of the WIL stakeholders. The summary of the findings on WIL initiatives can be found in Figure 9.1.
As key features of an internationalised curriculum (Black, 2004; Edwards et al., 2003; Haigh, 2002; Hobson & Josiam, 1996; Leask, 2001), foreign language teaching and learning and the acquisition of global perspectives were investigated in this study in order to examine how well
the students were prepared to deal with international customers. The outcomes of these two features and the factors influencing those outcomes were examined.

9.4.1 Outcomes of foreign language proficiency and global perspectives

Students’ global perspectives were not included in the claimed training outcomes in almost all institutions, except for Institution F which addressed this feature in its program descriptions and embedded it into its curriculum. Students’ proficiency in foreign languages, in contrast, was the claimed target of all of the tourism programs in the six institutions in this study. However, the actual level of foreign language proficiency of the graduates was disappointing. Both the lecturers and the companies expressed dissatisfaction with the students’ level of proficiency in English. All of the institutions measured their students’ level of English proficiency based on international language tests such as TOEIC or IELTS. A number of students encountered difficulties in achieving the required scores in this subject to be eligible for graduation to meet employers’ requirements for English proficiency, particularly where oral communication skills were involved. The great majority of the interviewees from the tourism companies supported this, holding that the graduates’ and interns’ level of English, especially speaking skills, was unacceptable.

The students themselves disagreed with the idea that programs provided them with communicative competence in foreign languages. In comparison with the students from the non-public universities, the students from the public institutions were rather more critical of this.

The appraisal of the graduates’ level of English proficiency through role-plays with the researcher reiterated these unsatisfactory findings. The majority of the graduates were evaluated as average or below. Among the four criteria of evaluation (fluency and coherence; lexical range and word choice; grammatical range and accuracy; pronunciation) based on the theory of communicative competence of Canale and Swain (1980), the graduates’ pronunciation was considered the least satisfactory, which probably caused them to shy away from speaking.

9.4.2 Influential factors on the foreign language proficiency and global perspective outcomes

The five pivotal factors for the results of the foreign language teaching and learning were: quality of teaching staff; amount of time allocated for the foreign language subject in the
curriculum; foreign language teaching materials; opportunities for students to communicate in the target language; and the effectiveness of assessment processes.

### 9.4.2.1 Quality of foreign language lecturing staff

From the staff profiles, the foreign language lecturers held satisfactory qualifications in which a majority held a Masters or higher level. However, the students were overwhelmingly quite critical of their foreign language lecturers’ proficiency in English. The graduates were particularly dissatisfied with their lecturers’ pronunciation. This finding correlated with the outcomes of the graduates described at Section 9.4.1. Furthermore, many English lecturers were said to lack knowledge in tourism, so they could not satisfy the students’ enquiries about expressions in tourism contexts. Negative comments about the English lecturers’ teaching methods also outnumbered the positive. The students considered the French lecturers either too “rigid” or too “laid-back”. Neither teaching style was deemed appropriate for improving the students’ level of French proficiency.

The lecturers in the two non-public universities outweighed their colleagues in the government universities in terms of their level of foreign language proficiency and exposure to a diversity of cultures since they had obtained qualifications overseas and had had experience in the host countries. In Institution F, the lecturers’ proficiency in English and their global competence were even more important because the university set objectives to provide learners with attributes to work in an international environment and it had launched a program in which English was the medium of instruction from 2012. Activities to develop the English proficiency of the staff were implemented. Nevertheless, the students’ data, surprisingly, showed that the university or non-public lecturers were significantly less competent than those from colleges or public institutions.

### 9.4.2.2 Foreign language subjects in the curriculum

The amount of time for foreign language subjects in the curriculum was generally evaluated as inappropriate: the students thought the English subject in university was given significantly less appropriate time than in the college. The allocation of time for English, especially English for Tourism, in the programs was thought to be inadequate in Institutions A and D. The lecturers in Institutions B and C claimed that this subject was given sufficient time but disappointingly, they were also unable to improve their students’ English proficiency. The researcher’s appraisal of the graduates’ English competence confirmed this. For the two private universities, the amount of time allocated for English satisfied the lecturers. However, the graduates’ competency in
English was also not high. In the last case study (Institution F), English was employed as the main language of instruction for specialisation subjects. This innovation was a highlight in the internationalisation process that many scholars had proposed (Bremer & Van der Wende, 1995; Edwards et al., 2003; Guerin, 2009). It also motivated the students to equip themselves with English competence and created an impetus for the lecturers to upgrade their English proficiency to be able to deliver lessons satisfactorily in the target language.

9.4.2.3 **Foreign language teaching materials**

Materials were another reason given for the unsatisfactory outcomes of English proficiency, particularly in the state-owned institutions. The lecturers all commented that there were no standard materials for the English subject and the lecturers had to decide on their own materials. In some institutions, the lecturers made use of existing materials available on the market while in other institutions, the lecturers wrote the materials themselves based on the guidelines of the Ministry. Some lecturers revealed that they needed to adapt the standard of the materials to suit the students’ actual level. On the one hand, this adjustment enhanced the students’ motivation to study this subject, but it failed to upgrade the students’ level to meet the requirements for graduation on the other.

9.4.2.4 **Students’ opportunities to communicate in target languages on campus and during an internship**

The theory of communicative competence by Canale and Swain (1980) put forward the idea that grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence are more likely to be achieved through real-life situations than in artificial contexts like the classroom. Notwithstanding, the results of this study showed that students from all institutions were similarly disappointed with the lack of opportunities to communicate with international customers. They mentioned the lack of an English environment for the students in some institutions, particularly in the government ones. The interviews with the lecturing staff echoed this. In comparison with the two private institutions offering various activities on a regular basis such as English clubs, conversations with English speaking people or English competitions etc., the four government institutions provided the students with fewer opportunities to communicate with foreigners. In the three colleges, there were not even any English speaking clubs.
In the internship, the students complained they did not have opportunities to communicate with foreign tourists or to accompany experienced tour guides on in-bound tours, not to mention having a chance to guide those tours. The companies confirmed this, admitting that they did not allow the interns to communicate with foreign tourists during the internships on the grounds that the under-qualified interns might damage the reputation of their companies if they communicated awkwardly with foreign tourists.

### 9.4.2.5 Design and implementation of assessment processes

The students complained that the assessments of foreign languages were more focused on rote-learning than on creative and critical expression. The academic staff, however, appraised them as effective. They maintained that assessments acted as a stimulus to the students’ awareness of improving their English proficiency to complete the subject competently. The tests were mostly conducted in a written and oral form to test the students’ ability to use English for public presentation and personal communication. The aims of those assessments sounded sensible, but the methods of testing were inappropriate. The students were normally asked to prepare a presentation and recite it in examinations. They normally reproduced exactly what they had learned in the classroom rather than produced new ideas. They could improve their communication skills better if given role-play tasks based on a scenario.

### 9.5 CONCLUSION

#### 9.5.1 Summary of findings

This section of this final chapter sums up the major findings of this study, showing how the main research question posed in the first chapter of this thesis has been answered. The selected Vietnamese tourism institutions applied WIL processes and included internationalisation features in their tourism programs to attempt a smooth transition from the academic world to the professional world in a globalised era. However, the findings revealed that the key stakeholders held somewhat negative opinions about the WIL processes and the internationalisation elements in most of the tourism programs provided by the tertiary institutions examined in Vietnam. As a result, these programs produced insufficient employable students to satisfy the growing demand of international tourists. The main results are summarised as follows:

- The quality of the design, implementation and assessment of tourism programs were influenced by the policies of the government, the quality of lecturers and the quality of
students on entry. The laws and regulations governing the institutions were evaluated as inconsistent and divorced from reality because they were over-complicated in one perspective yet loose from another. The lecturing staff was thought to hold satisfactory qualifications, but needed to enhance their industry experience, research skills, teaching methods, and foreign language proficiency. The institutions were aware of providing activities for professional development but there needed to be research to evaluate such initiatives. The students in the colleges and non-public institutions were assessed as less academically satisfactory on entry than those from the universities and government institutions, which influenced the quality of the outcomes.

- The WIL processes were not wholly successful in terms of their design, implementation and assessment. The program outcomes claimed by the institutions were not all satisfactorily achieved from the perspectives of the students and companies. The institutions were operating under two different systems: credit-based and fixed-semester, which demonstrated inconsistency in the governance and difficulty for both teachers and students. The university programs were more liberally than vocationally oriented, while the college programs were highly vocational - although these programs should include a balance of both. The tight control of the authorised ministries over the colleges restricted their improvement despite the existence of various problems in the curriculum design such as inappropriate time allocation, content overlap and inclusion of unnecessary subjects. On this point, the two non-public universities were given more autonomy and could innovate their curricula with new subjects. Materials in the universities or non-public institutions were more plentiful and of higher quality than those in the colleges or the government institutions, but materials for specialised subjects in Vietnamese were appraised as scant in all institutions. On-campus practical activities such as practical tours, simulations, field trips, invitation of guest speakers and lecturers from the industry were said to be organised in all institutions. However, the quality of these activities was not always guaranteed. The internship was the most important component of the WIL processes but was evaluated to be the least effective. The students were not given systematic preparation from their institutions regarding administrative procedures and psychological preparation prior to the internship. Nor did they receive committed mentorship from the workplace nor adequate supervision from the institutions during the experiential learning. Students’ generic skills, particularly interpersonal and cognitive skills, were deemed insufficient by the companies, although all of the institutions claimed to provide their students with various activities to boost their life skills. Finally, the assessment processes were found to be conducted in two main forms, written and oral, but were criticised by the students as too knowledge-based
and focused on rote-learning rather than competency-based and creative. The internship assessments were conducted rather perfunctorily.

- In this study, the internationalisation of tourism education dealt largely with the students’ proficiency in foreign languages and knowledge of global perspectives. The global competence of the students was virtually neglected in the programs of all institutions, except for Institution F. The lecturers showed their lack of awareness of preparing the students with this internationalisation element. The students’ level of foreign languages, particularly English, was evaluated as unsatisfactory in comparison with the requirements of the lecturers and companies. The students blamed the programs for not providing them with that competence. The main factors for these unexpected outcomes included unsatisfactory quality of teaching staff, an inappropriate amount of time allocated for foreign language learning in the curriculum, insufficient quality of foreign language teaching materials, inadequate opportunities for students to communicate in the target language, and ineffective assessment processes.

### 9.5.2 Recommendations for best practice

The findings revealed that the training institutions and the host companies were applying ‘value-added ethos’ in which students are expected to be adaptive, are assigned specific tasks to complete and are considered as workers or observers, rather than following the ‘stakeholder ethos’ which emphasises learning and adopts a long-term view which legitimates students as real learners, as suggested by Harvey et al. (1997) (as cited in Orrell, 2004, p. 2). Therefore, the WIL goals could not be fully achieved. For the long-term outcomes of WIL to be achieved, a stakeholder approach is strongly recommended. Partnerships between the university and host organisations should be fostered under the impact of sensible government policy, and students need to be considered as actual learners. In this sense, the model of Patrick et al. (2008) modified to be localised in the Vietnamese educational context is proposed as visualised in Figure 9.2.
Figure 9.2. Recommendations for best relationships of stakeholders in WIL processes in Vietnamese Tourism Training Programs.

Source: based on Patrick et al. (2008).

According to this model, each stakeholder and its members need to ensure the relationships with other stakeholders are maintained throughout the WIL process. To achieve this aim, they need to be proactive in their specific roles for successful internationalised tourism programs with an effective design, implementation and assessment of WIL.

**GOVERNMENT**

**Government authorities**

- Government ministries should share similar views in the management of tourism training providers and the governance system needs to be simplified and be more systematic to facilitate the WIL practices.
- Tourism laws should be amended, granting international tour guiding permits to college bachelor degree holders on condition that they show evidence of their proficiency in the target language. This can motivate the teachers and students to improve foreign language proficiency at the institutional level. Furthermore, a long-term gain would be
for the Vietnamese tourism market to possess an adequate pool of international tour guiding permit holders, which can minimise the number of illegal tour guides.

- Laws and regulations to protect the students’ rights when undertaking their placements in the organisations should be stricter and the implementation of these laws need to be supervised.
- Requirements for lecturers with updated industry experience should be imposed.

Curriculum designers

- The curriculum designers need to be made aware that specialised knowledge and skills, generic skills and foreign language proficiency are indispensable for the companies recruiting graduates. Therefore, they need to adapt the curricula to the needs of the industry.
- Curricula should be designed with more appropriate time allocated for core and mandatory units. The internship should also be lengthened or there should be a variety of internship phases.
- Generic skills and global competencies need to be integrated into the curricula.
- Furthermore, the curriculum designers should propose that the related authority carries out frequent evaluations of the WIL processes at the national and institutional level. There is still a gap in the literature about the evaluation of WIL in tourism training areas, to which this study has made a partial contribution.

TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Institution leaders (rectors and faculty leaders)

- The institutional leaders need to implement practical incentives to acknowledge and encourage the commitment of their lecturers to the development of WIL initiatives.
- In order to maximise the effectiveness of internships, it is essential that the institutional leaders create a career development department to coordinate the internship. The staff members of this department can liaise with the companies and advertise internship vacancies for the students.
- Workshops should be organised to provide the interns with a fundamental knowledge of job applications and teach them appropriate behaviours in a professional environment, which is obviously different from the learning environment they have experienced.
• They should also nominate lecturers to conduct workplace visits to observe and interview interns as well as the mentors during internships for assessment, supervision and support. Remunerations and acknowledgement should be given to motivate the lecturers as well as to create a fair work environment.

• The forms of internship assessment should be varied. Frequent evaluation needs to be conducted during the internships to ensure that timely supervision and support are provided. Various assessment strategies can be applied such as: direct observation of a skill or performance matching the academic criteria by an internship mentor, external evaluator and/or an academic supervisor at the placement site; demonstration of practical skills (portfolios of evidence); and competency tests at the placement site.

• More relationships with the companies are recommended. The institutions should conduct inductions for the company staff to provide better training and supervision. There should be policies to support the companies in return for a longer and more stable cooperation.

• Activities to enhance generic skills and foreign languages skills need to be promoted.

• The model of Institution F, which employs English as the main language instruction for tourism subjects, should be considered and promoted.

**Lecturing staff**

• In addition to upgrading their qualifications, lecturers are advised to engage in the industry for practical experience to skill themselves up. Preaching from books is not appreciated by either the students or the industry practitioners.

• They should be inspired and motivated to follow courses overseas for exposure to other cultures. Where this is not financially possible, they are strongly advised to apply for funding from the government or overseas and non-profit organisations.

• Their teaching methods need to be innovative with the incorporation of technological devices, but the students’ needs and interests should be also taken into consideration.

**TOURISM COMPANIES**

**Managers of companies**

• Currently, the companies prioritise their own benefits when admitting interns as free labour. It is urged that they consider their roles of practical training providers as a contribution to the development of community and the industry.

• Training activities should be organised by the institutions in a co-training partnership.
Companies are encouraged to sign official training agreements with the institutions in order to maintain the quality of the internship and to ensure the interns’ compliance with the company’s regulations.

Interns also need to be allowed more opportunities to be actually involved in the companies’ activities and be allowed more contact with real tourists and clients, including international ones. The satisfaction of the interns will be an advantage for the companies’ reputation as well as providing a richer source of employees in the future.

**Internship mentors**

- Internship mentors are encouraged to show more enthusiasm to support the interns. They will benefit from this task when they have more effective interns. If they are not confident in giving interns an opportunity to deal with customers due to their lack of quality, they can ask the interns to prepare and rehearse in advance.

**STUDENTS**

- The students will benefit the most from the WIL programs if they initiate actions in their engagement. Being well-prepared for the internship, taking the initiative during the placement, and completing assessments with integrity are strongly recommended.
- They also need to be aware of the significance of foreign language skills and global competency in a tourism work environments. They should thus be proactive in improving themselves through both curricular and extra-curricular activities.

In summary, based on the findings of this research, recommendations for best practice for WIL processes were generated, following the model of Patrick et al. (2008) adapted to the Vietnamese education context. It calls for a closer liaison between the four main stakeholders: (i) government (government authorities and curriculum designers); (ii) tourism training institutions (institution leaders and academic staff); (iii) tourism companies (company managers and internship mentors) and (iv) students. The government needs to amend the current laws and regulations in a way that more closely reflects reality. Curriculum designers should conduct frequent research and devise curricula responding to the needs of the industry with a balance between theoretical and practical elements, allocating appropriate time for necessary units, and integrating more activities to improve students’ generic skills and global competencies. Institution leaders need to have policies pertaining to lecturers, campus-based practical training, internship preparation, implementation and assessment, activities to improve students’ generic skills, foreign language skills and global competencies to maximise the effectiveness of WIL.
Lecturing staff need to improve their academic and industry expertise as well as their teaching methods to meet the growing needs of their students. Company managers need to actively participate in the tourism training and cooperate with the institutions in order to help create a richer pool of qualified and competent staff for the future. Internship mentors also need to be more responsible and supportive for the interns. Finally, students should understand that they also need to be active in their role for their own benefits.

9.5.3 Limitations and recommendations for future research

This study acknowledges two main limitations. Firstly, it excluded research venues in the northern part of Vietnam. However, the detailed investigation with both qualitative and quantitative methods of the WIL context in the tourism colleges and universities in two out of three regions of Vietnam presented a representative picture of the current WIL process in tourism training in Vietnam. Secondly, the voice of government officers was omitted. However, for reasons of sensitivity, the chances to gain access to Vietnamese government agencies and collect valuable data from them were rather slim.

Future studies might consider those limitations and attempt to bridge the gap and develop a more comprehensive research design for WIL evaluation. The researcher also calls for further research on the recommendations.

In conclusion, the evaluation of the WIL initiatives in the investigated tourism training institutions in this study showed that there is a great need that the stakeholders of WIL take more effective course of actions reflecting their expected roles. With the numerous avenues suggested, it is hoped that this study will pave the way for the WIL practitioners to make changes in the process of tourism teaching and learning. Their improvement will help create graduates who are professionally skilled, globally literate and linguistically competent for the thriving tourism industry in Vietnam to make this country a real “Destination for the New Millennium”, as the slogan of the Vietnamese Tourism at the dawn of the second millennium has pledged.
References


References


References


APPENDIX A
SEMI-INTERVIEWED QUESTIONS

A.1 INTERVIEW WITH THE DEANS OF SIX TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTIONS
A.1.1 ENGLISH VERSION

I. Experience
1. What are your educational backgrounds?
2. How long have you been the Dean?

II. General structure of the institution and faculty
1. Can you tell me a bit about the history of your faculty?
2. How many tourism enterprises cooperate with the institution in training students? Who are they?
3. What do you think about the cooperation between the enterprises and the institution?
4. Who are the coordinators of the internships?
5. How do the academic staff help students immediately before and during their internship? (Can students contact their lecturers if they have unexpected problems during the internship? How often do the lecturers meet the interns?)

III. Curriculum of the tourism programs
1. Can you please show me the curriculum (structure) of the Tour Guiding and Travel Management programs?
2. Can you tell me about the history of these programs?
3. Who (positions) are the designers of the curriculum?
4. What are the outcomes of the program? What graduate competencies do you want to equip your students with?
5. What jobs are available for the graduates of the programs?
6. What philosophy is the program curriculum based on? I mean why do you choose these subjects but not others?
7. What is the ratio of theory and practice in the curriculum?
8. Do you acknowledge the outcomes and generic skills that each subject will provide the students?
9. Do you use any supplementary documents for reference when designing the curriculum? If yes, what are they?
10. Does the institution consult the host organisations when designing the WIL curriculum?

11. Do you design internship plans to facilitate coordinators, mentors and interns? If yes, what is the basis of the design? Can you please show me one example plan?

12. Has the institution ever conducted any evaluation of the program curricula? If yes, how often and in what way?

13. What are the strengths and are there any weaknesses of the implementation of the curricula?

14. What problems do you and other teachers find in the implementation of the curricula?

IV. **Facilities and materials**

1. What facilities does the institution have to provide training to enhance the effectiveness of the program and motivate students?

2. Do you have sufficient facilities for students to practise?

3. What facilities do you have to enhance students' communicative competence in foreign languages?

4. How do you choose the current course materials (textbooks and reading materials)?

5. Do you have sufficient materials for both teachers and students?

V. **Teaching methods**

1. In what way are the units/subjects delivered (lectures, tutorials, seminars and online) according to each year?

2. Do you invite people working from the tourism industry to give lectures? If yes, how often? Do they have any problems in doing so? If not, why not?

3. Do students have opportunities to communicate with foreigners to improve their foreign language competence? If not, how does the institution help students in this matter?

4. Does the institution organise speaking clubs for students to practise their foreign language?

VI. **Quality of teaching staff**

1. What qualifications are the teaching staff required to have?

2. Does the institution have any professional development activities to improve the quality of the teaching staff and motivate them in their jobs?

VII. **Assessment processes**

1. How do you conduct the assessment of students after each unit/subject?
2. Do you assess students' communicative competence in foreign language? If yes, in what way?
3. How do you assess students' performances in their internship?
4. Does the institutions organise competitions to motivate students to develop the generic and professional skills?

A.1.2 VIETNAMESE VERSION

I. Kinh nghiệm
1. Thầy/Cô xin vui lòng cho biết về bảng cấp về chuyên môn?
2. Thầy/Cô đã làm trưởng khoa được bao lâu?

II. Việc tổ chức của trường và khoa
1. Thầy/cô có thể nói cho tôi biết một chút về lịch sử của khoa được không a?
2. Có bao nhiêu doanh nghiệp du lịch hợp tác giảng dạy với trường? Đó là những doanh nghiệp nào?
3. Thầy/cô nghĩ như thế nào về việc hợp tác giữa doanh nghiệp du lịch và nhà trường?
4. Ai là người điều phối chương trình thực tập?
5. Làm thế nào để các giảng viên giúp học sinh ngay trước và trong thời gian thực tập của mình? (Sinh viên có thể có cơ hội để liên hệ với các giảng viên nếu họ có vấn đề đạt xuất trong quá trình thực tập hay không? Các giảng viên có thường xuyên gặp các thực tập sinh không?)

III. Chương tình giảng dạy
1. Thầy/cô có thể cho tôi tham khảo chương tình giảng dạy của ngành Hướng Dẫn và Quản Trị Lữ Hành được không a?
2. Thầy/cô có thể nói cho tôi nghe về lịch sử của những chương trình này được không a?
3. Ai (chức vụ) là người thiết kế chương trình?
4. Chuẩn đâu ra của chương trình là gì? Các kỹ năng sau khi tốt nghiệp mà các sinh viên cần đạt được là gì?
5. Sau khi ra trường, sinh viên có thể làm những việc gì?
6. Chương trình dựa trên cơ sở tiền lé nào? Tại sao thầy/cô lại chọn những môn học này mà không phải là môn khác?
7. Tỷ lệ của lý thuyết và thực hành trong chương tình giảng dạy này là bao nhiêu?
8. Thầy/cô có dễ cấp đến những mục tiêu và kỹ năng tổng quát mà mỗi môn học cung cấp cho sinh viên hay không?
9. Thầy/cô có sử dụng tài liệu tham khảo để thiết kế chương trình giảng dạy không? Nếu có, đó là những tài liệu nào?
10. Trường có tham khảo ý kiến của doanh nghiệp khi thiết kế chương trình học tích hợp thực hành không?
11. Thầy/cô có thiết kế kế hoạch thực tập để tạo thuận lợi cho điều phối viên, giáo viên hướng dẫn và thực tập sinh không? Nếu có thì việc thiết kế đã đưa ra đâu?
   Thầy/cô có thể cho tôi tham khảo một ví dụ được không?
12. Nhà trường đã bao giờ tiên hành đánh giá chương trình giảng dạy chưa? Nếu có thì bao lâu một lần và bằng cách nào?
13. Điểm mạnh và yếu của việc áp dụng chương trình giảng dạy này là gì?
14. Thầy/cô và những giáo viên khác có gặp khó khăn nào trong quá trình áp dụng chương trình giảng dạy này không?

IV. Trang thiết bị vật chất và tài liệu
   1. Thiết bị vật chất nào mà một trường du lịch cần có để tăng tính hiệu quả trong việc giảng dạy và gây hứng thú cho học sinh?
   2. Trường mình có đủ cơ sở vật chất cho sinh viên thực hành không?
   3. Trường cần có thiết bị nào để tăng cường năng lực giao tiếp ngoại ngữ cho sinh viên?
   4. Thầy/cô chọn giáo trình giảng dạy hiện nay (sách giáo khoa, tài liệu tham khảo) như thế nào?
   5. Trường có tài liệu cho giáo viên và sinh viên không?

V. Phương pháp giảng dạy
   1. Các môn học được dạy theo hình thức nào (nghe giảng, học nhóm, hội thảo hay trực tuyến)?
   2. Thầy/cô có mời những người làm việc trong ngành du lịch về giảng dạy cho trường không? Nếu có, bao lâu một lần? Họ có gặp khó khăn nào trong việc giảng dạy không? Nếu không, tại sao không?
   3. Sinh viên có cơ hội giao tiếp với người nước ngoài để phát huy khả năng giao tiếp không? Nếu không thì nhà trường làm gì để giúp sinh viên về vấn đề này?
   4. Nhà trường có tổ chức các câu lạc bộ ngoại ngữ để học sinh thực hành giao tiếp không?

VI. Chất lượng giảng viên
   1. Giảng viên cần có bằng cấp gì để được giảng dạy tại trường?
   2. Trường có những hoạt động gì để tăng cường chất lượng giáo viên và khuyến khích họ dạy tốt?

VII. Kiểm tra đánh giá
   1. Việc đánh giá sinh viên sau mỗi môn học được thực hiện như thế nào?
   2. Thầy/cô có đánh giá năng lực giao tiếp ngoại ngữ của sinh viên không? Nếu có thì bằng cách nào?
3. Thầy/cô đánh giá sinh viên thực tập bằng cách nào?

4. Nhà trường có tổ chức các cuộc thi để khuyến khích sinh viên phát triển kỹ năng mềm và kỹ năng chuyên ngành không?
A.2 INTERVIEW WITH TOURISM LECTURERS IN SIX TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

A.2.1 ENGLISH VERSION

I. Experience
   1. What qualifications have you achieved?
   2. How many years have you been teaching?

II. Structure of the institution and faculty
   1. What do you think about the structure of the institution and your faculty?

III. Curriculum
   1. What are the learning outcomes of the Tour Guiding and Travel Management programs? Are you aware of these outcomes when you are assigned tasks to teach the students? Are the outcomes popular with students?
   2. Do you think the current curricula of Tour Guiding and Travel Management programs are appropriate to achieve those outcomes? Why and why not?
   3. Do you have any difficulties in implementing the curricula?
   4. Do you have any suggestions for improving the curriculum?
   5. Do you think the teaching materials are appropriate?
   6. What do you think about the cooperation between tourism enterprises (travel agencies, hotels, restaurants…) and the institution?
   7. Can you tell me about the design and implementation of the internship? What do you do to help students while they are in their internship if you are assigned as an academic supervisor?

IV. Teaching methods
   1. What teaching methods are you applying? Do you use media or technologies in teaching? If yes, how often? Do you think they are effective in teaching students? What are the benefits and drawbacks?
   2. Do you usually prepare lesson plans before teaching? If yes, what is the procedure?
   3. What do you do to maximise the students' opportunities to practise and apply the theories? Which one do you put more focus on, theory or practice?
   4. What do you do to help enhance students' generic skills?

V. Facilities and materials
   1. What do you think about the facilities in this institution in assisting your lessons?
   2. Do you use supplementary materials in your lessons?
   3. Do you provide students with other reading materials for them to self study after class?
4. Do you have any suggestions in terms of facilities and materials to optimise the teaching and learning?

VI. Assessment processes
1. How do you conduct the assessment of students during and at the end of each subject?
2. Do you think the methods of assessment you are applying are effective? If not, do you have any recommendations for improvement?

VII. Students' attitude and performances
1. What do you think about the students' attitude towards their learning?
2. What are the students' general academic grades in your subjects? What are the percentages of passing students?

A2.2 VIETNAMESE VERSION

I. Kinh nghiệm
1. Thầy/cô đã đà bất những bằng cấp nào?
2. Thầy/cô đã giảng dạy được bao nhiêu lần?

II. Tổ chức của trường và khoa
1. Thầy/cô nghĩ thể nào về tổ chức của trường và khoa của mình?

III. Chương trình giảng dạy
1. Mục tiêu đào tạo của khoa Hướng dẫn và Quản Trị Lữ Nhận là gì? Thầy/cô có biết đến những mục tiêu này khi tiếp kế bài giảng cho sinh viên không? Những mục tiêu này có được phổ biến cho sinh viên không?
2. Thầy/cô nghĩ chương trình hiện nay của hai ngành Hướng dẫn và Quản Trị Lữ Nhận có phù hợp để đạt được những mục tiêu đó không? Tại sao?
3. Thầy/cô có gặp khó khăn gì trong việc áp dụng chương trình đào tạo không?
4. Thầy/cô có đề xuất gì giúp cải tiến chương trình đào tạo không?
5. Thầy/cô có nghĩ là tài liệu giảng dạy phù hợp không?
6. Thầy/cô nghĩ thế nào về sự hợp tác giữa các doanh nghiệp du lịch như công ty du lịch, khách sạn, nhà hàng... với trường?
7. Thầy/cô có thể cho tôi biết về việc thiết kế và tiến hành kỹ thực tập không? Thầy/cô làm gì để giúp đỡ sinh viên trong kỳ thực tập nếu được giao nhiệm vụ làm giáo viên hướng dẫn thực tập?

IV. Phương pháp giảng dạy
2. Thầy/cô có chuẩn bị giáo án trước khi dạy không? Nếu có thì quy trình thực hiện như thế nào?

3. Thầy/cô làm thế nào để tối đa hóa việc tạo cơ hội cho sinh viên áp dụng lý thuyết vào thực hành? Thầy/cô tập trung nhiều vào lý thuyết hay thực hành trong việc giảng dạy của mình?

4. Thầy/cô làm gì để giúp sinh viên nâng cao kỹ năng mềm?

V. Trang thiết bị vật chất và tài liệu
1. Thầy/cô nghĩ gì về trang thiết bị của trường trong việc hỗ trợ việc giảng dạy?
2. Thầy/cô sử dụng tài liệu tham khảo nào trong bài dạy không?
3. Thầy/cô có cung cấp cho sinh viên tài liệu đọc thêm để các em tự học sau giờ lên lớp không?
4. Thầy/cô có đề xuất gì liên quan đến trang thiết bị và tài liệu để giúp giảng dạy và học tập hiệu quả hơn không?

VI. Kiểm tra đánh giá
1. Thầy/cô tiến hành đánh giá sinh viên trong khi dạy và kết thúc môn học như thế nào?
2. Thầy/cô có nghĩ phương pháp đánh giá mình đang áp dụng là hiệu quả không?
   Nếu không Thầy/cô có đề xuất gì không?

VII. Thái độ và năng lực của sinh viên
1. Thầy/cô nghĩ thế nào về thái độ học tập của sinh viên?
2. Điểm trung bình của sinh viên trong môn của thầy/cô thường là bao nhiêu? Bao nhiêu phần trăm sinh viên đạt môn của thầy/cô?
A.3 INTERVIEW WITH EFL LECTURERS IN SIX TOURISM TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

A.3.1 ENGLISH VERSION

I. Experience
1. What qualifications have you achieved?
2. How many years have you been teaching?

II. Structure of the institution and faculty
1. What do you think about the structure of the institution and your faculty?

III. Curriculum
1. What are the learning outcomes of English for the Tour Guiding and Travel Management programs? Are you aware of them when you are assigned tasks to teach the students? Are the outcomes popular with students?
2. Do you think the current curricula of Tour Guiding and Travel Management programs are appropriate to achieve those outcomes? Why and why not?
3. Do you have any difficulties in implementing the curricula?
4. Do you have any suggestions for improving the curriculum?
5. What do you think about the cooperation between tourism enterprises (travel agencies, hotels, restaurants…) and the institution in terms of teaching English language?
6. How is English integrated in the internships? Do the students have an opportunity to practise English during the internships?

IV. Teaching methods
1. What teaching methods are you applying? Do you use media or technologies in teaching? If yes, how often? Do you think they are effective in teaching students? What are the benefits and drawbacks?
2. Do you usually prepare lesson plans before teaching? If yes, what is the procedure?
3. What do you do to maximise the students' opportunities to practise their English?
4. What do you do to help enhance students' generic skills in your English lessons?

V. Facilities and materials
1. What do you think about the facilities in this institution in assisting your lessons?
2. Do you think the teaching materials are appropriate?
3. Do you use supplementary materials in your lessons?
4. Do you provide students with other reading materials for them to self study after class?
5. Do you have any suggestions in terms of facilities and materials to optimise the teaching and learning?

VI. Assessment processes
1. How do you conduct the assessment of students during and at the end of each subject? How do you assess students’ communicative competence? What are the criteria for you when you assess students?
2. Do you think the methods of assessment you are applying are effective? If not, do you have any recommendations for improvement?

VII. Students’ attitudes and performances
1. What do you think about the students' attitude towards their learning?
2. What are the students' general academic grades in your subject? What are the percentages of passing students?

A.3.2 VIETNAMESE VERSION

I. Kinh nghiệm
1. Thầy/cô đã đạt những bằng cấp nào?
2. Thầy/cô đã dạy được bao nhiêu lâu?

II. Tổ chức của trường và khoa
1. Thầy/cô nghi thể nào về tổ chức của trường và khoa của mình?

III. Chương trình giảng dạy
1. Thầy/cô có biết đến mục tiêu về Tiếng Anh trong chương trình Hướng Dẫn và Quản Trị Lữ Hành không? Thầy/cô có được biết đến các mục tiêu này khi thiết kế bài giảng cho sinh viên không? Các mục tiêu này có được phổ biến cho sinh viên không?
2. Thầy/cô nghĩ chương trình hiện nay của hai ngành này có hợp lý không?
3. Thầy/cô có gặp khó khăn gì trong việc áp dụng chương trình giảng dạy không?
4. Thầy/cô nghĩ là chương trình giảng dạy giúp sinh viên nâng cao năng lực giao tiếp ngoại ngữ không? Nếu không thầy/cô có đề xuất gì không?
5. Thầy/cô nghĩ thế nào về sự hợp tác giữa các doanh nghiệp du lịch như công ty du lịch, khách sạn, nhà hàng... với trường?
6. Tiếng Anh được tích hợp trong kỹ thuật tập như thế nào? Sinh viên có cơ hội được thực hành tiếng Anh trong kỹ thuật tập không?

IV. Phương pháp giảng dạy
2. Thầy/cô có chuẩn bị giáo án trước khi dạy không? Nếu có thì quy trình thực hiện thế nào?
3. Thầy/cô làm thế nào để tối đa hóa việc tạo cơ hội cho sinh viên thực hành tiếng Anh?
4. Thầy/cô làm gì để giúp sinh viên nâng cao kỹ năng mềm trong các bài tiếng Anh?

V. Trang thiết bị và tài liệu
1. Thầy/cô có nghĩ là trang thiết bị của trường đủ để hỗ trợ việc giảng dạy?
2. Thầy/cô có nghĩ là tài liệu giảng dạy phù hợp không?
3. Thầy/cô có sử dụng tài liệu tham khảo nào trong bài dạy không?
4. Thầy/cô có cung cấp cho sinh viên tài liệu đọc thêm để các em tự học sau giờ lên lớp không?
5. Thầy/cô có đề xuất gì liên quan đến trang thiết bị và tài liệu để giúp giảng dạy hiệu quả hơn không?

VI. Kiểm tra đánh giá
1. Thầy/cô tiến hành đánh giá sinh viên trong quá trình và kết thúc môn học thế nào?
2. Thầy/cô có nghĩ phương pháp đánh giá mình đang áp dụng là hiệu quả không?
   Nếu không thầy/cô có đề xuất gì không?
3. Thầy/cô đánh giá năng lực giao tiếp ngoại ngữ của sinh viên bằng cách nào?

VII. Thái độ và năng lực của sinh viên
1. Thầy/cô nghĩ thế nào về thái độ học tập của sinh viên?
2. Điểm trung bình của sinh viên trong môn tiếng Anh của thầy/cô thường là bao nhiêu? Bao nhiêu phần trăm sinh viên đầu môn này?
A.4 INTERVIEW WITH HR MANAGERS IN TOURISM COMPANIES
A.4.1 ENGLISH VERSION

I. Experience
1. Can you tell me your educational background?
2. Can you tell me about your career history?
3. How long have you been working here in the travel agency?
4. How long have you been the HR manager?

II. Tourism programs
1. What do you think about the tourism programs which are being delivered in universities and colleges in Vietnam?
2. Does your company cooperate with a tourism institution in training students and staff? If yes, can you tell me more in detail about the cooperation?
3. Do you highlight the importance of English in the recruitment?

III. Internships
1. Do you evaluate the intern before you allow them to do their internship in your company? If yes, in what way?
2. Do you think the interns have been well-prepared before they practise in your company?
   - Very Well prepared
   - Well prepared
   - So so
   - Not very well prepared
   - Ill-prepared
3. What competencies do the interns bring to their internship?
4. What do you think about the interns' communicative competence in a foreign language?
5. Do you allow the intern to serve and communicate with international tourists?
6. What do you think about the interns' performance in their internship?
7. What does your company do to help the students improve their graduate competencies and do they know what these are?
8. Do you train the staff to work as mentors for interns in their internship? If yes, how often and in what way?
9. How do you evaluate the internships that take place in your company?
10. Are you involved in the designing of internships with training institutions?
11. Do you receive support from the institution regarding the internship? If yes, what is the support?
IV. Quality of interns and recently graduated staff

1. What criteria do you use to recruit a new member of staff?
2. What percentages of the applicants who are recent graduates meet the criteria?
3. What competencies do you think are the most important to work for this company?
4. When the applicants are employed, do you have to retrain them? If yes, can you tell me about the training in details? Why do you think they need to be retrained?
5. How do you evaluate the graduates' foreign language competence?
6. Have you ever employed one of your interns after graduation? Why (not)?
7. Do you organise frequent training or professional development to improve the staff's quality? If yes, how often and can you please describe it in detail?

A.4.2 VIETNAMESE VERSION

I. Kinh nghiệm

1. Anh/chị có thể cho biết về học vấn của mình?
2. Anh/chị có thể cho biết về quá trình công tác của mình?
3. Anh/chị đã làm trong công ty du lịch được bao lâu?
4. Anh/chị đã làm trong phòng nhân sự được bao lâu?

II. Chương trình đào tạo du lịch

1. Anh/chị nghĩ thế nào về các chương trình đào tạo du lịch đang được giảng dạy trong trường đại học và cao đẳng tại Việt Nam?
2. Công ty của anh/chị có hợp tác với các trường du lịch để đào tạo sinh viên và nhân viên không? Nếu có anh/chị có thể nói chi tiết về sự hợp tác này không à?
3. Anh/chị có đề cao tầm quan trọng của tiếng Anh trong tuyển dụng nhân sự không?

III. Thực tập

1. Anh/chị có đánh giá thực tập sinh trước khi nhận học vào thực tập tại công ty mình không? Nếu có thì bằng cách nào?
2. Anh/chị có nghĩ là thực tập sinh được chuẩn bị chưa đào tạo trước khi các em thực tập tại công ty?
   □ Rất tốt
   □ Tốt
   □ Bình thường
   □ Không tốt lắm
   □ Kém
3. Các thực tập sinh đã mang đến công ty những kỹ năng nào sẵn có?
4. Anh/chị nghĩ thế nào về năng lực giao tiếp ngoại ngữ của thực tập sinh?
5. Anh/chị có cho phép thực tập sinh phục vụ và giao tiếp với khách quốc tế không?

6. Anh/chị đánh giá thế nào về sự thể hiện của các thực tập sinh?

7. Công ty làm gì để giúp thực tập sinh tăng cường các kỹ năng tốt nghiệp và sinh viên có biết đến những kỹ năng đó không?

8. Anh/chị có đào tạo nhân viên để làm giáo viên hướng dẫn thực tập cho thực tập sinh không? Nếu có thì bao lâu một lần và cách thực hiện thế nào?

9. Anh/chị có đánh giá gì về các kỹ thuật diễn ra tại công ty mình?

10. Anh/chị có cùng nhà trường thiết kế các kỹ thuật tập không?

11. Anh/chị có nhận được sự hỗ trợ của nhà trường trong kỹ thuật tập không? Nếu có sự hỗ trợ đó là gì?

IV. Chất lượng của thực tập sinh và nhân viên mới tốt nghiệp

1. Anh/chị sử dụng tiêu chí nào để tuyển nhân viên mới?

2. Bao nhiêu phần trăm sinh viên mới ra trường đáp ứng được yêu cầu đó?

3. Năng lực nào anh/chị nghĩ là quan trọng để làm việc trong công ty này?

4. Khi ứng viên được tuyển dụng, anh/chị có cần đào tạo lại không? Nếu có thì tại sao phải đào tạo lại và có thể cho tôi biết cụ thể về việc đào tạo này?

5. Anh/chị đánh giá thế nào về năng lực giao tiếp ngoại ngữ của sinh viên mới tốt nghiệp?

6. Anh/chị đã bao giờ tuyển thực tập sinh đã thực tập tại công ty mình chưa? Tại sao (không)?

7. Anh/chị có tổ chức đào tạo nhân viên thường xuyên để nâng cao năng lực nhân viên không? Nếu có thì bao lâu một lần và cụ thể thế nào?
A.5 INTERVIEW WITH INTERNSHIP MENTORS IN TOURISM COMPANIES

A.5.1 ENGLISH VERSION

I. Experience
1. Can you tell me your educational backgrounds?
2. Can you tell me about your career history?
3. How long have you been working here in the travel agency?
4. How long have you been working as a mentor in students' internship? And how many interns have you supervised?

II. Internships
1. What activities do you allow interns to do in their internship?
2. What are your particular duties in supervising the interns?
3. Do you have any internship plan to follow? If yes, do you stick to the plan? Do you have any difficulties in implementing the plan?
4. Have you ever experienced any problems when supervising the interns? What are they?
5. If the interns were not well-behaved, what would you do?
6. Do you have any recommendation to improve the effectiveness of the internship?
7. Do you know the outcomes of the internship and the graduate competencies that the internship will provide students with?
8. Do you often contact the interns' academic supervisors to discuss the issues regarding the interns and their internship?

III. Quality of interns
1. Do you think the interns are well-prepared before they do their internship?
2. What do you think about their behaviors and performances in their internship?
3. What do you think about the interns' communicative competence in foreign language?
4. What competencies do you think the internship can help the interns improve?

IV. Assessment processes
1. What criteria do you use to assess the interns?
2. How do you assess them?

A5.2 VIETNAMESE VERSION

I. Kinh nghiệm
1. Anh/chị có thể cho biết về học vấn của mình?
2. Anh/chị có thể cho biết về quá trình công tác của mình?
3. Anh/chị đã làm trong công ty du lịch được bao lâu?
4. Anh/chị đã làm giáo viên hướng dẫn thực tập bao lâu và hướng dẫn bao nhiều thực tập sinh rồi?

II. Thực tập
1. Anh/chị cho phép thực tập sinh làm gì trong quá trình thực tập của họ?
2. Nhiệm vụ chính của anh/chị trong việc hướng dẫn thực tập là gì?
4. Anh/chị đã gặp khó khăn nào trong việc hướng dẫn thực tập sinh không? Khó khăn gì?
5. Nếu thực tập sinh có thái độ không tốt, anh/chị sẽ làm gì?
6. Anh/chị có đề xuất gì để việc thực tập có hiệu quả hơn không?
7. Anh/chị có biết đến mục tiêu của kỳ thực tập và những kỹ năng mà kỳ thực tập trang bị cho thực tập sinh không?
8. Anh/chị có liên lạc thường xuyên với giảng viên của thực tập sinh để thảo luận các vấn đề liên quan không?

III. Chất lượng của thực tập sinh
1. Anh/chị có nghĩ rằng thực tập sinh được chuẩn bị chu đáo cho kỳ thực tập không?
2. Anh/chị nghĩ thế nào về năng lực và thái độ của thực tập sinh?
3. Anh/chị nghĩ thế nào về năng lực giao tiếp ngoài ngữ của thực tập sinh?
4. Những năng lực nào mà kỳ thực tập sẽ giúp thực tập sinh phát huy?

IV. Kiểm tra đánh giá
1. Anh/chị đã trên tiêu chí gì để đánh giá thực tập sinh?
2. Anh/chị đánh giá thực tập sinh bằng cách nào?
APPENDIX B

EVALUATION CHECKLIST OF THE TOURISM GRADUATES’ ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Graduate’s name: ____________________________________________

*Please CIRCLE the number rating the graduate’s English proficiency based on the following criteria.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Fluency and Coherence             | • Speaks fluently without frequent repeating or making self correction; any hesitation is content-related rather than to find words or grammar  
• Speaks coherently with fully appropriate cohesive features  
• Uses a range of connectives with flexibility | 5         | 4    | 3      | 2    | 1    |
| Vocabulary Range and Word Choice  | • Uses a wide range of appropriate vocabulary with precise word choice  
• Uses idiomatic language naturally and accurately | 5         | 4    | 3      | 2    | 1    |
| Grammatical Range and Accuracy    | • Uses a wide range of grammatical structures flexibly  
• Produces accurate structures | 5         | 4    | 3      | 2    | 1    |
| Pronunciation                     | • Produces comprehensible pronunciation  
• L1 accent has minimal effect on intelligibility | 5         | 4    | 3      | 2    | 1    |

(Source: modified from IELTS Assessment Criteria)

Other comments:

...............................................................................................................................................
...............................................................................................................................................
...............................................................................................................................................
.............................................................................................................................................
APPENDIX C
QUESTIONNAIRES
C.1 QUESTIONNAIRES TO STUDENTS
C.1.1 ENGLISH VERSION

Personal information:

Date of birth: ........................................................................................................................
Gender: ..................................................................................................................................
Institution: ............................................................................................................................
Major: ...................................................................................................................................

Please circle the number that you consider best appropriate to you.

PART I: APPRAISAL OF TOURISM SPECIALISATION

A. PROGRAM CURRICULUM
1. I found the amount of theoretical and practical parts balanced.
2. The program provided me with sufficient knowledge about tourism in general.
3. The program provided me with sufficient knowledge about my specialisation.
4. The program provided me with sufficient specialisation skills.

B. QUALITY OF LECTURERS
5. My tourism lecturers were competent in their expertise.
6. My tourism lecturers were committed to their teaching.
7. My tourism lecturers’ teaching methods were interesting.

C. MATERIALS AND FACILITIES
8. Materials and facilities were sufficient.

D. ASSESSMENT
9. The assessments were well designed and implemented.

E. INTERNSHIPS
10. It was easy for me to find a workplace for my internships.
11. I was assigned duties relevant to my specialisation.


12. My mentors were enthusiastic in their supervision.


13. My mentors had good specialisation skills and knowledge.


14. I received good support from my academic supervisors.


F. GENERIC SKILLS

15. The program provided me with the following generic skills (Circle ALL the options that are appropriate for you).

a. Teamwork and cooperation (fosters group facilitation and management, conflict resolution, motivation of others, creating a good workplace climate)

b. Flexibility (adaptability, perceptual objectivity, staying objective, resilience, behaviour is contingent on the situation)

c. Relationship building (networking, establish rapport, use of contacts, concern for stakeholders (e.g., clients))

d. Computer literacy (able to operate a number of packages and has information management awareness)

e. Conceptual thinking (pattern recognition, insight, critical thinking, problem definition, can generate hypotheses, linking)

f. Technical expertise (job related technical knowledge and skills, depth and breadth, acquires expertise, donates expertise)

g. Organisational awareness (understands organisation, knows constraints, power and political astuteness, cultural knowledge)

h. Concern for order, quality and accuracy (monitoring, concern for clarity, reduces uncertainty, keeping track of events and issues)

i. Impact and influence on others (strategic influence, impression management, showmanship, persuasion, collaborative influence)

j. Initiative (bias for action, decisiveness, strategic orientation, proactive, seizes opportunities, self-motivation, persistence)

k. Customer service orientation (helping and service orientation, focus on client needs, actively solves client problems)

l. Developing others (training, developing others, coaching, mentoring, providing support, positive regard)

m. Directiveness (assertiveness, decisiveness, use of power, taking charge, firmness of standards, group control and discipline)
n. **Team leadership** (being in charge, vision, concern for subordinates, builds a sense of group purpose)

o. **Analytical thinking** (thinking for self, reasoning, practical intelligence, planning skills, problem analysing, systematic)

p. **Self-control** (stamina, resistance to stress, staying calm, high Emotional Quotient, resists temptation, not impulsive, can calm others)

q. **Organisational commitment** (align self and others to organisational needs, business-mindedness, self sacrifice)

r. **Ability and willingness to learn** (desire and aptitude for learning, learning as a basis for action)

s. **Interpersonal understanding** (empathy, listening, sensitivity to others, diagnostic understanding, awareness of others’ feelings)

t. **Self-confidence** (strong self-concept, internal locus of control, independence, positive ego strength, decisive, accepts responsibility)

u. **Personal planning and organisational skills** (ability to organise self and others, effective time management, organises and completes tasks effectively and efficiently)

v. **Written communication** (relevant skills/appropriate use of emails, internal memos, internal and external reports, letters to clients)

w. **Information seeking** (problem definition, diagnostic focus, looking deeper, contextual sensitivity)

x. **Achievement orientation** (task accomplishment, seeks results, employs innovation, has competitiveness, seeks impact, aims for standards and efficiency)

**PART II. APPRAISAL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING**

16. The program provided me with communicative competence in foreign languages.


17. My foreign language lecturers were well qualified.


18. The amount of time for foreign language subjects in the curriculum was appropriate.


19. I had opportunities to communicate with international customers during my internships.

C.1.2 VIETNAMESE VERSION

Thông tin cá nhân:
Năm sinh ........................................................................................................................................
Giới tính: ........................................................................................................................................
Chuyên ngành: ...................................................................................................................................
Kết quả học kỳ vừa qua: ........................................................................................................................

Bạn vui lòng khoanh tròn vào chữ số mà bạn cho là phù hợp nhất đối với bạn.

PHẦN I: ĐÁNH GIÁ VỀ CHUYỆN NGÀNH DU LỊCH

A. CHƯƠNG TRÌNH GIÁNG DÀY

1. Thời lượng giữa lý thuyết và thực hành hợp lý.

2. Chương trình cung cấp cho tôi đầy đủ kiến thức về du lịch nói chung.

3. Chương trình cung cấp cho tôi những kiến thức đầy đủ về chuyên môn của tôi.

4. Chương trình cung cấp cho tôi các kỹ năng về nghiệp vụ chuyên môn của tôi.

B. GIÁNG VIÊN

5. Các giảng viên chuyên ngành của tôi giỏi chuyên môn.

6. Các giảng viên chuyên ngành của tôi rất nhiệt tình.

7. Các giảng viên chuyên ngành của tôi có phương pháp giảng dạy tốt.

C. THIẾT BỊ VÀ TÀI LIỆU

8. Thiết bị học tập và giảng dạy đầy đủ.

D. KIỂM TRA ĐÁNH GIÁ

9. Việc kiểm tra đánh giá các môn học được thiết kế và thực hiện tốt.

E. THỰC TẬP

10. Tôi gặp thuận lợi trong việc tìm nơi thực tập.

11. Tôi được giao nhiệm vụ có liên quan đến chuyên môn của tôi trong kỳ thực tập.
12. Giáo viên hướng dẫn tại doanh nghiệp của tôi nhiệt tình trong việc chỉ bảo tôi.

F. KỸ NĂNG MỀM
15. Chương trình đã cung cấp cho tôi những kỹ năng tổng quát sau (khoanh tròn vào TẤT CẢ các kỹ tự mà bạn cho là đúng đối với bạn):
   a. Khả năng làm việc theo nhóm
   b. Khả năng thích ứng khi thay đổi môi trường làm việc: vị dự thay đổi từ di tour này sang tour khác hoặc chuyển làm từ công ty này sang công ty khác…)
   c. Xây dựng môi quan hệ với vị dự như với khách hàng, đồng nghiệp, cấp trên...
   d. Biết sử dụng vị tỉnh, có khả năng quản lý thông tin
   e. Khả năng về tự duy, biết tự duy mang phép phán
   f. Chuyên môn kỹ thuật (kiến thức kỹ thuật liên quan đến công việc)
   g. Có nhận thức về tổ chức (biết những hạn chế, thẩm quyền, văn hóa của tổ chức mà mình là thành viên)
   h. Quan tâm về chất lượng, trạng tự và sự chính xác
   i. Biết tác động và ảnh hưởng đến những người khác (ảnh hưởng về chiến lược quân lí, tạo ảnh hưởng, thuyết phục, ảnh hưởng đến hợp tác)
   j. Chủ động (biết nắm bắt cơ hội, tự tạo động lực, kiên trì cho động lực do)
   k. Định hướng dịch vụ khách hàng (giúp đỡ và định hướng dịch vụ, tập trung vào nhu cầu của khách hàng, chủ động giải quyết các vấn đề của khách hàng)
   l. Phát triển những người khác (đào tạo, phát triển những người khác, huấn luyện, tư vấn, hỗ trợ)
   m. Khả năng quyết đoán, biết sử dụng thẩm quyền, phụ trách, kiểm soát nhóm
   n. Khả năng lãnh đạo nhóm (là chịu trách nhiệm, xây dựng một ý thức về mục đích nhóm)
   o. Tư duy phân tích (biết lập luận, có khả năng phân tích vấn đề mang tính hệ thống)
   p. Khả năng tự kiếm soát (có sức đề kháng với stress, giữ bình tĩnh, chống lại sự cá mập, không bỏ đống, có thể tran an những người khác)
   q. Gần bới với tổ chức (biết cần bằng giữa quyền lợi của bản thân với những người khác, đặt quyền lợi của cấp tổ chức lên trên, có sự hy sinh cho tổ chức)
   r. Có khả năng và sẵn sàng học hỏi (mong muốn và khao khám học hỏi, lấy học tập làm cơ sở cho hành động)
   s. Có sự hiểu biết giữa các cá nhân (đồng cảm, lắng nghe, nhận thức và có sự nhạy cảm về cảm xúc của...
người khác)

t. Tự tin (tự ý thức về bản thân, tự kiểm soát, quyết định, chấp nhận trách nhiệm)
u. Lập kế hoạch cá nhân và kỹ năng tổ chức (khả năng tổ chức, quản lý thời gian hiệu quả, hoàn thành nhiệm vụ một cách hiệu quả)
v. Khả năng giao tiếp bằng văn bản (biết sử dụng email, báo cáo, thư từ cho khách hàng)
w. Biết tìm kiếm thông tin
x. Có ý thức về thành tích (ý thức hoàn thành nhiệm vụ, có sáng tạo, có khả năng cạnh tranh, tìm cách tác động nhằm mục đích để làm việc hiệu quả)

PHẦN II. ĐÁNH GIÁ VỀ VIỆC GIẢNG DẠY NGOẠI NGỮ

16. Chương trình cung cấp cho tôi khả giao tiếp bằng tiếng nước ngoài.

17. Giáo viên Ngoại Ngữ của tôi đủ khả năng giảng dạy tôi.

18. Thời lượng môn tiếng Anh trong chương trình hợp lý.

C.2 QUESTIONNAIRE ABOUT GENERIC SKILLS TO HR MANAGERS

C.2.1 ENGLISH VERSION

Below is the list of generic skills which Travel Management and Tour Guiding programs are thought to have provided to students so that they will advantageously get employed by employers. Please tick the options that you consider the most appropriate.

1. Teamwork and cooperation (fosters group facilitation and management, conflict resolution, motivation of others, creating a good workplace climate)

2. Flexibility (adaptability, perceptual objectivity, staying objective, resilience, behaviour is contingent on the situation)

3. Relationship building (networking, establish rapport, use of contacts, concern for stakeholders (e.g., clients))

4. Computer literacy (able to operate a number of packages and has information management awareness)

5. Conceptual thinking (pattern recognition, insight, critical thinking, problem definition, can generate hypotheses, linking)

6. Technical expertise (job related technical knowledge and skills, depth and breadth, acquires expertise, donates expertise)

7. Organisational awareness (understands organisation, knows constraints, power and political astuteness, cultural knowledge)

8. Concern for order, quality and accuracy (monitoring, concern for clarity, reduces uncertainty, keeping track of events and issues)

9. Impact and influence on others (strategic influence, impression management, showmanship, persuasion, collaborative influence)

10. Initiative (bias for action, decisiveness, strategic orientation, proactive, seizes opportunities, self-motivation, persistence)
11. Customer service orientation (helping and service orientation, focus on client needs, actively solves client problems)


12. Developing others (training, developing others, coaching, mentoring, providing support, positive regard)


13. Directiveness (assertiveness, decisiveness, use of power, taking charge, firmness of standards, group control and discipline)


14. Team leadership (being in charge, vision, concern for subordinates, builds a sense of group purpose)


15. Analytical thinking (thinking for self, reasoning, practical intelligence, planning skills, problem analysing, systematic)


16. Self-control (stamina, resistance to stress, staying calm, high Emotional Quotient, resists temptation, not impulsive, can calm others)


17. Organisational commitment (align self and others to organisational needs, business-mindedness, self sacrifice)


18. Ability and willingness to learn (desire and aptitude for learning, learning as a basis for action)


19. Interpersonal understanding (empathy, listening, sensitivity to others, diagnostic understanding, awareness of others’ feelings)


20. Self-confidence (strong self-concept, internal locus of control, independence, positive ego strength, decisive, accepts responsibility)


21. Personal planning and organisational skills (ability to organise self and others, effective time management, organises and completes tasks effectively and efficiently)


22. Written communication (relevant skills/appropriate use of emails, internal memos, internal and external reports, letters to clients)

23. Information seeking (problem definition, diagnostic focus, looking deeper, contextual sensitivity)

24. Achievement orientation (task accomplishment, seeks results, employs innovation, has competitiveness, seeks impact, aims for standards and efficiency)

Other comments: .......................................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................................................................
......................................................................................................................................................................
C.2.2 VIETNAMESE VERSION

Dưới đây là những kỹ năng mềm mà theo quỹ vĩ là chương trình đào tạo Lữ Hành và Hướng Dẫn tại các cơ sở đào tạo đã trang bị cho các sinh viên của trường để khi doanh nghiệp tuyển dụng các em có ưu thế được nhận vào làm việc. Xin quỹ vĩ vui lòng đánh dấu ✔ vào ô của sự lựa chọn mà quỹ vĩ cho là đúng nhất.

1. Làm việc theo nhóm và hợp tác (giải quyết xung đột, tạo động lực cho những người khác trong nhóm, tạo ra một môi trường làm việc tốt)

2. Linh hoạt (khả năng thích ứng khi thay đổi môi trường làm việc: ví dụ thay đổi từ đi tour nghĩa vụ sang tour khác hoặc chuyển làm từ công ty này sang công ty khác…)

3. Xây dựng môi quan hệ (thiết lập môi quan hệ, sử dụng các địa chỉ liên lạc, môi quan tâm đối với các bên liên quan (ví dụ như khách hàng))

4. Biết sử dụng vi tính, có khả năng quản lý thông tin

5. Khả năng về tư duy (biết tư duy mang phê phán, biết định nghĩa khái niệm chuyên ngành, có cái nhìn sâu sắc về sự việc sự vật xung quanh)

6. Chuyển môn kỹ thuật (kiến thức kỹ thuật liên quan đến công việc và kỹ năng, đỗ sau và bè rồng)

7. Nhận thức về tổ chức (hiểu tổ chức, biết những hạn chế, thâm quan về, văn hóa của tổ chức mà mình là thành viên)

8. Quản tâm về chất lượng, trật tự và sự chính xác

9. Biết tác động và ảnh hưởng đến những người khác (ảnh hưởng về chiến lược quân lý, tạo ân tượng, thuyết phục, ảnh hưởng đến hợp tác)

10. Chế độ (biết nầm bắt cơ hội, tự tạo động lực, kiên trì cho động lực đó)

11. Định hướng dịch vụ khách hàng (giúp đỡ và định hướng dịch vụ, tập trung vào nhu cầu của khách hàng, chủ động giải quyết các vấn đề của khách hàng)

12. Phát triển những người khác (đào tạo, phát triển những người khác, huấn luyện, tư vấn, hỗ trợ)
13. Khả năng quyết đoán, biết sử dụng thẩm quyền, phụ trách, kiểm soát nhóm

14. Khả năng lãnh đạo nhóm (là chủ trách nhiệm, xây dựng một ý thức về mục đích nhóm)

15. Tư duy phân tích (biết lập luận, có khả năng phân tích vấn đề mang tính hệ thống)

16. Khả năng tự kiểm soát (có sức chịu đựng, có sức đề kháng với stress, giữ bình tĩnh, chống lại sự cảm dỗ, không bỏ đống, có thể tránh những nguy cơ khác)

17. Gần bờ với tổ chức (biết cân bằng giữa quyền lợi của bản thân với những người khác, đặt quyền lợi của cả tổ chức lên trên, có sự hy sinh cho tổ chức)

18. Có khả năng và sẵn sàng học hỏi (mong muốn và khao khám học hỏi, lấy học tập làm cơ sở cho hành động)

19. Sự hiểu biết giữa các cá nhân (đồng cảm, lắng nghe, nhận thức và có sự nhạy cảm về cảm xúc của người khác)

20. Tự tin (tự ý thức về bản thân, tự kiểm soát, quyết định, chấp nhận trách nhiệm)

21. Lập kế hoạch cá nhân và kỹ năng tổ chức (khả năng tự tổ chức, quản lý thời gian hiệu quả, hoàn thành nhiệm vụ một cách hiệu quả)

22. Khả năng giao tiếp bằng văn bản (biết sử dụng email, báo cáo, thư từ cho khách hàng)

23. Biết tìm kiếm thông tin

24. Có ý thức về thành tích (ý thức hoàn thành nhiệm vụ, có sáng tạo, có khả năng cạnh tranh, tìm cách tác động nhằm mục đích để làm việc hiệu quả)

Ý kiến khác: ......................................................................................................................................................................
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APPENDIX D

PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT AND CONSENT FORM

D.1 PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT

I am Khuong Thi Hong Cam, a PhD candidate in the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies at RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia. My primary supervisor is Professor Desmond Cahill, an expert in intercultural studies. My research topic is “Internationalising Tourism Education in Vietnam: An evaluation of the work-integrated learning process in tourism training programs”. The central aim of this research is to examine the effectiveness of the work-integrated learning (WIL) process and foreign language training in tertiary tourism programs in universities and colleges in Vietnam in providing students with employable skills to meet the needs of international tourists from the perspectives of (a) lecturing staff; (b) tourism company managers and internship workplace mentors; and (c) current students and recent graduates.

To achieve such aim, six tourism training institutions including universities and colleges, government and non-public institutions in four provinces of Vietnam have been selected. The interviews will be conducted to the Dean of Tourism Faculty and three tourism teachers from Tourism Faculty and three teachers of foreign languages of each institution. A survey will be done with final year students majored in Tour Guiding and Travel Management programs within 10 to 15 minutes in their class time. I will also interview some graduates of those programs and do role-plays with them in English to evaluate their English proficiency. I will invite some HR managers of tourism companies and their staff who work as internship supervisors for interviews as well.

All personal information of the participants will be kept confidential. All data will be securely stored and then will be destroyed after five years. A summary of the research findings will be made available for the interested participants upon request after the completion of the thesis. The thesis will be submitted to the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia.

You will have the following rights in my research:

- The right to withdraw from participation at any time
- The right to request that any recording cease
- The right to have any unprocessed data withdrawn and destroyed, provided it can be reliably identified, and provided that so doing does not increase the risk for the participant.
• The right to have any questions answered at any time.

The project has been approved by the RMIT University Human Research Ethics Committee.

For further information regarding this research, please feel free to contact me via email at camhongthi.khuong@rmit.edu.au or my primary supervisor at des.cahill@rmit.edu.au or Human Research Ethics Committee RMIT University on +61 3 99252251 or email at human.ethics@rmit.edu.au.

Yours sincerely,

Khuong Thi Hong Cam
Ph.D. candidate
School of Global, Urban and Social Studies
RMIT University
Melbourne, Australia

If you have any complaints about your participation in this project, please see the complaints procedure at Complaints with respect to participation in research at RMIT [ctrl + click to follow]/ http://www.rmit.edu.au/research/human-research-ethics
D.2 CONSENT FORM

RMIT UNIVERSITY CONSENT FORM
(MĀU THU ĐÔNG Y CỦA RMIT)

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet./Tôi đã được giải thích về nghiên cứu và tôi đã đọc bản thông tin nghiên cứu.
2. I agree to participate in the research project as described./Tôi đồng ý tham gia dự án nghiên cứu như mô tả.
3. I agree/Tôi đồng ý:
   - to be interviewed./được phỏng vấn.
   - to be observed./được quan sát.
   - that my voice will be audio recorded./ràng giọng nói của tôi sẽ được thu âm.

1. I acknowledge that/Tôi biết rằng:
   (a) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety)./Việc tham gia của tôi là tự nguyện và tôi có quyền rút về nghiên cứu bất cứ lúc nào và rút lại thông tin tôi cung cấp mà chưa được xử lý.
   (b) The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me./Dự án này được nhằm mục đích nghiên cứu chứ không phải vì lợi ích cá nhân của riêng tôi.
   (c) The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law./Sự riêng tư và thông tin cá nhân tôi cung cấp sẽ được bảo mật và chỉ tiết lộ khi tôi cho phép hoặc do luật yêu cầu.
   (d) The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published in academic journals, and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to RMIT university library and to the investigated institutions. Any information which will identify me will not be used./Tình an toàn của dữ liệu sẽ được bảo đảm trong và sau khi nghiên cứu hoàn thành. Dữ liệu của nghiên cứu sẽ được xuất bản thành tập chí khoa học và các báo cáo của kết quả nghiên cứu sẽ được cung cấp cho thư viện của Đại Học RMIT và cho những tổ chức tham gia nghiên cứu.

Participant’s consent/ Sự đồng ý của người tham gia

Participant’s signature/ Chữ ký của người tham gia __________________________

Date/ Ngày tháng năm __________________________

Participants should be given a photocopy of this form after it has been signed./ Người tham gia nghiên cứu sẽ được giữ một bản của mẫu này sau khi ký.