

The Contribution of English Language Study to obtaining degree qualification: Case study of English Study Writing and BTM Programme at AIS St Helens

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Background:

The Bachelor of Tourism Management Programme (BTM) was first launched at AIS St Helens in the first semester of 2005. At the beginning, a decision was made by the Academic Board of AIS St Helens that Stage I (Level 5) 2.120/1.120 English Study Writing (ESW) would be a compulsory paper for the BTM programme. The objective of introducing the study writing course was to help students develop linguistic competencies in academic English. The course was designed to equip students with the appropriate knowledge and skills required for the types of academic writing that they would encounter in degree-level courses (AIS St Helens Programme Handbook 2005).

During 2005-2006, there were various comments from stakeholders (Course Evaluation Reports 2005 and 2006) that the contribution of the ESW course is now required to be reviewed, amidst mixed feed backs from students and staff alike. It is an opinion that English Language study needs to be appropriate to the type of degree programmes that are on offer.

This research is very much a work-in-progress, to try and assess (qualitatively and quantitatively) the contribution of such course towards completion of a degree Programme

Objective

To examine the contribution of English Language Study course to complete a tourism management degree.

Methodology

Contribution can be measured in a number of ways, such as feed back from students and stakeholders and from the grades that students obtained. This study will examine the grades and also conduct a survey of stakeholders (including students).

The study will conduct a survey among the stakeholders, and also will use the students' results of assessments over this period.

Research Tasks

Obtain grades of BTM students who took the 2.120/1.120 courses as from the second semester of 2005

Follow up their grades in both BTM and BIB courses in subsequent semesters as from 3rd semester 2005 to 3rd semester 2006, i.e. over 4 semesters.

Obtain grades of students who didn't take this course 2.120/1.120 and compare their grades during the same period i.e. from 3rd semester 2005 to 3rd semester 2006

All data collected to be statistically analysed.

Expected Outcome

Contribution of English Study Writing for achieving degree programmes is of mixed reaction. Course contents and course material need to be reviewed carefully and periodically.

While ESW is useful to some students, it may not be essential to those students with high IELTS level on entry to the programme like BTM.

Identify any differences in outcome from native English speaking students and that from non-native English speakers.

Possible conclusion that English Language study may be kept optional for degree courses in fields such as tourism management

Ethical Approval

This is considered part of the normal monitoring of course delivery in the BTM Programme. Aggregated analysis will be carried out and no single student or group of students will be singled out or discussed. Data gathered will be solely used for the purpose intended for in this research.