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**THE DEVELOPMENT OF A  
CONTEXTUALISED SET OF EVALUATION  
CRITERIA FOR STUDYING  
INTERNATIONALISATION AT A VIETNAMESE  
PUBLIC UNIVERSITY**

**A dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this thesis is to explore the development of a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university. The literature on internationalisation has so far paid little attention to Vietnam, a context which is at an early stage in conceptualising a plan for its internationalisation. This thesis, therefore, will assist Vietnamese universities in this effort in order to become a part of the global higher education system. Having access to a set of relevant evaluation criteria will not only enable them to better understand their current level of internationalisation but also inform their future internationalisation strategy.

The research process was supported by two conceptual frameworks: practical participation evaluation and utilization-focused evaluation approaches. A mixture of qualitative and quantitative research methods was employed to conduct the three-phase development of the contextualised set of evaluation criteria. A collaborative partnership was also developed with the institutional stakeholders from a key university for which the set of criteria was contextualised for evaluating the internationalisation process.

The findings from this study indicated that the development of a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university was informed by a complexity of contextual factors. In particular, the domestic-focused nature of institutional internationalisation was found to be shaped not only by national economic and political rationales but also the institutional structure of single focus on teaching. The complexity was further expanded to (national) cultural relevance, institutional purposes for the evaluation, and the institutional mono-disciplinary structure when it came to the evaluation of that internationalisation. As a result of the study, a modelling process for developing a contextualised set of criteria for internationalisation at Vietnamese public universities was established.

Insights into the complexity of the process for contextualising a set of evaluation criteria to study internationalisation at a Vietnam university also led to implications and recommendations for institutional stakeholders at the key university in the study (policy implementers and senior leaders), other universities, and policy makers.



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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Introduction**

This thesis focuses on developing a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university. Interest in this topic began during my working experiences at my university in Vietnam. The first experience I had was in the position of coordinator for an intensive English language training program for Economics and Business majors who enrolled in programs believed to be of international standard. These “international standard” programs were developed by the national university as a part of a special project. My second experience arose from my role as a coordinator for an international joint program between my university and an American university. These international experiences captured my interest and got me thinking about the reasons why my university had such programs and whether these “international” programs could make my university become more international in a sustainable way. This concern inspired my interest in the evaluation of international activities to understand the purpose, goal, and achievement of such activities in the university sector.

The literature on international education and international joint programs refers to the broader concept of *internationalisation*. Although there is a large literature on the history and contemporary development of internationalisation in higher education in many countries, little has been reported on internationalisation activities in Vietnamese universities. Further, despite the existence of numerous tools for evaluating institutional internationalisation in other countries, no such tools appear to be used in Vietnamese universities.

As a starting point for conceptualising this thesis, I took the view that the sustainable development of my own university with regard to international perspectives could be improved if there was a set of evaluation criteria that is contextually suitable for use in Vietnam. An appropriate set of evaluation criteria should provide opportunities for Vietnamese universities to reflect on the purpose and effectiveness of their internationalisation efforts.

This thesis identifies the current context of internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university, and develops a set of evaluation criteria for assessing internationalisation efforts. As this is the first time that the concept of internationalisation has been discussed officially at a Vietnamese public university, I believed that involving institutional stakeholders in the study would not only provide insightful information about internationalisation at the university, but also improve the university's understanding of the purpose and nature of internationalisation.

The following section overviews the context of Vietnamese higher education, in which the operation of public universities is undertaken and the effort of institutional internationalisation is shaped. At the end of this section, the rationale and significance of the current study will be described.

## **1.2. The context of Vietnamese higher education**

In the *Global Competitiveness Report* of the World Economic Forum for 2010-2011, Schwab and Sala-i-Martin reported that Vietnam had improved its ranking in terms of the global competitiveness index from the previous year. However, these researchers also indicated that the country's competitiveness was compromised by weaknesses in many areas, one of which was the quality of higher education. There have also been studies on the problems of the Vietnamese higher education system, which have prevented it from becoming a part of the international higher education (Fry, 2009; London, 2011; H. L. Pham & Fry, 2004; H. M. Pham, 1998; N. T. Pham, 2010; B. N. Tran, 2002). Consideration of internationalisation at Vietnamese universities, therefore, should be put into the context of the Vietnamese higher education system. Three main factors have been identified that contribute to shaping the contemporary context of Vietnamese higher education, with regard to international perspectives. In the following sections, these factors are discussed, beginning with an overview of the influences of foreign education models, then the national reform of higher education in the move towards international standards, and finally the globalisation pressure on Vietnamese higher education.

### **1.2.1. Influences of foreign education models**

Vietnam's higher education system has been said to be shaped largely by external influences (H. L. Pham & Fry, 2004). These include the Chinese Confucian influence, the French colonial influence, the Soviet influence, and the United States influence.

These foreign influences occurred in different periods of Vietnamese history and involved different characteristics. However, the influence of Soviet model has been the most significant and is still evident with regard to the current operation of Vietnamese higher education (H. L. Pham & Fry, 2004; Welch, 2010).

### *Historical influences of foreign models*

The Chinese Confucian influence, with its tradition of fondness for learning and special respect for teachers, scholars, students, and mentors, has become a fundamental element in shaping Vietnam's culture and people for one thousand years of Chinese domination (H. L. Pham & Fry, 2004). Education is seen as the important key to a successful life for Vietnamese people; therefore, both teachers and students are expected to do their best for that purpose (H. L. Pham & Fry, 2004). That is the main reason why Vietnamese people are serious about having their children proceed to higher education (Fry, 2009).

The influence of French colonialism occurred between 1884 and 1945 and was significant in the introduction of the first Western university model (H. L. Pham & Fry, 2004; H. M. Pham, 1998). This period witnessed the establishment of science and technical colleges (H. Hayden & et al., 1967). However, the purpose of maintaining French colonisation resulted in Vietnam missing the wave of institutional innovation in higher education that took place across many parts of Asia during the early twentieth century (Vallely & Wilkinson, 2008).

The influence of the United States on the Vietnamese higher education system began in the South of Vietnam in the 1950s and lasted until the end of 1970s, just before the country's unification. In contrast to specialised higher education universities in the North, universities in the South became a combination of many colleges, following the comprehensive organisational pattern of US colleges and universities (Fry, 2009; Welch, 2010). During this period, higher education in the South of Vietnam was more academic than applied, focusing on fundamental sciences, laws, economy and administration (Q. K. Nguyen & Nguyen, 2008). However, none of these universities were further developed due to the chaos of the war and the diversion of resources for military and security activities (Welch, 2010).

The influence of the Soviet model on the Vietnamese higher education system began in the North of Vietnam in the 1950s. During the American war (1955 – 1975), the Northern higher education system was completely redeveloped under the Soviet model

to serve national needs (London, 2011; H. Pham, L & Fry, 2002; Welch, 2010). Universities with different specialised areas, ranging from agriculture, pedagogy, engineering to medicine, were established in the North of Vietnam during this time (L. B. Dang, 1997). In addition, higher education, as a part of the national education system, was centrally planned and financed (London, 2011). During this period, the Soviet model had been successful in training human resources for developing the Northern region of Vietnam, supporting national protection and country reunification (George, 2010; Q. K. Nguyen & Nguyen, 2008). This model continued to be in effect after the end of the American war in 1975. However, with the *Doi Moi* (Reform) policy in 1986, the Vietnamese government embarked on a national reform, changing from a centralized planning system to a socialist-oriented market system that stimulated rapid economic growth during the early 1990s (Kelly, 2000; Q. K. Nguyen & Nguyen, 2008). To support the national development, reforms of the higher education system have been considered to be an important task (H. M. Pham, 1998). However, the contemporary organisation of Vietnamese universities on the basis of the Soviet model has been an obstacle to the success of these reforms.

### ***Contemporary issues of the Soviet model***

According to M. Hayden and Lam (2010), the transition to a socialist market-driven economy of Vietnam has been hindered by the existing influences of the Soviet model on the Vietnamese higher education system. These influences include: the central planning system, the mono-disciplinary structure, and the single focus on teaching at universities.

The centralised planning characteristic of the Soviet model resulted in universities being dependent on the central government, particularly in terms of administration and financing (M. Hayden & Lam, 2010). With regard to administration, although progress has been made toward decentralisation in the Vietnamese higher education system, the effect was minimal as the higher education model was “still conceptualised as a form of social welfare, dependent on economic development” (George, 2010, p. 36). For example, the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), in consultation with the Ministry of Planning and Investment, allocates enrolment quotas for all universities, both public and private ones (M. Hayden & Lam, 2007). The MoET is also the authority that grants approval for curriculum frameworks for all types of education programs across the education system (M. Hayden & Lam, 2007). In terms of financing, public

universities have remained heavily dependent on state funding for their operation. According to a 2005 survey, public universities and colleges received 68% of their funds from the state budget allocated by the MoET (Adams, Chhibber, Jimenez, Thomas, & Gropello, 2008).

Another facet of the Soviet model in the contemporary development of the Vietnamese higher education system is the mono-disciplinary structure of universities. According to Welch (2010), mono-disciplinary universities were too limited in their scope and not able to equip graduates well to meet the changing needs of a dynamic, transitional economy. The case of the Intel Corporation struggling to hire engineers in Ho Chi Minh City in 2009 was a significant example. Only 40 out of 2,000 Vietnamese students in the Information Technology major were sufficiently qualified to be hired by the Intel Corporation. In addition, the mono-disciplinary structure also hindered the development of the basic infrastructure and restricted the range of teaching staff in universities (Ngo, 2006).

An important legacy of the Soviet model was the separation of teaching and research between universities and research institutes. In order to make Vietnam an industrial and modernised country by 2020, the Vietnamese government set an ambitious target of enhancing research and development, particularly university research capacity (Harman & Le, 2010). However, the traditional role of Vietnamese universities as providers of an educated workforce rather than knowledge innovators has been an obstacle to achieving that target (Brooks, 2010; Harman & Le, 2010). In Vietnam, research has been conducted primarily in separate research institutes which are under the management of the Ministry of Science and Technology rather than the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) (Adams et al., 2008). In addition, high teaching loads, insufficient research training and support, and lack of incentives have been seen as obstacles in engaging academic staff in research in Vietnamese universities (Harman & Le, 2010; M. Hayden & Lam, 2010).

### **1.2.2. National reform of higher education towards international standards**

There have been different calls for national reform of Vietnamese higher education since *Doi Moi* in 1986. However, the national reform, for which international standards were mentioned as the target, was initiated by the presentation of the Higher Education Reform Agenda (HERA) in 2005. This agenda explicitly sets the goal of creating a

higher education system that is “advanced by international standards, highly competitive, and appropriate to the socialist oriented market system” (Vietnamese Government, 2005, p. 3). This is considered to be the most comprehensive package of measures to reform the higher education system ever undertaken in Vietnam. The 2005 HERA focused on reforming aspects of governance, privatisation, expansion, funding and curriculum restructuring (Nguyen, 2011). This national reform of higher education is also supported by the revised Law on Education in 2009 and the Law on Higher Education in 2012. These laws state that the task of Vietnamese higher education is to meet the national demand of qualified human resources for national development while maintaining the Vietnamese cultural identity.

### **1.2.3. Globalisation pressure on Vietnamese higher education**

Other than the increasing demand for human resources for national development, the influences of globalisation on Vietnamese higher education have mainly come from the increasing participation of Vietnam in regional and international organisations, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organisation, and ASEAN (A. Q. Dang, 2009). For example, the World Bank has provided large sponsorship for Vietnamese higher education development policy program since 1998. With its international experience, the World Bank has legitimated its involvement in Vietnam’s higher education reform process by targeting the national policy on higher education system in its projects.

In addition, the ASEAN regionalisation process has been another pressure on Vietnamese higher education. An ASEAN University Network (AUN) was established in 1995 for facilitating regional cooperation in academic programs. However, the influence of this network has not been prominent in the general Vietnamese higher education system since only some big Vietnamese public universities have joined as members of this network. This situation indicates that collaboration, rather than unification, appears to be the contemporary trend of the ASEAN region’s higher education initiatives. Concerns were also raised about the competitiveness of university graduates, as well as the quality of Vietnamese universities compared to universities in other ASEAN member countries. In 2008, it was noted that the number of publications in peer-review journals by a Vietnam university was just less than 50, compared to many hundreds from universities in the Philippines and Thailand (Adams et al.). In addition, the recent policy regarding the establishment of the ASEAN Economic

Community in 2015 also imposed a challenge for Vietnamese higher education in improving the competitiveness of its human resources to other countries in the region. Vietnam, therefore, has been under pressure to improve its higher education system and catch up with other countries in the region.

### **1.3. Rationale and significance of the study**

In recognising that much has been written about internationalisation in higher education in different contexts, this study aims to extend the current literature by providing a perspective on internationalisation in the context of Vietnam as a ‘newcomer’ to international education.

In the practical context of Vietnamese higher education, terms like *international/regional standard* or *international/regional position* can be found in vision and mission statements presented on the websites of many Vietnamese public universities. However, the actual concept of, and strategy for, internationalisation are missing from their strategic plans for development. Further, little has been reported on how internationalisation is currently understood and practiced at Vietnamese universities. Hence, it is timely now to undertake this study, for which a key aim is to provide insight into the current context of internationalisation at Vietnamese universities. In addition, from the institutional perspective, insufficient research in this area can result in a discrepancy between strategic aspiration and strategic reality with regard to internationalisation efforts, as suggested by Foskett (2010). Therefore, a second key aim of this study is to develop a set of evaluation criteria for studying the status of internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university. These criteria will not only help Vietnamese universities to examine their current progress in internationalisation, but also help to identify relevant strategic steps to fill any gaps.

In addition, while there is a large body of literature on internationalisation and evaluation of institutional internationalisation, from many different national/regional contexts, only recently have concerns been raised about the involvement of institutional stakeholders in formulating the concept of internationalisation (de Wit, 2013). To contribute to promoting greater understanding, this study was designed to involve institutional stakeholders in examining internationalisation at institutional level.

In light of the issues identified above, the proposed study will serve both practical and theoretical purposes. From a practical perspective, this study will help the Vietnamese

public university develop and trial a set of criteria to evaluate their internationalisation progress, while at the same time promoting organisational learning about internationalisation issues. From a theoretical perspective, the study will add to the literature on internationalisation, by providing insights into the Vietnamese context. In addition, it will provide a different approach to evaluation of internationalisation in terms of institutional stakeholders' input and relevance to the Vietnamese context.

#### **1.4. Overview of the Thesis**

This thesis includes eight chapters. In Chapter One, I have identified and justified the research problem and objectives, and provided background to the study with information about the context of Vietnamese higher education system. I have presented issues related to the influences of historical foreign factors, the national policies, and the globalisation pressure on the current development of the Vietnamese higher education.

In Chapter Two, I review relevant literature, including the definitions of internationalisation in higher education, the influences of globalisation and national/local context on the internationalisation of higher education, as well as the different trends of internationalisation in higher education. A conceptual framework for evaluating institutional internationalisation is also provided to identify potential criteria by reviewing different evaluation tools from a range of contexts. This chapter concludes with the identification of gaps in the literature addressed by the research questions for the current study.

In Chapter Three, I present the evaluation approaches and methods used in the current study, which involve a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research methods. The research procedure chosen is also described.

In the next three chapters, Chapter Four, Chapter Five, and Chapter Six, I present the findings from the three phases of the study. The qualitative and quantitative findings demonstrate the contextualisation process involved in identifying the set of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university.

In Chapter Seven, I draw together the findings from the three previous chapters and discuss these results with regard to the relevant literature, and in line with the research questions.

Finally, in Chapter Eight, a summary of key findings is provided. That is followed by discussion of implications for theory and methodology, as well as practical implications for institutional stakeholders (policy implementers and senior leaders), universities, and policy makers. Following an outline of the limitations of this study, suggestions for future research are provided. In conclusion, I present some reflections on my research journey.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter begins with an overview of definitions of internationalisation in higher education. It is followed by a review of the influence of globalisation and national/local context in considering internationalisation of higher education. In the next section I will move on to describing the various trends in internationalisation of higher education in considering the influences of these factors in different contexts. The lack of research on the internationalisation of higher education in the Vietnamese context is identified as a key point in this section. The chapter will continue with reviewing evaluation tools that have been developed for studying institutional internationalisation in different national and regional contexts. In doing so, concerns in relation to the development of evaluation tools for studying institutional internationalisation are also discussed. The chapter concludes with a summary of key points from the literature on internationalisation of higher education and the evaluation of institutional internationalisation, and the research questions for the current study.

#### **2.2. Definitions of internationalisation in higher education**

Internationalisation in higher education has gone through a long history of development since the middle ages and the renaissance in Europe (Altbach, 1998; de Wit, 2002; de Wit & Merkx, 2012). However, the use of ‘internationalisation’ to describe the different ways that international dimensions in higher education have been taking shape with different emphases and features dates back to the 1990s (de Wit, 2013). There has been, however, even more growing concern about rethinking the concept of internationalisation in higher education in recent years. For the purpose of this study, definitions which were developed for describing internationalisation at the institutional level of higher education will now be discussed.

In the early 1990s, institutional internationalisation was defined as a set of activities. Arum and Van de Water (1992) proposed that internationalisation was “the multiple activities, programs and services that fall within international studies, international educational exchange and technical cooperation” (p.202). This definition reflected the range of single activities in international education which were the focus of American universities during the late 1980s and the early 1990s (Arum & Van de Water, 1992).

This definition, therefore, was said to be “very American-oriented” (Knight & de Wit, 1995, p.15).

Later in 1994, institutional internationalisation was defined as a dynamic process “of integrating an international and intercultural dimension into the teaching, research, and service functions of the institution” (Knight, 1994, p.3). This definition is relevant for analysing internationalisation at the institutional level (de Wit, 2002; Yang, 2014) since it considers international perspectives in relation to the three main missions of a university. Knight later revised her earlier definition to indicate that internationalisation was a “process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purposes, functions or delivery of higher education” (2004, p.11). This definition is the most quoted by researchers (e.g., Beerkens et al., 2010; Egron-Polak & Hudson, 2014; Kudo & Hashimoto, 2011; Yiyun, 2007).

There have been, however, two different viewpoints regarding the notion of relations among countries referred to in Knight’s definition. According to Knight (2012), the definition emphasises “the sense of relationships between and among nations” (p.30) in terms of higher education, as distinct from the borderless characteristic of the term globalisation. Turner and Robson (2008) have also highlighted the “culturally situated” nature of higher education systems (p.41) in considering internationalisation. These researchers suggested that the distinctiveness of national systems may result in differing responses with regard to internationalisation by specific universities. However, Altbach (2007) and Maringe, Foskett, and Woodfield (2013) have argued that universities are already international in nature. According to Altbach (2007), universities have historically “functioned in a common language, Latin, and served international clientele of students,..., and knowledge [that] reflected scholarly learning in the Western world.” (p.121). Sharing a similar viewpoint about the international nature of a university, Maringe et al. (2013) suggest that Knight’s definition is partially true because it assumes that, “prior to becoming international, institutions have generally had a national or local agenda and focus” (p.11). Therefore, Maringe et al. (2013) have suggested that the internationalisation of a university “only seeks to intensify their international character” rather than becoming international (p.11). These researchers have also suggested that Knight’s definition should adopt the phrase of “an increasingly international dimension” rather than just “an international dimension” (p.11).

In addition, the conceptual precision in defining internationalisation has been critiqued in recent years. According to Turner and Robson (2008), internationalisation is multi-stranded and is particularly embedded with institutional motivation and needs. On the other hand, Maringe et al. (2013) have argued that the notion of international integration in Knight's definition was problematic because it could be interpreted as either a simple additive or cosmetic approach, or a fundamental transformation of institutional culture and ethos. In dealing with that conceptual precision, Turner and Robson (2008) suggest themes in conceptualising internationalisation should include: "international engagement, mobility, revenue, international professionals, communications, knowledge-sharing, language, programming and curriculum, academic practices, and reciprocity/"Westernisation." (p.13). However, this thematic approach tends to turn the definition of internationalisation back to specific dimensions and activities, which were used to define internationalisation in the United States by the early 1990s. Moreover, it may be misleading in the way it considers internationalisation as a goal linked to Westernisation, whereas internationalisation may be better seen in a wider light within education.

In the recent decade, the notion of a comprehensive internationalisation has been introduced with different perspectives. The idea of comprehensive internationalisation was firstly introduced by Hudzik (2011) in responding to influences of global forces for American universities. Accordingly, internationalisation is considered as "a commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of higher education" (2011, p.10). According to Hudzik (2011), this comprehensive internationalisation approach aims at both on-campus and cross-border internationalisation practices in order to make American universities become a global asset rather than a local or national one. This focus on global orientation, again, was intended for American higher education system rather than for wider application in various contexts. In addition, it is suggested by de Wit (2013) that the idea was "more as a wake-up call than as an introduction of a new concept" (p.24) of internationalisation.

Another perspective in defining comprehensive internationalisation was made by de Wit and Hunter (2015). Their view involves a call for wider attention to internationalisation at home. They have added to Knight's (2004) definition the specific goal of enhancing

“the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society” (p.3). According to de Wit and Hunter (2015), internationalisation, in this sense, is seen as more inclusive by not focusing much on minority mobility, but rather more on curriculum and learning outcomes on campus to ensure internationalisation for all. In referring to the context of internationalisation in the European region, it was intended to capture the effort of switching from a concept of internationalisation as mobility only, to a view of internationalisation at home since it has been taking place widely across Europe (Beelen, 2016). On the other hand, this definition recognises that specific national and institutional actions need to be the first concern for a university, in order to define the position on internationalisation appropriately (de Wit, 2013; de Wit & Hunter, 2015).

The efforts in defining internationalisation at institutional level so far have been generally concerned about the integration of international, intercultural, or global factors into the primary (teaching, research, and service) functions of a university. It is interesting that globalisation and its effects have been included in discussing internationalisation of higher education. These two terms have sometimes been found to be used interchangeably. However, further discussion on this issue is probably not appropriate to the current study, in that the focus of this study is on identifying contextual factors in order to develop a set of relevant criteria for evaluating internationalisation at a Vietnamese university. In doing so, the current study adopts the viewpoint that globalisation is a wider factor which has been influencing the current trends of internationalisation within higher education (de Wit, 2013; International Association of Universities [IAU], 2012; Maringe & Woodfield, 2013). In contrast to the notion of globalisation, the current study supports the call for consideration of the national/local contextual factors in internationalisation, as suggested by Turner and Robson (2008), de Wit (2013), and de Wit and Hunter (2015). These aspects are specifically relevant to the current study, as it focuses on considering the discourse of internationalisation in the particular context of Vietnam. Further discussion on the influence of those contextual factors on conceptualising internationalisation of higher education is included in the following section.

### **2.3. Globalisation and national/local contexts in internationalisation of higher education**

Globalisation and national/local contexts are two influencing phenomena in the discussion on internationalisation in higher education. Each phenomenon has a different influence on how internationalisation has been viewed in higher education.

Globalisation has been defined as “the processes, shaped by and driving economic, cultural, social, political, ideological and technological integration of nations” (Maringe & Woodfield, 2013, p.2). Globalisation, accompanied by the significant development of the knowledge industries and communication technologies, has influenced universities (Jarvis, 2001; Sabour, 2015; Zajda, 2015).

With the large growth of knowledge industries, universities no longer generate knowledge for its own sake or for society, but more for economic value which is often brought about through increasing partnership with business sector, or import and exports of educational services and products (Knight, 2008; Maringe & Foskett, 2010). In that knowledge production process, many universities have been modelled on the basis of a corporate operation, and therefore, have embraced the corporate characteristics with regard to efficiency and accountability (Sabour, 2015; Zajda, 2015). This change in university governance has been accompanied with the establishment of international organisations or frameworks to oversee the key decisions and the quality regarding university education, including accreditation, ranking, and recognition of qualifications (Knight, 2008; Maringe & Foskett, 2010). In addition, the development of information and communication technologies has become a means to increase the international dimensions of higher education such as online delivery of education (Knight, 2008; Sabour, 2015). With all of these changes, globalisation has had a large impact on universities. The internationalisation of universities has also changed accordingly.

Internationalisation of universities in this 21<sup>st</sup> century has been viewed as a response to globalisation. According to Egron-Polak and Hudson (2014) and Maringe and Foskett (2010), the internationalisation of universities in the globalised context is different from what happened in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century due to the influences of the globalisation process. For example, the internationalisation of universities in the mid of the 1980s was defined by activities such as studying abroad, language studies,

institutional cooperation agreements and subject area studies (Knight, 2008). However, more recently, globalisation has “led to intensified mobility of ideas, students and academic staff and to expanded possibilities for collaboration and global dissemination of knowledge”, together with new aims, activities and actors participating in the internationalisation process (IAU, 2012, p.1). The recent report by Egron-Polak and Hudson (2014) showed that, in different parts of the world, prioritised internationalisation activities mainly included: student and staff mobility, international collaboration in research, recruiting fee paying students, joint/double degrees programs, and offshore educational provision. These activities represented the influence of globalisation forces.

While globalisation has influenced the internationalisation of universities, national/local contexts have become increasingly recognised as an important counterbalance to the effects of globalisation. Rumbley, Altbach, and Reisberg (2012) stated that the effect of the globalisation is powerful, but effective attention should also be given to the “unique needs and aspirations of their particular institutions, local communities, and regional or national contexts” (p.3). Altbach (2013) emphasised the concerns about the national and local scientific communities and higher education systems, explaining that English has been growing “as a global language of science and scholarship network dominated by the main English-speaking academic systems” (p.6) as a result of the globalisation process. For countries where English is not the native language, it is, therefore, believed that creating a balance between the local and the global is necessary, in order to maintain their intellectual independence (Altbach, 2013; Rumbley et al., 2012). The concern about national/local context has also been acknowledged in the study by Maringe and Foskett (2010), who stated that universities had different ways to adopt internationalisation strategies depending on their position with regard to global influence, national interest or local strategies.

Consideration of national/local contexts is clearly observed in the way internationalisation is interpreted in Asian countries such as Japan and China. For example, internationalisation in Japanese universities was widely described by a Japanese term, *kokusaika*, which implies internationalisation with consideration of socio-historical elements (Burgess, Gibson, Klaphake, & Selzer, 2010; Gerbert, 1993; Hashimoto, 2000; Lincicome, 1993). For Chinese universities, the catchword for internationalisation in the 1990s was coined as *Jei Gui*, which focused on adapting

Chinese higher education practices to international criteria (Yang, 2005). However, with increasing attention to national identity, this term did not appear to be relevant to representing the contemporary internationalisation of Chinese higher education (Liu & Metcalfe, 2016; Yang, 2014). Different concepts of internationalisation from emerging higher education systems such as in Japan and China have challenged the predominantly western discourses of internationalisation as well as the landscape of internationalisation, as argued by (de Wit, 2013).

The significance of national/local context has been further recognised in the *glonacal agency heuristic theory*, which was first introduced by Marginson and Rhoades (2002). This theory was developed to consider the operation of universities through the interlocking of the *global*, the *national*, and the *local* dimensions. Consideration for these three dimensions was further discussed by Marginson, Kaur, and Sawir (2011), particularly in regard to universities in the Asia-Pacific region. The global dimension, which is made up of globalisation process, involves “world systems of knowledge and information flows, people movement, and networks between higher education institutions” (Marginson et al., 2011, p. 14). Despite the growing influence of the global factors, Marginson and his co-authors also believe that the national dimension, which involves such factors as “systems, policies, laws, and regulations” (p.14), also shapes higher education. According to these authors, factors such as national history, languages, cultures, political systems and/or resources generate variations in the way nations and universities consider global factors and the strategies they might take to address these. The final factor in this *glonacal heuristic theory* is the local component which is made up of “the day-to-day life of universities, localities, communities and employers of graduates” (Marginson et al., 2011, p. 14). This theory emphasised the influence of different layers of contextual factors on the operation of any particular university.

Although the *glonacal* theory was originally developed for “comparative higher education research” (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002, p. 288), it has recently been used in studies concerning the influences of contextual factors on internationalisation of universities in the European region, Japan and China (Hunter, 2013; Kudo & Hashimoto, 2011; Liu & Metcalfe, 2016). In Europe, Hunter (2013) has suggested that a European university can position itself in an internationalisation agenda in considering the changing global environment; the national factors (regulations and policy); and the

institutional factors (historical legacy, resources, and ability). In Japan, Kudo and Hashimoto (2011) have used this *glonacal* theory to depict the “cosmopolitan internationalisation” (p.356) of global-ranking universities. As a result, these Japanese universities have become an “independent interface between the global and the local communities” while staying “aloof from nationalism” (Kudo & Hashimoto, 2011, p. 356). In light of the *glonacal* theory, Liu and Metcalfe (2016) have identified the influence of cultural and institutional factors in the internationalisation effort at a school in a Chinese university. In the current study, this theory was not employed as the main guiding theory but as a supporting theory to highlight the centrality of contextual factors in developing evaluation criteria for studying the internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university.

The review of literature above indicates that the notion of context, in relation to studying the internationalisation of higher education appears to involve a complexity of factors at different levels. The studies from Europe, Japan and China mentioned above indicated that the “national identity still matters” (Marginson et al., 2011, p. 20) although the overall effects of the globalisation process have been widely recognised in other studies. The consideration of national context in studying internationalisation was noted by Knight’s (2004) discussion on approaches to internationalisation at the national level. According to Knight (2004), national economic development, social, cultural and/or political perspectives could be seen as rationales for a nation to internationalise their higher education. Moreover, taking note of the context at the institutional level has also been observed. For example, Knight (2004) described a number of approaches to internationalisation at the institutional level, indicating that each university might have their own way of defining their internationalisation strategies. The popular approaches are found to be process-based as defined by Knight (2004) and internationalisation at home, which has been advocated by de Wit and Hunter (2015), with focus on campus-based activities rather than outbound mobility. The studies by Hunter (2013), Liu and Metcalfe (2016), and Kudo and Hashimoto (2011) provide clear evidence of the influence of local and institutional factors on internationalisation at the university level. How the notion of context was informed at the Vietnamese public university in the current study will be explored in the Findings (see Chapters 4, 5, and 6) as well as in the Discussion (see Chapter 7).

In the following section, a review of the different trends in internationalisation of higher education in different contexts will demonstrate how they are shaped by different contextual factors.

## **2.4. Internationalisation of higher education trends in different contexts**

A global survey of internationalisation in higher education by Maringe and Foskett (2010) has indicated that internationalisation strategic responses are different across universities in different regions of the world. The developed countries, especially English-speaking countries and large European countries, tend to lead the world in internationalisation practices with large in-flows of international students, franchise of off-shore education programs, and leading collaborative research and teaching (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Maringe, 2010). In contrast, countries in regions like Asia tend to be the followers in internationalisation, acting as buyers of off-shore programs despite their efforts in attracting international students, improving internationalisation of the curriculum, and gaining reputation (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Maringe, 2010). This section provides an overview of typical trends for internationalisation in higher education that have been taking place in these contrasting contexts.

### **2.4.1. Comprehensive internationalisation with globally oriented higher education in U.S.**

The comprehensive internationalisation approach has been led by the American higher education system, which has been known to have significant independence from national control and policy (de Wit, 2002; Kerr, Gade, & Kawaoka, 1994; Shattock, 2014). However, whether it is defined by specific practices in the history or as comprehensive internationalisation in the current period, the influence of different national factors on formulating the trends of internationalisation at American universities has been observed. According to Smithee (2012), national policies on internationalisation of American universities have been delivered through the support of professional organisations in that process. Some organisations which have been famous in this area include the American Council on Education (ACE), Institute of International Education (IIE), and NAFSA, which originally stood for National Association of Foreign Student Advisers) and is currently known as Association of International Educators.

Before the 1980s, internationalisation at American universities was represented by multiple activities, programmes, and services in international/regional studies, foreign language education, international exchange and technical cooperation (Arum & Van de Water, 1992; Goodwin & Nacht, 1991). This early internationalisation approach was dominated by historical and political rationales of national security and foreign policy (de Wit, 2002). As Goodwin and Nacht (1991) observed, the internationalisation of higher education in the U.S at that time aimed “to understand the languages and cultures of both friend and foe and to comprehend the nature of past and potential global systems” (p.3). This period also witnessed the support from government and professional organisations in promoting actions and plans for internationalisation of American universities (de Wit, 2002; Goodwin & Nacht, 1991; Vestal, 1994). However, American universities were so focused on national programs and projects with regard to internationalisation that their internationalisation efforts only occurred in some disciplines linked to particular national professional communities and sponsors, instead of across the university (Holzner & Greenwood, 1995).

Between the 1980s and the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, internationalisation of American universities expanded but was still defined by specific practices. American universities involved in a variety of internationalisation practices, such as recruiting academic staff from other countries, developing international curriculum, foreign language training, study abroad, exchanges, foreign student recruitment, and international connections (de Wit, 2000; Groennings & Wiley, 1990). During this period, the competitiveness of American higher education and economic rationale were identified as the key national factors driving the internationalisation of American universities (de Wit, 2000; Holzner & Greenwood, 1995; Smithee, 2012). The danger of being surpassed in the global marketplace by Europe and Japan was seen as the key motivation for the internationalisation of higher education in this period (Holzner & Greenwood, 1995; Phelps, 1996). Americans were concerned about the promotion of international cooperation in science and research from the European region, and the ambitious plans of the Japanese government in internationalising higher education after their economic revival (de Wit, 2000; Phelps, 1996). In addition, academic concerns regarding the disappointing knowledge level and misconceptions of American graduates in global understanding also pushed American universities to accelerate their internationalisation process (Goodwin & Nacht, 1991; Rahman & Kopp, 1992). Moreover, this period also

witnessed federal budget cuts and retrenchment at American universities and colleges (Holzner & Greenwood, 1995). The economic impact of having a strong international sector (international student enrolment and study abroad programs), therefore, was viewed as an approach to improve university financial problems (Smithee, 2012). The professional associations and organisations increased their support to American universities in raising institutional awareness of and responsibilities in integrating internationalisation into their missions (de Wit, 2000; Rahman & Kopp, 1992).

Since the start of the 21st century, a comprehensive internationalisation approach has been increasingly adopted in many American universities. This comprehensive approach aims at internationalisation both on campus and cross-border, with the particular focus on global learning outcomes and competence (CIGE, 2012; Helms, Brajkovic, & Struthers, 2017; Hudzik, 2011; Olson, Green, & Hill, 2005). This internationalisation approach aims at positioning American universities to be more globally oriented rather than being a national asset (Helms et al., 2017; Hudzik, 2011). The increasing impact of global forces has contributed to the formulation of this internationalisation approach, in addition to the traditional national factors such as national security, competitiveness and economic rationales of the American higher education (Hutcheson, 2011).

The strong globalisation process has created “a new interconnected landscape of higher education world-wide” and it requires the American higher education sector to become globally competent in order to compete with other countries (Peterson & Helms, 2013, p.7). In particular, the terrorist events of September 11 in 2001 triggered a decline in international student enrolment at American universities, which was reported to be a loss for the American higher education (Smithee, 2012). Moreover, it is said that the knowledge-based economy created by globalisation, requires an innovative and competitive human resource for American well-being, a part of which has been provided by international students and scholars (Bain, Luu, & Green, 2006). According to Hutcheson (2011), US colleges and universities were also subject to business complaints about “ill-prepared graduates” for globalisation (p.56). Specifically, the events of September 11 in 2001 contributed to the view that higher education should prepare graduates with the ability to create connections and to build mutual understanding to help prevent and resolve cultural and geopolitical conflicts (Peterson & Helms, 2013). Surveys conducted by the American Council on Education every five

years since 2001 have also provided a picture of how internationalisation has been increasingly integrated into the operation of American universities, with an increasing focus on comprehensive internationalisation (Helms et al., 2017).

#### **2.4.2. Internationalisation and regionalisation of higher education in Europe**

The concept of regionalisation in higher education emerged from the European region. Regionalisation in Europe is known as Europeanisation. The term *Europeanisation* has been used to describe “domestic change caused by European integration” such as administrative adaption of national states to European membership or implementation of European directives (Vink, 2003, p. 63). In higher education, Europeanisation has been represented by the establishment of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) through the Bologna Process (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Barrett, 2017). However, before the development of this Europeanisation trend, the internationalisation of higher education received relatively little interest from both national governmental and institutional levels in European countries (Kalvemark & van der Wende, 1997).

Until the 1990s, internationalisation was seen mainly as student and staff mobility, instead of the wider process of internationalising universities in European countries (Kalvemark & van der Wende, 1997). According to de Wit (2002), academic mobility (including students and staff) and increasing research cooperation were the most popular international elements in higher education during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to student mobility within European countries, foreign students were mainly from developing countries. These students often received scholarships and financial help as a result of foreign policies in European countries (Baron, 1993).

In the late part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Europeanisation trend in internationalising European higher education was initially about increasing the region’s economic competition and the creation of a single European market in higher education (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Initial efforts were made to integrate education and research among European countries. Accordingly, a number of action programs were promoted by the European Communities such as the Directorate for Education, Research and Science; Joint Study Programme (JSP) scheme; and European Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS) (Baron, 1993; de Wit, 2002). Increased academic mobility and cooperation were still the focus of this initial Europeanisation trend, particularly with the development of the ERASMUS scheme (de Wit, 2002). This

scheme started to attract interest in the concept of studying abroad and international cooperation in higher education from universities in Europe (Smith & Dalichow, 1988). In addition to initiatives to connect European higher education systems, the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century also witnessed initiatives to strengthen international cooperation in higher education such as bilateral programs and projects and development aid programs (de Wit, 2002).

The involvement of European universities in internationalisation was demonstrated by their participation in the ERASMUS program (de Wit, 2002; Smith & Dalichow, 1988). This involvement, in turn, created “a shift from a passive response to active engagement” among European universities (de Wit & Callan, 1995, p.84). Moreover, arising problems, such as support facilities, language barriers, or different academic background due to the participation in the ERASMUS program became an important motive for European universities to place internationalisation on their priorities in strategic planning (de Wit & Callan, 1995; Harvey, Hunter, & Delhaxhe, 2000; Teichler, 1999). Across the European continent, institutional initiatives for internationalisation were recorded during the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These initiatives involved the establishment of international offices, developing language courses for foreign students, studying abroad, courses taught in foreign languages, support for foreign students, and improving international perspectives in courses or curricula (de Wit, 2002). In several European countries, the system of European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) was introduced for the first time and there were efforts in planning joint international curriculum by groups of universities in Europe (Harvey et al., 2000).

A further step to Europeanisation of higher education was the approval of the Bologna Process in 1999. This Process emphasised the development of a compatible regional system of higher education as well as increasing the international competitiveness of European higher education (Scott, 2012; Zmas, 2015). The Bologna Process significantly stimulated universities in the region to work toward internationalising their own systems, and ultimately transformed the landscape of European higher education (Hunter, 2013; Scott, 2012). Internationalisation, therefore, shifted from being a marginal activity to a more strategic approach with an increasingly economic rationale (van der Wende, 2001). The focus of internationalisation in European universities also expanded to include curriculum and staff development, quality assurance, the use of

ICT, establishment of consortia, and joint/double degree programs, together with the traditional focus on student mobility (Beelen, 2016; Egron-Polak & Hudson, 2014). According to Beelen (2016), European universities have been paying more attention to “internationalisation at home in their strategies for internationalisation” rather than the traditional mobility of student and staff (p.57). However, it was indicated that the pace and pattern of internationalisation varied considerably among different European countries. Universities across the continent had different priorities to internationalisation practices in their institutional plans and strategies (Egron-Polak & Hudson, 2014; Hunter, 2013).

The regionalisation of higher education, as an internationalisation trend, has triggered interest in other regions, such as Latin America and Africa, in order to sustain their position in global higher education; however, a similar level of success to the Bologna Process has not been recorded (Zmas, 2015).

#### **2.4.3. Internationalisation versus Westernisation of higher education in Asia**

Internationalisation of higher education is said to be synonymous with the notion of westernisation. It is because Western institutional models and knowledge production have been exported to other countries as a representative of the superior form from the colonial until the contemporary period (Altbach & Selvaratnam, 1989; Cummings, 2014; Knight, 2002; Maringe et al., 2013). Asian higher education systems have been influenced by Western models, even in countries that were not colonised by Western powers (Altbach, 2007). However, supported by remarkable socioeconomic development, universities in Asian countries have been expanding their internationalisation efforts and shaping their particular trends in internationalisation to compete with Western higher education institutions (Yonezawa, Kitamura, Meerman, & Kuroda, 2014). Internationalisation efforts in Japanese and Chinese higher education demonstrate the typical trends of internationalisation in Asian higher education systems. In the section below, the first example illustrates the trend for internationalisation of Japanese higher education which has a focus on strengthening national identity. The following example, from Chinese higher education, illustrates the trend for internationalisation with a focus on promoting influence.

### ***Internationalisation in Japan: Strengthening national identity***

The contemporary internationalisation of Japanese higher education, described by a Japanese term (*kokusaika*), demonstrates an internationalisation effort that considers Japanese socio-historical elements (Kudo & Hashimoto, 2011; Lincicome, 1993; Sato, 2004). The history of internationalisation in Japanese higher education dates back to the early 20th century, when the country started opening door for receiving Western knowledge and higher education models (Aspinall, 2010; Hatakenaka, 2010). However, in the 1970 report by the OECD, it was suggested that Japan should advance internationalisation in education to strengthen their economic growth and competitiveness (Huang, 2014; Sato, 2004). That was when the contemporary trend of internationalisation flourished. The internationalisation of Japanese higher education is characterised by two key programs that have been heavily funded by the government, as described below.

In the 1980s, the first national call for internationalisation was part of a large-scale reform of higher education which touched almost all aspects of Japanese higher education, including the international dimension (Huang, 2014). The rapid development of the Japanese economy after the 1970s resulted in Japan emerging as an important part of the global economy and the international community (Ohkura & Shibata, 2009). In this period, the industry-wide demand for human resources was the key drive for internationalising Japanese higher education, in addition to the purpose of promoting mutual understanding and international cooperation (S. Li, 2014; Yonezawa, Akiba, & Hirouchi, 2009).

This internationalisation effort was initiated by the national project entitled *Plan for 100,000 Overseas Students* that aimed at having 100,000 foreign students in Japanese universities by the beginning of the twenty-first century (Burgess et al., 2010; Ohkura & Shibata, 2009). Together with substantial financial support, the government also eased immigration regulations regarding student visas (Li, 2014), and offered incentives to secure inexpensive accommodation for international students (Horie, 2002).

At Japanese universities, a number of internationalisation practices were implemented, including: increasing the number of foreign faculty, developing international-related programs, and internationalising curricula (Huang, 2006; Umakoshi, 1997). The internationalisation of curricula was particularly represented by the introduction of

English-instructed programs which aimed at attracting international students (Huang, 2006, 2011; Kudo & Hashimoto, 2011; Ninomiya, Knight, & Watanabe, 2009; Whitsed & Volet, 2011). Large support for Japanese language and culture training for international students was also provided for international students (Horie, 2002; S. Li, 2014; Umakoshi, 1997). In addition, Japanese universities put their efforts into improving international inter-university links through academic and educational exchanges (Umakoshi, 1997). Study abroad programs became a criterion to assess the degree of internationalisation of universities (Paige, 2005). Japanese universities were even provided with government financial support to participate in University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP) (Horie, 2002).

The second wave of internationalisation in Japanese higher education started at the beginning of the 21st century, and aimed at enhancing the global competitiveness and leadership of Japanese society by fostering world-class universities (Burgess et al., 2010; Yonezawa et al., 2009). This period witnessed the release of another government's project, *Global 30*, in which selected universities were expected to become the 'internationalised' core (Burgess et al, 2010) and realise the target of recruiting 300,000 international students by 2020 (Rivers, 2010). This project has been expanded by a recently announced project, *Top Global University*, which aims to provide additional funding for the leading international universities in Japan (Mock, Kawamura, & Naganuma, 2016).

At the institutional level, internationalisation has moved from a passive stance to a more proactive strategy (Ninomiya et al., 2009), particularly at universities which participated in the Global 30 project. As noted by Rivers (2010), each Global 30 Project university had its own target for international students and foreign academic staff. In addition to increasing international partnerships for twinning and joint/double degree programs, universities also provided more scholarships and setting up offices in foreign countries to attract high-quality foreign students (Ninomiya et al., 2009). Therefore, the use of English was promoted in degree programs at Japanese universities with the employment of a large number of adjunct foreign English language teachers or Japanese who could use English (Hashimoto, 2009; Tanabe, 2004; Whitsed & Wright, 2013). Universities were also concerned about strengthening their international competitive levels, particularly in research capacity (Yonezawa, 2009). In particular, the Japanese government selected key research institutes in universities to support with research

publication in English (Yonezawa, 2009). In addition, the issue of world ranking became an essential issue for many universities (Ninomiya et al, 2009). Some universities also sought official recognition through foreign accreditation organizations (Yonezawa, 2009).

However, the dependence on government funding and initiatives has led to an increasing difference in the internationalisation strategies among different groups of Japanese universities (Kudo & Hashimoto, 2011; Yonezawa, 2011). This difference, referred to as stratification by Eades (2016) and Kudo and Hashimoto (2011), is observed between world-class universities which are heavily supported with government funds and other groups of universities. The elite, global-minded and innovative universities have been “almost always at an advantage in international engagements”, whereas the majority of Japanese universities “are inclined to promoting the image as an international university for domestic market” as their primary concern in internationalisation (Kudo & Hashimoto, 2011, p.356). As suggested by Stigger (2018), the pronounced distinction between different types of universities can affect the interpretation of “how educational policies can be transformed into practice within higher education” (p.12). More than that, these higher ranking universities “have also become benchmarks for what other HEIs [higher education institutions] should be aiming to achieve within their own internationalisation projects” (Stigger, 2018, p.12). That emphasis on the reputation of a university strongly influences the ways universities, particularly the lower ranking ones, respond and develop their internationalisation strategies (Stigger, 2018).

### ***Internationalisation in China: Promoting influence***

Internationalisation of Chinese higher education can be described as internationalisation for national economic development together with promoting its influence in the world. Internationalisation of the Chinese higher education system, known as a part of the national education reform, began after the launch of an open door policy and economic reforms in 1978 (Welch & Cai, 2011; Yiyun, 2007). According to Welch and Cai (2011), the American model has been used as a benchmark for Chinese higher education reforms from the traditional organisation of Soviet model in the internationalisation process. The main rationale driving the internationalisation of higher education in China has been economic development in relation to four modernisations: industry, agriculture, defence, and science and technology (Yang, 2014). However, the use of

internationalisation practices, such as international exchange and cooperation for increasing global competitiveness and promoting China's power, has gained more attention recently (Wang, 2013; Yang, 2012, 2014).

Internationalisation in Chinese higher education has been widely described by a Chinese term, *Jie Gui*, which is understood as adapting "China's education according to the criteria and mainstream of international practice" in the 1990s (Yang, 2002, p. 84). However, there is still a long-standing argument against this term, as it is felt that the focus on one-side adaptation could lead to a neglect of national characteristics (Yang, 2002). The concern about re-conceptualising the internationalisation of Chinese higher education was further supported by the Chinese government's increasing focus on exporting cultural influence (Yang, 2014).

The internationalisation of Chinese higher education has been strongly supported by the government (F. Li, 2016), in terms of attracting international students and gaining world-class ranking by increasing research capacity. The Chinese government has provided significant financial support for the internationalisation by offering a wide range of scholarships for international students, and promoting international student exchanges (Hayhoe & Liu, 2011). In particular, the Chinese Scholarship Council was established in 1997, in association with the Ministry of Education, to oversee scholarships provided to international students (Dong & Chapman, 2011). The leading Chinese universities have attracted international students across a wide range of fields of study, particularly in the areas of language, culture, and indigenous knowledge traditions, such as traditional Chinese medicine (Hayhoe & Liu, 2011). Meanwhile, the Chinese government has also invested heavily into improving research strength and international ranking in the internationalisation of Chinese universities (Liu & Metcalfe, 2016; Yang, 2005; Yoder, 2011). Two projects, Project 2/11 in 1993 and Project 9/85 in late 1998, were launched by the Chinese government to allocate important financial support to enable the top 100 Chinese universities to become globally ranked through improved research outputs (Hayhoe & Qiang, 2004; Liu & Metcalfe, 2016; Yoder, 2011). According to Yoder (2011), the Soviet model of higher education had removed research from Chinese universities; however, these two government projects have provided intensive support for universities to develop into research universities.

Internationalisation practices implemented by Chinese universities appear to be varied. These have ranged from enhancing international mobility of students, academic and

administrative staff to internationalising curriculum by using original or translated text materials, and establishing transnational education cooperation programs (Yiyun, 2007). For example, in 2002, 10 of the leading Chinese universities decided to buy and use almost all of the textbooks then used in Harvard University, Stanford University, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Huang, 2003). More and more universities in China have also provided bilingual instruction (Chinese and English) in university teaching and research activities (Huang, 2003). English language education has been strongly promoted by the government and universities (L. Pan, 2011; Stanley, 2011; Sun, Hu, & Ng, 2017). According to Sun et al. (2017), English is no longer seen as a subject but has become “more prominent as a medium of instruction” (p.201). In addition, with more international students going to China, bilingual instruction or English-instructed programs have been supported by the government and used by universities to improve education quality and services for international students (Wu & Zhen, 2006 as cited in Dong & Chapman, 2011).

Chinese universities also have been importing a larger number of programs from foreign universities (Huang, 2011; Yang, 2008). The Chinese government has required international programs to be jointly run with Chinese universities so that individual Chinese universities could quickly obtain a full and direct understanding of these programs and degree requirements of foreign-partner universities (Hayhoe & Liu, 2011; Huang, 2007). In addition, these international joint programs has not only made it possible for Chinese students to gain foreign degrees while doing the majority of their study in China (Hayhoe & Liu, 2011) but also has attracted international students (Huang, 2011; S. Y. Pan, 2013).

The adoption of international practices in Chinese higher education, to improve their influence, has been observed in recent years when internationalisation activities have been shifting from a “one-way import of Western knowledge to bringing China to the world” (Yang, 2014, p.157). Chinese government and universities have also put effort into bringing their degree programs to other countries although the number of such programs is much smaller than that of international joint programs provided on Chinese campuses (Huang, 2007). For example, there was an agreement between Fudan University of China and Singapore National University for establishing branch campuses and recognizing some curricula and earned credits (Huang, 2007). However, the most significant export of Chinese education to the world is the establishment of

Confucius Institutes for Chinese language study that are linked with universities around the world (Hayhoe & Liu, 2011; Yang, 2014). Such internationalisation practices in higher education have been used to increase China's political influence in other countries, particularly in ASEAN member countries (Yang, 2012).

#### **2.4.4. Internationalisation of higher education in Vietnam**

Internationalisation in the Vietnamese higher education system has focused on improving international cooperation and outbound mobility (L. T. Tran & Margison, 2018).

With regard to outbound mobility of Vietnamese students, it was reported that Vietnamese students accounted for 2.7 percent of the global number of 3.7 million tertiary students studying overseas in 2009 (C. H. Nguyen, 2013). This number has kept growing with 125,000 Vietnamese students studying overseas in 2013, an increase of 15% compared to 2012 (Hoang, Tran, & Pham, 2018). This outbound mobility is supported by the Vietnamese government's Strategy for Education Development in order to develop Vietnamese human resources (Vietnamese Government, 2012).

International cooperation in Vietnamese higher education is symbolised by the existence of foreign-owned universities or university branches; the development of twinning programs between Vietnamese universities and foreign universities; the establishment of excellent universities in cooperation with foreign partners; and the development of advanced programs (Hoang et al., 2018; Ngo, 2006; Welch, 2010).

A typical example for the establishment of a wholly foreign-owned university is the case of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) from Australia. This university's first link was with the Vietnam National University (Hanoi) in 1994, and it then became the first international university to operate in Vietnam in 2000. Programs offered at RMIT Vietnam embrace intensive English language classes because English is the language of instruction. Courses at RMIT have been facilitated by extensive use of ICT and good connectivity with the parent campus in Melbourne (Welch, 2010).

Another popular type of international cooperation in higher education is the development of twinning programs between Vietnamese universities and foreign universities. Across Vietnam, there have been 246 joint programs between local universities and foreign universities approved by the Ministry of Education and Training by March 2014 (MoET, 2014). Among these programs, a majority were

imported from English-speaking countries like Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. It is also noted by MoET that not all of these 246 programs were still active up to March 2014.

In addition, there have been universities established in cooperation with foreign partners at governmental level. The “Excellent university” project was launched in 2006 as an ambitious government project which aims at having national research universities providing educational and research services at international standards. However, these four universities have been dependent on funding from Vietnamese and foreign governments or loans from international financial institutions (Hoang et al., 2018). The success of this project is still uncertain as these universities have been relying on foreign partners in terms of lecturers and do not have their own base of adequately trained and full-time academic staff (Hoang et al., 2018).

Provision of advanced programs was another core practice of international cooperation in the internationalisation agenda of MoET as indicated in the Strategy for Education Development for the period 2011-2020 (Vietnamese Government, 2012). These programs have been imported from universities ranked in the top 200 in the world, using English as a medium of instruction, and have been implemented in about 20 Vietnamese universities which are mainly in the science and technology fields, and business education. The effect of these imported programs on the internationalisation of domestic education programs at Vietnamese public universities has not been evaluated in an official report before the completion of the current study. According to L. T. Tran, Phan, and Marginson (2018), these programs have exposed Vietnamese students to “advanced disciplinary knowledge and learning environment” and enhanced “students’ generic skills and English proficiency” (p.56). However, the impacts on curriculum reform and graduate capacity have been fragmented, as their implementation was on a small scale with selected disciplines and in certain major universities (L. T. Tran et al., 2018).

As described in Chapter One, the internationalisation of Vietnamese higher education in the history before *Doi Moi* (launch of open-door policy) was a mixture of influences from different foreign countries resulting from colonisation. However, the contemporary internationalisation of higher education in Vietnam was first initiated by the national Higher Education Reform Agenda in 2005. This was the first time that the development of universities “up to international standards” was mentioned (Vietnamese

Government, 2005). The process of bringing Vietnamese higher education close to international standards, referred to as internationalisation, was intended to support “the socio-economic development strategy, consolidation of defence and security, the country’s demand for high-level human resource” at the same time “promoting the national identity, ...and approaching the world’s advanced tertiary education” (Vietnamese Government, 2005, p. 10). It, therefore, becomes clear that national economic development and maintaining national identity are the two key concerns identified in the national policies for internationalising higher education in Vietnam.

However, except for the internationalisation practices focusing international cooperation and outbound mobility noted above, little is known about how internationalisation has been undertaken at individual Vietnamese universities. A brief review of visions and missions presented on the official websites of some big universities in Vietnam indicated that the concept of internationalisation is not clearly stated. Some internationalisation related terms have been identified in some Vietnamese universities’ missions and goals. Examples include: improving the quality of education to international standards; strengthening international education by expanding academic collaboration; or improving the quality of learning resources and academic staff. However, how these activities represented the internationalisation at Vietnamese universities has not been studied comprehensively. It is commented by L. T. Tran and Marginson (2018) that Vietnamese government policies have not yet paid attention to internationalisation ‘at home’ by Vietnamese universities. According to these researchers, this internationalisation approach would assist more Vietnamese students with “developing international knowledge and global competence” (p.5) than the current focus on international cooperation and outbound mobility. Therefore, on one hand, it is important for Vietnamese universities to position where they are in terms of internationalisation in order to effectively craft their internationalisation agenda. On the other hand, the conceptualisation of internationalisation at Vietnamese universities might require more awareness by the government on internationalisation ‘at home’.

Evaluation practices of internationalisation in different countries have been designed for their universities to reflect and plan their institutional internationalisation effort. The development of a set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation is expected to help Vietnamese universities to review and plan their internationalisation effectively. In the

following section, a review of popular existing tools for evaluating internationalisation at the institutional level, that are relevant to the purpose of the study, is presented.

## **2.5. Review of evaluation tools for institutional internationalisation**

As the focus of the current study is to develop a set of criteria for evaluating internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university, the review of evaluation tools is intended to highlight those which were developed for a similar purpose. In addition, evaluation tools in different contexts are included so as to determine how each tool represented contextual factors.

### **2.5.1. Selection of evaluation tools for studying institutional internationalisation**

Evaluating the success or failure of internationalisation has received more attention when internationalisation is no longer at the margin, but at the core of institutional strategies (de Wit, 2009; Green, 2012). Hudzik and Stohl (2009) have noted that the lack of attention to performance evaluation could weaken the priority given to internationalisation by universities. De Wit (2010) has also stated that the growing interest in accountability regarding institutional operation as well as accreditation, ranking, certification, auditing, and benchmarking, has become a key item on the international higher education agenda. Therefore, by measuring the success of internationalisation practices, universities will be able to evaluate how much these practices relate to the overall institutional goals and strategies, to benchmark with others in the same area, and to improve internationalisation programs and practices (de Wit, 2010; Green, 2012; Paige, 2005).

Attempts have been made in different countries to develop tools for evaluating institutional internationalisation efforts. Western countries are the main developers of evaluation tools for internationalisation practices. According to a review by the Netherlands University Foundation for International Cooperation (NUFFIC) in 2009, there were 32 tools available worldwide for evaluating internationalisation in higher education institutions. Almost all of these 32 tools were from European countries like the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Germany, or from the United States. Four tools have been developed for Asian countries and regions including Japan, Taiwan, China and Hong Kong.

A document analysis of evaluation tools was conducted in order to establish a preliminary conceptual framework of evaluation criteria for institutional

internationalisation. This analysis guided the development of the contextualised set of evaluation criteria in the current study. A good conceptual framework is seen as helpful in selecting, building and demonstrating the links within indicators in the set of criteria in a coherent and meaningful way (Blank, 1993; Brown, 2009). Therefore, dimensions and criteria that were identified in existing tools were used as an initial conceptual framework which could then be adapted for the Vietnamese context.

The selection of the existing evaluation tools was undertaken by a process of purposive sampling in order to build up samples that were suitable to the specific needs of this study, as recommended by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011). This process also enabled the researcher to conduct a contrastive analysis of samples, and to identify a level of representativeness as suggested by Teddlie and Yu (2007).

### **2.5.2. Overview of selected existing evaluation tools for studying institutional internationalisation**

For the purposes of the current study, seven key evaluation tools were reviewed.

The first international effort in building an evaluation tool for examining institutional internationalisation was the *International Quality Review Programme* (IQRP). This tool was developed in 1996 by the Institutional Management in Higher Education, Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), together with the Academic Cooperation Association. This is a self-assessment tool designed to help universities assess and enhance the quality of their internationalisation efforts, as well as include internationalisation as a key part in institutional overall quality assurance system (de Wit & Knight, 1999). There were two main components provided in this tool: a self-assessment report and an external peer review by international expert team. A particular feature of IQRP was the requirement to conduct a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) before examining each criterion of internationalisation (Knight & de Wit, 1999).

The development of IQRP has been followed by a significant number of studies and projects that attempted to develop appropriate evaluation tools for institutional internationalisation in different countries/regions.

In 2005, the American Council on Education (ACE) simplified the review process of the IQRP and further developed its tool to classify comprehensive universities in the United States within two groups: highly active and less active in internationalisation

(Green, 2005). This evaluation tool has been continuously updated and is currently known as the *Mapping Internationalisation on U.S. campuses* survey (named as ACE Review hereafter). The tool is implemented in the form of a survey among a large number of universities in order to provide information about how American universities have been implementing internationalisation practices. For example, the 2017 report for this survey provided information on the activity level of American universities in considering the comprehensive internationalisation framework (Helms et al., 2017).

In 2007, the Centre for Higher Education Development in Germany developed a tool (named as *CHE* hereafter) to provide German universities with a comprehensive set of criteria to measure their internationalisation. This tool served as a basis for nationwide ranking among universities (Brandenburg & Federkeil, 2007). The CHE tool mainly evaluated internationalisation in relation to academic and administrative staff, research, teaching and education programs. The tool used the input and output framework for evaluating the internationalisation performance of a university (Brandenburg & Federkeil, 2007). The input data enabled universities to identify their weaknesses in certain organisational aspects or to compare their types of organisation with others (Brandenburg & Federkeil, 2007). With regard to the output data, the developers believed that these data helped German universities to identify possible trouble areas and to document developments identified in a strategy.

By 2009, the *Mapping Internationalisation (MINT)* tool was developed by the Netherlands University Foundation for International Cooperation (NUFFIC) in cooperation with Dutch universities. Its aim was to provide a complete evaluation framework of institutional policy, activities, and facilities for internationalisation. The updated version of 2012 was a web-based tool for both program and institutional levels. The tool was designed for Dutch universities to perform self-evaluation and benchmarking of internationalisation performance (Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education, 2012).

In 2010, another cross-border tool was established to support universities in monitoring and assessing their internationalisation performance in the European region (Beerkens et al., 2010). The project, *Indicators for Mapping and Profiling Internationalisation (IMPI)*, was conducted by the Lifelong Learning Program of the European Commission. The IMPI tool was intended to serve as a ‘building block’ for universities to have a better overview of their internationalisation by investigating short, medium, and long-

term effects of internationalisation activities (Beerkens et al., 2010). In the guidelines for users, it was advised that the IMPI toolbox should be understood as a resource to help users organise their thinking about internationalisation (Beerkens et al., 2010). Therefore, the development of this evaluation tool was not for the purpose of differentiating ‘success’ or ‘failure’ in internationalisation at European universities. According to Beerkens et al. (2010), the evaluation tool also worked most effectively when combined with reflection, dialogue, and analysis related to missions and outcomes planned by the institution.

Japan took the lead in developing an evaluation tool for internationalisation among Asia countries. In 2004, Osaka University set up a study to develop evaluation criteria for the internationalisation of Japanese universities as a government project. The tool (named as the *Osaka tool* hereafter) was designed to meet the demand of promoting internationalisation at universities at both national and institutional levels (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, 2007). The *Osaka tool* was intended to help stimulate internationalisation of the curriculum and research activities at Japanese universities (Furushiro, 2006). The developers of this tool examined the IQRP tool and the ACE Review, in addition to quality assurance and accreditation systems in other countries with a view to incorporating these internationalisation criteria into their regular national quality assurance and accreditation (Furushiro, 2006).

Another Asian evaluation tool for internationalisation is the *Peking* tool from China, which was introduced in 2009. This tool came out as the result of a study conducted by a group of researchers from Beijing University and Zhong Shan University with financial support from the Chinese Ministry of Education. The survey for that study obtained data from 26 Chinese universities. Criteria were drawn from the ACE Review and the Osaka tool in order to adapt for the Chinese higher education context. The tool was intended for evaluating and ranking internationalisation among Chinese universities (Chen, Zeng, Wen, Weng, & Yu, 2009). However, as the surveyed universities were research universities, the evaluation criteria were found to focus more on the internationalisation in research than in other areas.

Brief information on these seven tools is summarised in Table 2.1 below.

*Table 2.1: Overview of selected existing tools for evaluating institutional internationalisation*

Tool	Abbreviation	Developed by	Country/Region of Origin	Type of data collection	Year of publication
International Quality Review Process	IQRP	Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) & Academic Cooperation Association (ACA) & Conference of European Rectors (now European University Association)	Europe	Self-evaluation and peer-review	1999
Measuring internationality and internationalisation of higher education institutions	CHE	Centre for Higher Education Development	Germany	Self-evaluation	2007
Mapping Internationalisation	MINT	Netherlands University Foundation for International Cooperation (NUFFIC)	The Netherlands	Self-evaluation	2009, 2012
Indicators for Mapping and Profiling Internationalisation (IMPI)	IMPI	European Commission	Europe	Self-evaluation	2010
Mapping internationalisation on U.S. campuses	ACE Review	American Council on Education	The United States	Survey	2003, 2008, 2012, 2017
Study to develop evaluation criteria to assess the internationalisation of universities	Osaka	Osaka University and National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (Japan)	Japan	Self-evaluation and peer-review	2006
The establishment of indicator system for the evaluation of internationalisation of research universities in China	Peking	Peking University	China	Self-evaluation	2009

### 2.5.3. Dimensions and criteria for evaluating institutional internationalisation

Although different terms have been used to name dimensions and criteria for evaluating institutional internationalisation among the tools, common elements can be identified. The framework of dimensions and key criteria that were identified for evaluating institutional internationalisation is presented in Table 2.2. The framework is then followed by a discussion on the variations of the main criteria examined in each dimension with regard to different national contexts.

*Table 2.2: Framework of dimensions and key criteria in evaluating institutional internationalisation*

Dimensions	Main criteria
Institutional commitment	Strategies, policies or goals Institutional awareness
Management	Management structure Responsible staffing
Administrative structure	Supporting administrative system Competence of administrative staff
Financial matters	Financial sources Financial allocation
Services and facilities	Campus services Facilities and infrastructure
Research	International research cooperation International research publication
Education program	Curriculum/program internationalisation Foreign language education International collaboration programs
Academic staff	Domestic academic staff International academic staff
Students	Domestic students International students

#### ***Institutional commitment***

Institutional commitment to internationalisation was the first dimension identified in the seven evaluation tools presented in Table 2.1. The two key criteria, evaluated under this dimension, include the existence of strategies/policies/goals related to internationalisation, and the awareness of such commitment within the institution.

However, the focus of various aspects investigated within this dimension varied among the different evaluation tools.

In the United States, the ACE Review focused on the institutional commitment to accelerating the internationalisation focus on international and global education. This commitment was examined in relation to the mission statement, strategic plans, funding allocation; and formal assessment mechanisms (Helms et al., 2017). The goal of sustaining global education is defined as pertaining to student learning opportunities and learning outcomes (ACE, 2012). According to Green (2012), the concern about global education dated back to 2005 when American universities were criticised for their failure to assess student learning. It was due to the influence of the national and international rankings which had a strong bias toward research output rather than students' learning outcomes (Green, 2012).

In Japan, the Osaka tool assessed not only the existence of a strategy for internationalisation but also how the specific articulation of the medium and long-term plans was consistent with the general policies and plans of the university (Furushiro, 2006). This focus was considered to be a response to the greater emphasis on the establishment of institutional strategies for internationalisation, as the Japanese government was promoting internationalisation as a key theme in Japanese university reform by the 2000s (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, 2007).

In contrast, the IMPI tool, which was developed for the European region, required universities to be more specific in their internationalisation strategy. For instance, it included criteria involving sub-strategies in human resources, international alumni, research, curriculum, or diversity in international students (Beerkens et al., 2010). This tool also identified five specific goals for European universities to select in considering their internationalisation effort. These included: 1) to enhance the quality of education; 2) to enhance the quality of research; 3) to prepare students for life and work in an intercultural and globalising world; 4) to enhance the international reputation and visibility of the unit; and, 5) to provide service to society and community social engagement (Beerkens et al., 2010). The establishment of goals for internationalisation was similar to the MINT tool from the Netherlands. By providing a range of goals, these two European-originated evaluation tools show that they were flexible in evaluating institutional internationalisation focus. These are also different from the specific focus on global education of the ACE Review.

The Peking tool from China appeared to focus more on human resource planning for internationalisation practices rather than the overall institutional commitment to internationalisation.

Awareness within the institution about internationalisation was a concern noted in IQRP, IMPI and Osaka. The IQRP and IMPI tools valued the endorsement of internationalisation strategy from faculty, students and administration (Beerkens et al., 2010; Helms et al., 2017). However, the Osaka tool was concerned about the awareness of departments involving in the implementation of internationalisation strategies (Furushiro, 2006) rather than other institutional stakeholders in Japanese universities. These criteria were particularly relevant to the higher education context in Japan in the 2000s. That was the time when internationalisation was in the process of integrating into the institutional operation at Japanese universities (Ninomiya et al., 2009). In contrast, the long history of internationalisation in European countries and the United States may explain why the issue of awareness was not raised in the CHE, MINT, or the ACE Review. The Peking tool, however, did not include any criteria to evaluate how the issue of internationalisation awareness was recognised in Chinese universities. This appears to be an important omission, especially when there were different viewpoints about the concept of internationalisation in Chinese universities (Yang, 2002).

### ***Management***

The way in which internationalisation strategies and goals are managed can illustrate the level of institutional commitment to internationalisation. Management with regard to internationalisation includes involvement in setting up, decision making, reporting and evaluation of internationalisation efforts. Although there are differences in the way each tool examined the management dimension in organising internationalisation practices at universities in different contexts, the seven tools covered the institutional management structure for effective implementation of internationalisation practices.

With regard to the management aspect, MINT from the Netherlands differed from the other tools as it introduced criteria examining the involvement of internal and external stakeholders in setting the internationalisation strategy. In this tool, internal stakeholders were defined as actors within the institution, such as management and/or administrative staff, teaching staff or students. External stakeholders were listed to be

representatives of industry, government, and sectorial organisation or partner institutions (NUFFIC, 2012).

### ***Administrative structure***

Administrative structure was another dimension evaluated in institutional internationalisation. The reviewed tools included two main criteria relating to the administrative support structure: the assignment of administrative units, and the competence of the administrative structure.

The Osaka tool included criteria questioning the administrative support that Japanese universities provided to international students, visitors, and academic staff (Furushiro, 2006). In addition to the criterion specifically examining the foreign language skills of the administrative staff, the Osaka tool was also concerned about professional development programs for administration staff.

The tools from Western countries, including ACE Review, CHE, MINT and IMPI, had varying foci on international qualities in examining the competence of the relevant administrative structure for supporting internationalisation. Criteria covered such aspects as foreign language skills, international administration competence, and different kinds of international experience.

However, there was no criterion for examining the administrative support structure at Chinese universities in the Peking tool. This might be an important omission because international qualities in the administrative structure would support Chinese universities more effectively in attracting international students, which has been defined as a key target in internationalisation (Dong & Chapman, 2011).

### ***Financial matters***

Two main financial issues were examined by the tools reviewed, including financial allocation and financial sources available for internationalisation practices. The investigation of financial matters by these tools shows the significant difference in internationalisation practices across different contexts.

Tools from Western countries included criteria on institutional budget allocation for the recruitment of international students, international marketing, and promotion of cross-border programs (Beerkens et al., 2010; Helms et al., 2017; NUFFIC, 2012). This aspect was more focused on by the ACE Review from the United States and the MINT from

the Netherlands. The Western tools also examined funding for international activities, such as education abroad for students, academic staff teaching abroad, hosting international academic staff, or staff undertaking research abroad (Beerkens et al., 2010; Helms et al., 2017). Different from other Western tools, the CHE criteria indicated that German universities tended to pay more attention to financial support for international research cooperation and for attracting higher degree researchers (Brandenburg & Federkeil, 2007).

The criteria through which the Western tools examined the variety of financial sources that a university received for internationalisation were different from the criteria identified in Japanese and Chinese tools. For example, popular financial sources listed in the ACE Review were private donors, corporations, alumni, and both federal and state governments (Helms et al., 2017). The IMPI tool provided a detailed examination of how a university received and allocated funds for their internationalisation activities in research and education programs.

In contrast, there were few or no criteria on financial matters for specific internationalisation activities in the Osaka tool or the Peking tool. The Osaka tool did not cover how Japanese universities allocate their budgets for internationalisation practices. Instead, criteria focused simply on the existence of budget for international projects, or the university's application for funds provided by the government (Furushiro, 2006). There were also criteria to assess the consistency between the size of the budget and the progress on relevant international projects. These criteria reflected the fact that the internationalisation at Japanese universities largely depended on government funding (Yonezawa et al., 2009). In developing the Peking tool, however, the researchers failed to collect any data on financial matters (Chen et al., 2009); therefore, no criteria were developed for this dimension.

### ***Services and facilities***

Criteria for investigating the services and facilities in supporting internationalisation practices revealed remarkably different emphases between Western and Asian countries.

Tools from Western countries focused on services and facilities provided specifically for international students and academic staff as well as for domestic students and staff (NUFFIC, Beerkens et al., 2010; Helms et al., 2017; 2012). For example, the ACE Review included a number of criteria focusing on support services facilitating the

integration of international students into American society, and the returning of domestic students from study abroad programs. In the Netherlands, the MINT tool classified services and facilities supporting internationalisation on the basis of their functions, such as academic and social functions, and for both international and domestic students and academic staff.

However, tools from Japan and China focused more on support services and facilities for international students and researchers/experts (Chen et al., 2009; Furushiro, 2006). In the Osaka tool, for instance, information services and infrastructure support for international students and researchers were included in evaluation criteria. This aspect was included because increasing the number of foreign students was a goal for both the Japanese government and universities (Ninomiya et al., 2009). Similarly, the Peking tool also focused on infrastructure support for international students and experts. In addition, this Chinese tool included criteria questioning the development of resources in library and information technology facilities.

### ***Research***

The evaluation tools are consistent in covering internationalisation in research. Key criteria which were identified in the tools included: international research projects and conferences, the number of internationally published articles, incentives for doing international research, and numbers of international researchers (Beerkens et al., 2010; Brandenburg & Federkeil, 2007; Chen et al., 2009; Furushiro, 2006; Helms et al., 2017; NUFFIC, 2012). In particular, the IMPI tool put even more emphasis on the importance of the research dimension by introducing indicators evaluating scores on the index of Highly Cited Authors and international patents (Beerkens et al., 2010).

### ***Education programs***

The internationalisation of education programs was a key dimension examined in evaluation tools. This dimension also highlighted the contextual difference between countries. Knight (2008) stated that there are two basic components that evolve in the internationalisation of higher education. One component is internationalisation at home, which includes curriculum-oriented activities to prepare students to be active in a globalized world. The other component is internationalisation abroad, involving different forms of cross-border education, such as mobility of students and academic staff, and mobility of programs. These two components, however, are not mutually

exclusive, but are intertwined in internationalisation policies of universities (de Wit, 2010). Criteria developed for evaluating the internationalisation of education programs in evaluation tools can be categorised under three main aspects: foreign language education, curriculum/program internationalisation, and international collaboration programs. Each of these aspects will now be considered in turn.

#### *Foreign language education*

The criteria that each evaluation tool developed for examining foreign language education represented the varying concerns of various countries.

Tools from Western countries focused on the foreign languages provided by the university, foreign language requirements on university enrolment or graduation, or the number of credit points for foreign language courses (Beerkens et al., 2010; Helms et al., 2017). These criteria suggest that universities in the Western countries were concerned about their students knowing foreign languages although their languages could be one of those popularly used in other parts of the world. For example, the ACE Review included a criterion evaluating the inclusion of foreign language requirement for graduation at undergraduate level at American universities.

In contrast, the Osaka tool included a comprehensive and detailed assessment on the ratio of lessons by foreign native speakers, the degree of participation in overseas language programs, communicative approach in lessons, and the use of standardised tests in foreign language education (Furushiro, 2006). In addition, the Osaka tool also examined if Japanese universities had articulated their foreign language education goals and results. The context of internationalisation at Japanese universities in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century may explain why their evaluation tool paid so much attention to foreign language education. Foreign language education (especially English) was a priority in the Japanese government's educational agenda (Hashimoto, 2009; Tanabe, 2004).

However, there were no criteria in the Peking tool for evaluating foreign language education. It was, however, known that English language education was strongly promoted by the Chinese government and universities (L. Pan, 2011; Yang, 2014).

#### *Curriculum/program internationalisation*

Internationalising curriculum/programs is another important part evaluated by the tools in the education programs dimension. The criteria developed in the evaluation tools

were particularly designed to evaluate the level of internationalisation implemented in education programs at a university.

Criteria in the evaluation tools frequently focus on curriculum/program content and program delivery methods. The inclusion of international/intercultural perspectives or global issues in a course or a program was frequently examined by the evaluation tools. However, the level of interest in this aspect shown in each evaluation tool tended to vary in different national contexts.

With regard to program delivery methods, except for ACE Review in the U.S., the other evaluation tools tend to be concerned about the number of courses or programs taught in foreign languages, particularly in English. For example, in addition to English instructed programs, the Peking tool also examined the number of courses using original course books in English at Chinese universities (Chen et al., 2009). The concern about English-instructed programs in the tools from European region, Japan and China is an evidence of the dominance of English language in the internationalisation of higher education (Rumbley et al., 2012).

It was also found that criteria examining the application of information and communication technology (ICT), such as e-learning, e-portfolios, and video lecturing were frequently found in the evaluation tools from Western countries, such as the ACE Review and IMPI. However, there were no criteria in the Osaka tool from Japan or the Peking tool from China that considered this aspect. This might be because the focus of internationalisation practices within education programs at Japanese and Chinese universities in the 2000s did not involve the application of ICT in teaching and learning.

Mobility in education programs, including credit mobility and degree mobility, was specifically covered in the European IMPI tool. Activities, such as learning modules abroad, study abroad experiences, summer school abroad, and double degree programs were investigated in IMPI as a part of internationalisation of the education programs (Beerkens et al., 2010). This concern reflected the fact that student mobility has been the traditional and popular internationalisation practice in this region (de Wit, 2012; Ferencz, Hauschmidt, & Garam, 2013). Similar concerns were also identified in the CHE from Germany and the MINT from the Netherlands.

Other than the tools from the European region, mobility in education programs did not appear to be the key concern in the other evaluation tools examined. For example, the

ACE Review from the U.S. only had criteria to examine the implementation of short-term exchange, and study abroad programs for American students (Helms et al., 2017). In Japan, the Osaka tool did not refer to this aspect as credit or degree mobility. Instead, it only examined how a number of credits earned through exchange programs are recognised for both international and domestic students at their home institutions (Furushiro, 2006). On the other hand, the Peking tool did not have any criteria covering this aspect.

#### *International joint programs*

International joint or cross-border programs were found to be a particular feature of higher education internationalisation of Western countries as an initiative for exporting education programs to other parts of the world (Altbach, 2007). This kind of programs was found to be more common in evaluation tools in Western countries than in Asian countries. For example, the ACE Review from the U.S. had specific criteria for evaluating the development of cross-border programs at American universities. These criteria specifically focused on types of collaboration programs, types of degrees conferred, types of partners, numbers of enrolments, and accreditation (Helms et al., 2017). According to a report in 2012, there were 153 American universities operating off-shore programs for non-U.S. students (CIGE, 2012).

Although the Osaka tool included criteria covering international joint programs, criteria were not as specific as those from the ACE Review. The Osaka tool evaluated international joint programs from the perspective of both an exporter and an importer. From the viewpoint of an importer, there were criteria to evaluate the proportion of students and academic staff participating in international joint programs with other universities and the impact of such programs. However, from the viewpoint of an exporter, the Osaka tool examined the number and location of oversea offices which were operated by Japanese universities and their performance. This Asian tool did not have criteria specifically examining cross-border degree programs, as in the ACE Review or IMPI.

In contrast, the Peking tool did not have any specific criteria for international joint programs although there were a large number of joint programs between Chinese universities and foreign-partner universities, as commented by Hayhoe and Liu (2011) and Huang (2007).

### ***Academic staff***

Academic staff was another important dimension included in evaluation tools. The two groups of academic staff whose internationalisation practices were investigated included: domestic academic staff and international academic staff.

In terms of the domestic academic staff, the evaluation tools appeared to share common concerns about international professional development, including international qualifications and experience. However, the level of interest in this aspect varied among the evaluation tools in different contexts.

For example, the ACE Review in 2017 had specific criteria investigating if an American university provided funds for their academic staff to improve their international experience. Activities such as travel to conferences abroad, conducting research abroad, and teaching abroad were included (Helms et al., 2017). Moreover, this tool also had criteria relating to whether international work and experience in promotion and tenure decisions were considered at American universities (Helms et al., 2017).

In contrast, the Osaka tool included criteria examining the international qualification, and research experiences of academic staff. For example, criteria were related to the rates and the changes in the number of domestic academic staff who studied abroad and participated in overseas researches, and the inclusion of international activities in staff performance review (Furushiro, 2006). The Peking tool also introduced criteria evaluating the ratio of the domestic academic staff having one year working/studying abroad or international qualifications (Chen et al., 2009).

With regard to international academic staff, it was found that the number or ratio of international academic staff and researchers and the recruitment of international academic staff in universities were included in the evaluation tools from Western countries as well as the Osaka tool. For Western countries, this was reported as a part of internationalisation of universities (CIGE, 2012; Krstić, 2012). For Japanese universities, the appearance of international researchers and academic staff was also reported to be a popular internationalisation practice (Whitsed & Wright, 2013). Having international academic staff working on either short-term or long-term basis has been one of the features of internationalisation in Chinese universities (Yoder, 2011). However, the Peking tool only had one criterion examining the ratio of international academic staff.

## **Students**

The review of evaluation tools showed that students were another important dimension in studying the level of internationalisation at a university, though the level of interest in this dimension varied with regard to different contexts. There were two aspects of this dimension examined in the evaluation tools: domestic and international students.

Evaluation tools from Western countries were particularly concerned about the participation of domestic and international students in international activities organised by universities (Beerkens et al., 2010; Helms et al., 2017). For example, criteria for domestic students covered the number of students participating in intercultural courses and credit/degree mobility programs (Beerkens et al., 2010). With regard to international students, criteria examined the number of students coming to the institution for both degree or non-degree programs as well as the accessibility of international students to support services provided by the university.

In contrast, the focus of the Osaka tool was on how international students were supported at Japanese universities, as well as the number of international students in degree programs, Japanese language and cultural classes, and seeking career support (Furushiro, 2006). There were no criteria, however, examining the involvement of domestic students in internationalisation practices of Japanese universities. The focus on recruiting international students as part of internationalisation at Japanese universities might explain why the Osaka tool only took into account international students.

With regard to the Peking tool, the concern was only with the number of international students coming to a Chinese university and the number of Chinese students participating in exchange programs abroad (Chen et al., 2009). There were no other specific criteria examining the participation of international students in any education program at Chinese universities, although recruiting international students was a target of institutional internationalisation in China (Dong & Chapman, 2011; Hayhoe & Liu, 2011).

### **2.5.4. Considerations in the development process of evaluation tools**

The review of the seven evaluation tools provides an in-depth insight into their development process. In this section, the discussion moves on to looking at how these evaluation tools reflect different contextual priorities in internationalisation, the

involvement of stakeholders, the evaluation purposes, and the development approaches in differing contexts.

### ***Different contextual priorities for internationalisation***

Different priorities for internationalisation of different national contexts are demonstrated in the focus of the dimensions and key criteria in evaluation tools.

Among the seven tools reviewed in the current study, the IQRP and IMPI can be considered as internationally and regionally applicable tools. The IQRP was developed in Europe but was piloted in universities of nine different countries, including those outside Europe (de Wit & Knight, 1999). Therefore, it can be considered to be an international tool. On the other hand, the IMPI was designed for European universities to know about the differences between institutions, particularly in areas where “increasing level of regional integration – like the European Higher Education Area” was observed (Beerkens et al., 2010, p. 13). Therefore, the IMPI also covered specific features of the European Higher Education Area, such as joint/double/multiple degree programs, Erasmus Mundus, co-supervision, ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System).

However, the other tools, including the ACE Review, CHE, MINT, Osaka and Peking, are likely to reflect their particular national contextual priorities for internationalisation of higher education. As indicated in Section 2.4 above, each country, in particular the U.S., Japan and China, had its particular pathway towards internationalisation in higher education. It becomes evident that the priorities in internationalisation examined by each evaluation tool demonstrated a relevant trend that was closely connected to the national context.

The ACE Review tool was developed specifically for evaluating the implementation of a comprehensive internationalisation with focus on global learning outcomes in American universities (Helms et al., 2017). This comprehensive internationalisation aimed at positioning American universities to be “more globally oriented and internationally connected” (Helms et al., 2017, p. 1) in the context that Americans wanted to increase the global competitiveness of American universities as well as understanding and collaborative with other parts of the world (Hudzik, 2011; Peterson & Helms, 2013). Comprehensive internationalisation, therefore, is evaluated across six dimensions: 1) institutional commitment; 2) administrative structure and staffing; 3)

curriculum, co-curriculum, and learning outcomes; 4) staff policies and practices; 5) student mobility; and 6) collaboration and partnerships. The goal of being “more globally oriented and internationally connected” (p. 1) in this comprehensive internationalisation framework is clearly represented by criteria examining the dimensions of curriculum, staff, and students. This evaluation tool, however, focused more on education with regard to internationalisation instead of including both education and research as in the other tools. On one hand, the internationalisation effort of research universities was examined in another tool developed by Green (2005), although it is not as popular as ACE Review tool. On the other hand, the ACE Review tool was an effort to meet the challenges of national and international rankings with their strong bias toward research outputs (Green, 2012).

MINT reflects the characteristics of the Dutch higher education system, which has adopted the New Public Management (NPM) model (Currie, 2003). With this model, institutional autonomy, entrepreneurial management, and privatisation have become popular concepts within Dutch higher education institutions (Currie, 2003). That might be the reason why different types of education programs for profit purpose such as distance education, twinning programs, and franchising have been included as criteria for evaluating the internationalisation practices of Dutch universities. Although MINT had quite a different format for organising evaluation criteria, compared to the other evaluation tools, this evaluation tool provides an example of different contextual priorities in internationalisation.

Unlike MINT from the Netherlands, the CHE tool considered dimensions of research, teaching, and learning ‘at home’ as the main focus in German universities by 2007. However, Germany has been working hard to promote mobility as a part of their strategy for heightening the international profile of German universities (DAAD, 2014). The CHE evaluation tool, therefore, might not be relevant for the current context of internationalisation in German universities. However, this evaluation tool represented the national contextual priorities for internationalisation in Germany by the 2000s. In addition, this tool also demonstrated a particular development approach with regard to evaluating institutional internationalisation, which is useful to consider for the purpose of the study.

The development of the Osaka tool focused on international perspectives with regard to students, staff, and research dimensions. These were also the national focus of

internationalisation at Japanese universities, as set by Japanese government and supported by government projects (Mock et al., 2016). In particular, this focus reflected the concern of the Japanese government in attracting international students in the ambitious plan for 300,000 foreign students by 2020 in the Global 30 project (see Section 2.4.3). Therefore, criteria in the evaluation tool tended to focus more on organisational structure to support international students and researchers going to Japanese universities.

The Peking tool used a survey on internationalisation which was conducted at 26 research-oriented universities for developing evaluation criteria to examine the internationalisation at general Chinese universities (Chen et al., 2009). This suggests that the evaluation of internationalisation in general Chinese universities would then be intentionally directed by criteria applied for Chinese research-oriented universities. This process also reflected the efforts of the Chinese government to develop Chinese world-class universities by providing substantial funding for universities selected in Project 2/11 and Project 9/85 to develop into research universities (Yoder, 2011). Research, therefore, was the main concern in the development of evaluation criteria in the Peking tool. There were five dimensions included in the Peking tool: organisational support for international cooperation, international activities for students and academic staff, international perspective in teaching and research, infrastructure support, and international collaboration in research (Chen et al., 2009). However, three of these dimensions were about international cooperation and research.

It can be seen that these evaluation tools were embedded in their national contextual priorities in internationalisation of higher education.

### ***Involvement of stakeholders in developing evaluation tools***

All seven evaluation tools presented in Table 2.1 were developed for studying internationalisation at the institutional level. However, the involvement of institutional stakeholders was either not identified or limited in piloting the developed evaluation criteria. The review of the evaluation tools indicated that none of these evaluation purposes was decided by the institutional stakeholders who were supposed to use the evaluation tools. Instead, they were decided by outside experts who worked together to select evaluation dimensions and criteria.

The first evaluation tool for studying internationalisation, IQRP, was developed by a group of international experts and involved different types of stakeholders in its pilot stage. It was piloted in different universities in both European countries, such as Finland and Poland, as well as in countries outside Europe such as Mexico, Kenya, and Australia. In this pilot process, the international experts worked with a self-evaluation team nominated by each university. The results from these pilots indicated that the tool was considered to be useful and effective in different types of universities in different regions of the world because of its flexibility and its adaptability for different educational and cultural contexts (de Wit & Knight, 1999). The effective implementation of IQRP also required strong commitment from many stakeholders including the leadership, the academic and administrative staff, and even students at various stages of the review process. This requirement helped the implementation of IQRP avoid becoming a top down process (de Wit & Knight, 1999). However, the peer-review stage proposed in IQRP might be a challenge for universities because expertise and practical experience in internationalising an academic institution is a critical quality of the peer-review team. Therefore, instead of being applied as an evaluation, it was found from the review of evaluation tools in the current study that IQRP was more commonly used as a reference in developing new evaluation tools.

With regard to the other six tools, which are in different national/regional contexts, the development of the evaluation criteria was conducted by researchers and experts outside the institutional authority.

The tools which were developed completely by external researchers and experts include the ACE Review, the Osaka tool, and the Peking tool. The ACE Review was developed by the American Council on Education. In addition, although the Osaka tool was built with the key participation of Osaka University researchers, a project led by the National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation. It only involved Japanese universities for testing and revising (Sadler, 2006), and no information was found about the participation of institutional stakeholders other than that. Similarly, the Peking tool was developed by researchers from two big Chinese universities with the financial support from the Ministry of Education. No information about the participation by other institutional stakeholders in different stages of tool development was found in the project report.

In contrast, the other tools from Europe tended to involve institutional stakeholders. For example, the development of the CHE tool in Germany involved a particular group of institutional stakeholders, heads of International Offices from four universities, who worked together with the Centre for Higher Education Development (Brandenburg & Federkeil, 2007). However, these were the only group of institutional stakeholders participating in the development of the CHE tool. In addition, recent projects of tool development, such as MINT and IMPI, proactively incorporated institutional stakeholders in the design process, although the developers were still from external organisations. These developers were the Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC) and the Lifelong Learning Program of the European Commission. These tools, however, were intended for a wider application purpose than just a particular university.

There has been increased awareness that the voices of different stakeholders at the institutional level should be taken into account. De Wit (2013) argued that the discourse on internationalisation has traditionally been dominated by a small group of higher education leaders, governments, and international bodies while the voices of institutional stakeholders, such as staff and students, have been neglected. In a recent set of evaluation criteria developed for international use by Gao (2015a), there was involvement of the policy makers at the institutional level. However, the role of those policy makers was no more than the information providers, whereas they should also be considered as users of such an evaluation tool. As argued by Patton (2012), an evaluation should take into account the need of primary users in order to ensure their commitment to the application of the tool. A set of evaluation criteria for institutional internationalisation, therefore, should take into account institutional stakeholders during its development.

### ***Purposes for evaluating institutional internationalisation***

The seven evaluation tools, reviewed in this chapter, were developed for a variety of purposes ranging from self-review, to benchmarking and planning of internationalisation.

The ACE Review in the United States was developed for the wider national purpose of classifying ‘highly active’ and ‘less active’ universities in terms of comprehensive internationalisation (Helms et al., 2017). This evaluation tool was developed with six

evaluation dimensions, utilizing a weighting scheme which was applied in data analysis intended only for the purpose of comparing the level of internationalisation between institutional types (Helms et al., 2017).

The Osaka tool was intended more for institutional self-review purpose at Japanese universities (Furushiro, 2006). In developing criteria for evaluating internationalisation at Japanese universities, it was explained that the discourse of internationalisation varies among universities (Ashizawa, 2006). Therefore, the Osaka tool was developed for Japanese universities to select relevant items to conducting a self-review of their internationalisation instead of pursuing a uniform evaluation of internationalisation (Ashizawa, 2006). However, the guidelines on how to conduct the evaluation did not provide any instruction for Japanese universities about coping with variations in the possible priorities across the suggested dimensions.

For the Peking tool, different weights were assigned to the five evaluation dimensions suggested for evaluating internationalisation in Chinese universities (Chen et al., 2009). However, there was no information indicating whether the assignment of different weights was to cater for potential difference in terms of institutional priorities or purposes in evaluating internationalisation at Chinese universities.

Similarly, other evaluation tools, such as IMPI, MINT, and CHE were developed for different purposes including self-profiling, benchmarking, and self-reviewing. However, the common aspect among these evaluation tools is that these evaluation purposes were decided by the outside experts rather than involving institution stakeholders.

### ***Development approaches of evaluation tools for internationalisation***

Gao (2015b) noted that the existing tools for evaluating institutional internationalisation have been developed utilising two main approaches: an input-output model and a framework model. These two approaches are described below.

The *input* and *output* model was applied in the development of the CHE tool with primary focus on research, teaching and learning (Brandenburg & Federkeil, 2007). In this tool, input factors contributing to the implementation of internationalisation activities included such dimensions as management, administrative staff, academic staff, resources (finance and equipment), international networking, education programs, and curricular. The output indicators included factors related to the results from the implementation process, such as the number of international staff recruited, the number

of courses taught in foreign languages, and research findings (Brandenburg & Federkeil, 2007). However, internationalisation is not necessarily the final goal for a university to achieve but may primarily be intended to contribute to the enhancement of their education and research quality (de Wit, 2011). By considering the internationalisation process as a linear chain with a causal relationship between input and output, the internationalisation outputs identified by this tool tend to be a fixed target which might not be applicable over time (Beerkens et al., 2010). In addition, this model might cause confusion by categorising a dimension or criterion as either input or output (Gao, 2015b).

Considering the complexity of the internationalisation process, a framework model is said to be an effective approach for developing a tool for evaluating internationalisation (Gao, 2015b). The framework model has been employed by other tools such as IQRP, ACE Review (U.S.), Osaka (Japan), Peking (China). According to Gray and Wilcox (1994) and Gao (2015b), this model enables developers of evaluation tools to add or remove criteria which are thought to be relevant or irrelevant to their particular contexts. However, by developing a group of criteria in one framework without denoting the contextually-influenced interconnection among these criteria, these tools could become a bundle of disconnected criteria and indicators. This issue is a challenge for universities, who are the primary users of the evaluation tools. In particular, they are not able to decide which criteria are relevant to their contexts if they do not know how evaluation criteria are developed with regard to their interconnection and independence of each other. The Osaka tool provides a good supporting evidence for this perspective. According to Ashizawa (2006), the evaluation criteria in the Osaka tool were designed to be an *a-la-carte menu* of criteria for Japanese universities to choose items which suited their needs. However, the guidelines of the tool did not tell how a university could decide to keep or take out a criterion from that *menu*. That kind of decision is not an easy task when the universities may not fully understand the interconnections as well as the possible independence among evaluation criteria developed in the tool.

Internationalisation “means different things to different people” (Knight, 1994, p. 3). That means universities need to access reliable and relevant tracking measures for studying their internationalisation performance (Knight, 2008). It is also suggested that the discourse around internationalisation should be constructed by the universities themselves in order to avoid vagueness in self-presenting their internationalisation

status in the public space (Stier & Borjesson, 2010). Therefore, an evaluation of institutional internationalisation should start from the users of such evaluation results as it would then be “pertinent to the desired objective and limited to the most relevant” (Knight, 2008, p.44).

In considering these issues in the development of evaluation tools for studying internationalisation at the institutional level, this study looked to achieve an appropriate implementation of evaluation approaches and their potential methods. Further discussion on this process is presented in Chapter 3.

## **2.6. Chapter summary**

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to the current study. It begins by explaining how internationalisation has become an important issue in the world’s higher education agenda, and particularly highlights concerns about rethinking the concept in contextually relevant ways. In addition to the inevitable influence of globalisation, there has been a growing attention to national/local contextual factors in considering the internationalisation of higher education. To date, different trends have been identified in internationalisation of higher education in different contexts. Western contexts can be represented by the trend of comprehensive internationalisation for globally oriented higher education, which particularly applies to the United States, or by the trend of regionalisation in European higher education systems. In contrast, Asian contexts can be represented by the constraints of internationalisation or westernisation in higher education. This view is linked to consideration of strengthening national identity in the Japanese context and promoting influence in the Chinese context. The question is then raised about what the trend of internationalisation for universities in Vietnam might be.

In Vietnam, internationalisation of higher education has recently been officially mentioned in the national Higher Education Reform Agenda in 2005. While there have been a number of studies about the internationalisation of Vietnamese higher education in general, there has been little official study of how internationalisation has been undertaken at Vietnamese universities. The identification of such terms as *international/regional standards* and *international/regional position* in the vision and mission of some Vietnamese public universities, however, does not indicate how internationalisation is interpreted and implemented at the institutional level in

Vietnamese higher education. This question highlights the need to have a study on how internationalisation has taken place at a Vietnamese public university.

In order to find out how internationalisation has taken place at universities in other nations, a number of evaluation tools have been developed for studying institutional internationalisation in different contexts, as described in the present review. Although each evaluation tool was found to have its own focus in studying internationalisation at universities in their national/regional context, the review indicated that they had a shared emphasis on some key dimensions and criteria in evaluation. This insight indicates that these international dimensions and criteria could be applied to examine how internationalisation is taking place at a Vietnamese public university, when there is an appropriate understanding of that phenomenon in the Vietnamese context.

Evaluation tools for internationalisation so far have not taken into account the involvement of institutional stakeholders in their development process. In addition, the framework model frequently employed in developing evaluation tools did not seem to provide sufficient comprehension for institutional stakeholders who were the users of the tools.

Taken together, these issues highlight the importance and timely nature of the current study. This study aims to answer the following three research questions:

1. What is the context of internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university?
2. How does this context differ from those in other countries?
3. What are contextual factors that should be taken into account in developing a set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university?

This study aims to add to the literature regarding implications related to the trend of internationalisation at universities in the Vietnamese higher education system; how the international evaluation criteria can be contextually relevant for studying internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university; and how the interconnections within a set of evaluation criteria for studying institutional internationalisation are established while also taking into account the influence of contextual factors.

In the following chapter, evaluation approaches and methods that were employed in developing the contextualised set of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university will be described and justified.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH PROCEDURE AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter focuses on presenting the research design for the development of a contextualised set of evaluation criteria that a Vietnamese public university could use to self-evaluate their internationalisation process. The development of this set of evaluation criteria took into consideration contextual factors and institutional stakeholder involvement. Therefore, it did not rely on just one specific evaluation approach and method, but instead used a combination of two key evaluation approaches and a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods in order to build up a relevant set of evaluation criteria which fitted with the uniqueness of the Vietnamese public university context.

This chapter begins by identifying the appropriate aspects of the evaluation approaches employed in this study. That is followed by an explanation of the methodological perspective that guided the selection and implementation of the evaluation approaches. Following that, there is a description of the research procedure and the data collection schedule. Next, the research setting and the participants in each of the three phases of the study are introduced. A description is also provided of the specific data collection tools, the role of researcher, and the approaches to data analysis. Finally, ethical issues considered in the research process are outlined.

#### **3.2. Identifying appropriate aspects of evaluation approaches**

Evaluation has been undertaken in many professions, ranging from education to health care, justice, business, and social service, and provides meaningful information for making decisions (Christie, 2003; Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014; Stufflebeam, Madaus, & Kellaghan, 2000). It is also known that evaluation inter-relates with research methods, especially in applied research in education and social sciences (Mertens, 2009), and contributes to knowledge development just as research does (Mark, Henry, & Julnes, 2000). As a distinct specialty field in social science, the evaluation field has developed an increasingly large professional literature on evaluation models and approaches (Christie, 2003; Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004).

In the current study, the development process of a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university was informed by two evaluation approaches that were deemed to be appropriate to this study. These evaluation approaches were the practical participatory evaluation (Chouinard & Cousins, 2012, 2014) and the utilization-focused evaluation approaches (Patton, 1997, 2008, 2012). Each of these approaches is described in more detail next.

### **3.2.1. Practical participatory evaluation approach**

The first evaluation approach seen to be appropriate to the study was the practical participatory evaluation (P-PE) approach. Having evolved from writings and approaches by Stake (1975) and Guba and Lincoln (1989), the participatory evaluation approach is distinguished from others by having “evaluators work in partnership with stakeholders to produce evaluative knowledge” (Chouinard & Cousins, 2012, p.10). By involving stakeholders, the practical participatory evaluation is designed to increase the ownership of the evaluation process and the intended use of the evaluation results (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2012; King, 2005). The essence of this approach, therefore, is the development of a collaborative partnership and process involving the researcher and stakeholders.

Stakeholders in practical participatory evaluation are usually the primary users who are closely associated with the evaluated practice, have decision-making responsibility for that practice, and will use the evaluation findings, such as sponsors, managers, developers, and implementers (Chouinard & Cousins, 2012, 2014; Greene, 2005). However, not all of these stakeholders might be expected to participate in a participatory evaluation practice. On one hand, a diversity of stakeholders can increase the credibility and validity of the findings (Brandon, 1998; Fitzpatrick et al., 2012; Thayer & Fine, 2001). On the other hand, including a variety of stakeholders can present challenges for the practical viability of the evaluation practice (King, 2004, 2005; Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). In addition, the in-depth involvement of stakeholders, can sometimes risk the external credibility of the evaluation outcomes when evaluation methods and procedures are placed in the hands of non-evaluator stakeholders (Brisolara, 1998; Fitzpatrick et al., 2012; Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). As suggested by Cullen and Coryn (2011) in utilising the participatory evaluation approach, the current study, therefore, took into account the selection of appropriate stakeholders and identification of study phase(s) those stakeholders could participate in.

The collaborative partnership in practical participatory evaluation involves continuous interaction between the evaluator and stakeholders. In a practical participatory evaluation practice, the evaluator and stakeholders engage in interactions ranging from making technical decisions to planning, instrument development, data collection, analysis, and reporting (Chouinard & Cousins, 2012; Fitzpatrick et al., 2012; Poth & Shulha, 2008). According to Chouinard and Cousins (2012), the interactions between stakeholders (users of knowledge) and evaluators (producers of knowledge) determine both the general significance and the practical importance of the knowledge gathered. In the current study, the researcher brought to the Vietnamese public university the knowledge of the professional evaluation practice as well as the internationalisation area, whereas institutional stakeholders bring the knowledge of their context, as suggested by Chouinard and Cousins (2014). The knowledge which is developed as a result of this partnership can, therefore, be better used by stakeholders (Chouinard & Cousins, 2012; Cousins & Earl, 1992).

In considering the process of collaboration in this study, three dimensions have been included: control of technical decision making, stakeholder selection, and the level of stakeholder participation, as suggested by Chouinard and Cousins (2012) and Cullen and Coryn (2011). According to these researchers, the control of technical decision-making can fall on either the evaluators or the stakeholders, or both of these two groups. It is also advised that the selection of stakeholders can include diverse groups of stakeholders, but is generally limited to groups of those with a primary or vested interest in the outcomes for the evaluative research. Finally, the level of participation depends on the extent to which individual stakeholders are able to participate in the research. These three dimensions of the collaboration process are essential to differentiate a collaborative evaluation study from others (Chouinard & Cousins, 2012). How these three dimensions were dealt within the current study is presented in the following sections of this chapter.

The selection of a practical participatory approach for this study follows the recommendation by Cousins and Earl (1992, 1995) and Chouinard and Cousins (2012). These researchers have utilised this evaluation practice in education. According to these researchers, those evaluations conducted in a partnership between evaluators and members of an educational organisation have tended to be most useful for decision making, improvement, and problem solving with regard to the evaluated practices. In

the current study, this evaluation approach appeared to be appropriate to the aim of developing a set of evaluation criteria for a Vietnamese public university to review their contemporary internationalisation and plan their future strategies. However, practical participatory evaluation approach has sometimes been criticised for being “more of an implementation strategy than an evaluation approach” (Brisolara, 1998, p.35). Therefore, in this study, attention is paid to the advice that a participatory evaluation approach should be implemented with specification and precision (Cullen & Coryn, 2011; Cullen, Coryn, & Rugh, 2011).

A particular benefit of the practical participatory evaluation approach in this study is that it fosters individual and organisational learning for ongoing evaluative inquiry as well as stakeholders’ capacity building (Cousins, 2003; Fitzpatrick et al., 2012; Poth & Shulha, 2008). According to these researchers, the focus on increasing usage of evaluation outcomes and the collaborative process help to enhance organisational learning, enabling evaluation information to be used for planning and improvement. This viewpoint was particular true for institutional stakeholders at a Vietnamese public university, where the discourse of institutional internationalisation has not yet been officially defined.

At the time of the current study, the aims and nature of internationalisation had not been clearly defined for Vietnamese public universities. Therefore, an understanding of what stakeholders perceived as internationalisation was critical to achieving a contextually relevant set of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation in that context. With this in mind, the present study drew on a practical participatory evaluation approach in the development process of the evaluation criteria. The collaborative partnership nature of this approach, therefore, led to close cooperation between the researcher and the institutional stakeholders in identifying their perceptions regarding the practical implementation of internationalisation, in order to develop contextually relevant evaluation criteria. Accordingly, different institutional stakeholders were invited to participate in different phases of the study in order to get the most from the various stakeholders’ knowledge and perspectives on internationalisation. How different institutional stakeholders participated and collaborated with the researcher throughout the process of the study is described for each phase of the study (see Sections 3.5 to 3.7).

### **3.2.2. Utilization-focused evaluation approach**

The second approach that the current study drew on was the utilization-focused evaluation approach. In making this choice, it was affirmed that the success of a study relies on how it is used by people in their actual context (Patton, 1997, 2008, 2012).

The concept of utilization-focused evaluation has been endorsed by a number of evaluation experts (Alkin, 2011; Alkin & Taut, 2002; Cronbach, 1980; Patton, 1997; Stufflebeam, 1966; Weiss, 1998). This reflects the essence of this evaluation approach that the focus is on “intended use by intended users” (Patton, 2012, p.4). Similar to the practical participatory evaluation approach recommended by Chouinard and Cousins (2012), utilization-focused evaluation requires the identification of individuals who care about the evaluation and the findings it generates, as well as their commitment to the use of evaluation outcomes (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). However, different from the focus on the collaborative partnership and process in the practical participatory approach, the utilization-focused evaluation regards both personal factors and situational factors as the key to the success of an evaluation practice (Patton, 1997, 2008, 2012).

The personal factors identified from intended users may involve the leadership, interest, availability, determination, commitment, or capacity “for contributing to the evaluation and its use” (Patton, 2012, p. 72). In this study, it was essential for the researcher to identify and involve key stakeholders, as well as work with them to understand their personal factors, as recommended by Patton (2008) and Patton (2012). As recommended by Patton (2012), a stakeholder analysis was conducted with regard to personal factors in order to assess the different degrees of potential involvement of different stakeholders. In line with Patton (2012) suggestion, the *Power Versus Interest grid*, which was adapted from Eden and Ackermann (1998), was used to identify and work with relevant primary intended-users. By considering personal factors of stakeholders based on the potential level of their power over and interest in the evaluation, this grid was helpful to “distinguish different degrees of potential involvement of different stakeholders” (Patton, 2012, p. 72).

However, the involvement of the primary intended users only has been identified as a limitation of the utilization-focused evaluation approach. Patton (1997) and Stufflebeam and Coryn (2014) have commented that the intended user group may not represent all of

the stakeholders' interests. In addition, stakeholders with conflicts of interest might have an inappropriate influence on the evaluation process and outcomes (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). Therefore, the implementation of a utilization-focused evaluation practice in this study required the researcher to approach the situation flexibly "without compromising basic professional standards" (p. 219), as suggested by Stufflebeam and Coryn (2014). How the researcher ensured this flexibility during the study is discussed further in Section 3.9 of the current Chapter.

A situational analysis conducted at the very beginning of the study is essential. According to Patton (2012), this early situational analysis helps to identify primary intended users as well as to assure "understanding of the program, appreciating stakeholders' interests and potential areas of conflict" (p. 88). In addition, Patton (2012) has showed the concern about the uniqueness of every evaluation situation. Therefore, in the current study, the researcher and institutional stakeholders worked together to identify an evaluation that fits with users' information needs as well as their unique situation, as suggested by Patton (2012). However, this situational analysis was also continued during the study, as advised by Patton (2012), because it involved institutional stakeholders in an ongoing process.

The utilization-focused evaluation approach has been particularly recognised for its targeting towards the use by specific end-users and close attention to contextual factors (Chouinard & Cousins, 2012; Cullen & Coryn, 2011; Fitzpatrick et al., 2012). According to these writers, this feature differentiates utilization-focused evaluation from other existing participatory evaluation approaches. In addition, in supporting the utilization-focused evaluation as an evaluation approach rather than just an implementation strategy, Stufflebeam and Coryn (2014) commented that this approach reflects the principle of change with its emphasis on evaluation impacts. According to Stufflebeam and Coryn (2014), individuals are more likely to value and use the findings of the evaluation if they are meaningfully involved in the planning and execution. In the current study, this evaluation approach was, therefore, employed as an ongoing advisory tool with regard to consideration of contextual factors.

In developing a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university, the current study aims to support Vietnamese universities to identify where they are in their internationalisation process, and to consider what they could plan for their future internationalisation. This process requires flexibility and

recognition of unique needs, particularly in the contemporary context of Vietnamese universities which still have a single focus on teaching and a mono-disciplinary structure (discussed in Section 1.2). The philosophy of a utilization-focused evaluation approach, therefore, was appropriate for supporting the researcher to locate appropriate stakeholders and to delineate the contextual appropriateness during the process of developing evaluation criteria in the current study.

### **3.3. Research design**

The methodology of evaluation research involves both qualitative and quantitative methods (Kellaghan, 2010; Scriven, 1991). Evaluation is known to draw on concepts, criteria and methods from other fields like philosophy, psychology, sociology, education, communication, statistics or economics (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). Evaluation research, however, mainly involves the application of existing social science research methods and methodologies (Clarke & Ruth, 1999; Kellaghan, 2010). In addition to conventional quantitative designs in evaluation, the use of qualitative methods in evaluation has been advocated by many experts since the late 1970s (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Madaus & Stufflebeam, 2000; Patton, 1975, 2014; Rossi & Wright, 1987; Scriven, 2000). It is, however, argued that no single approach or method is necessarily appropriate, and the use of multiple methods and perspectives can help enhance the validity of evaluation results (Bledsoe, 2014; Fitzpatrick et al., 2012; Kellaghan, 2010; Patton, 2008; Scriven, 1991; Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). The researcher, therefore, carefully considered the evaluation concerns, context, and characteristics of what is being evaluated, as well as the values and perspectives of stakeholders, as recommended by Chelimsky (2007) and Rossi et al. (2004). These considerations provide a comprehensive background for justifying methods which “work best and in combination to serve the study’s particular purposes” (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014, p. 29).

A mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods was used in the design of this study in light of the needs in both practical participatory evaluation and utilization-focused evaluation approaches. In a practical participatory evaluation practice, it is said that the method selection is shaped by problem-solving demands and constraints (Chouinard & Cousins, 2014; Cousins & Earl, 1995; Cousins & Whitmore, 1998). Therefore, instead of explicitly defining a specific technique or method, a practical mixture of methods is preferred. Chouinard and Cousins (2014) have commented that a mixture can “enable

the corroboration of findings in a practical participatory context” (p. 119). In addition, the corroboration of different sources of information gathered by different methods can reduce the risk of subjective judgement from stakeholders (Chouinard & Cousins, 2014). In a utilization-focused evaluation practice, methodological appropriateness is the important key due to its highly personal and situational features (Patton, 2008, 2014). As Patton (2008) has noted, any kind of data collection method, qualitative, quantitative or a mixture of both, can be employed, in collaboration with intended users while focusing on their intended uses of the evaluation.

The following sections present how both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed in the study.

### **3.3.1. Quantitative research design**

Quantitative research is “a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables” (Creswell, 2014, p. 247). In quantitative inquiry, the researcher can employ linear methods of data collection and analysis that result in statistical data in order to understand patterns, correlations, or causal relationships between variables (Leavy, 2017). Although the researcher often has little personal interaction with the participants in quantitative research, the quantitative method, such as a survey, can provide quantifiable information from the wider members of a population (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009).

The current study employed survey method for its quantitative design. Surveys are used for ascertaining individuals’ attitudes, beliefs, opinions, or their reporting of their experiences (Creswell, 2014; Leavy, 2017). Consisting of standardised questions that could be analysed statistically, the surveys utilised in this study were able to provide a breadth of data from respondents of participating Vietnamese public universities, regarding the implementation of internationalisation policies and practices, as suggested by Leavy (2017). The quantitative findings from the study were also useful for developing questions in the qualitative data collection process that followed. How the survey method was employed in the current study is presented in Section 3.7 below.

### **3.3.2. Qualitative research design**

Qualitative research is “a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2014, p. 246). This research approach involves collecting, analysing, and interpreting comprehensive

qualitative data to get in-depth information about a specific phenomenon (Gay et al., 2009). The meaning of the phenomenon is embedded in a particular context, which “is not controlled or manipulated by the researcher” (Gay et al., 2009, p. 7). In addition to contextual aspects, personal interaction is commonly involved in qualitative data collection process. This insight is consistent to the nature of collaborative partnership between the researcher and institutional stakeholders, as suggested by (Chouinard & Cousins, 2012). According to Creswell (2014) and Leavy (2017), the values underlying qualitative research include the importance of people’s subjective experiences and meaning-making processes, and acquiring a depth of understanding of a small sample of participants. As Patton (2014) has noted, the open-ended nature of qualitative techniques “allows whatever factors are important to emerge from interviews with key informants” (p.35).

The qualitative research techniques applied in the current study included document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups. These strategies helped to obtain the institutional stakeholders’ views of their internationalisation effort as well as to identify the relevance of evaluation criteria to their context. How these qualitative methods are employed in the current study is presented in Section 3.7 below.

### **3.4. Research procedure**

The research procedure for the current study was divided into three phases. All of these three phases were conducted at one key university, while two supplementary universities were added in Phase Three. Decisions on the involvement of different institutional stakeholders (senior leaders and policy implementers) from these universities, as participants in the three phases of the study, were guided by the principles of the practical participatory and utilization-focused evaluation approaches. As suggested by Chouinard and Cousins (2012), the collaborative partnership between the researcher and the institutional stakeholders was elaborated phase by phase, during which the institutional stakeholders gradually became more deeply engaged in the process of developing a set of evaluation criteria relevant to their context. A detailed research timeline for the three phases of the study can be found in Appendix A.

Phase One, conducted between January and April 2016, addressed the first and second research questions regarding the current context of internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university as well as how it differs from experiences and approaches in other

countries. In this phase, the context of internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university (*the key university*) was explored from the university documents and viewpoints of institutional stakeholders (senior leaders and policy implementers) at the key university (this process is explained further in Section 3.6). Three data collection tools were used in this phase (document analysis, interviews, and questionnaires) in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of stakeholders' perceptions on their contemporary stage of internationalisation.

Phase Two was conducted between April and July 2016. This phase explored the answers to the third research question regarding the contextual factors which influenced the development of an evaluation framework for internationalisation at the key university. Two data collection tools were used in this phase: document analysis and focus groups. The researcher initially conducted a review of international literature on the evaluation tools for institutional internationalisation developed in different contexts, in order to form a common conceptual framework of evaluation dimensions and criteria. The researcher then worked with the policy implementers at the key university in order to identify their views with regard to the relevance of using these international dimensions in evaluating internationalisation at their university.

Phase Three, conducted between July and September 2016, continued with further exploration of contextual factors that were taken into account in developing a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at the key university. This phase involved piloting and assessing the set of evaluation criteria developed as a result of Phase Two. Two data collection tools were employed in this phase: questionnaire and focus groups. Firstly, the set of evaluation criteria, which was developed as a result of Phase Two, was piloted in the form of a questionnaire at three universities (the key university and two supplementary universities). Further information about two supplementary universities is presented in Section 3.5.3. This pilot aimed at finding out how institutional stakeholders (policy implementers) at Vietnamese public universities responded to the initial evaluation criteria by asking them to reflect on their actual implementation of internationalisation effort. Next, focus groups were conducted with the policy implementers at the key university to assess the relevance of the evaluation criteria developed to study their internationalisation effort.

Figure 3.1 summarises the research procedure showing each of the three phases with specific locations, participants, and tools.

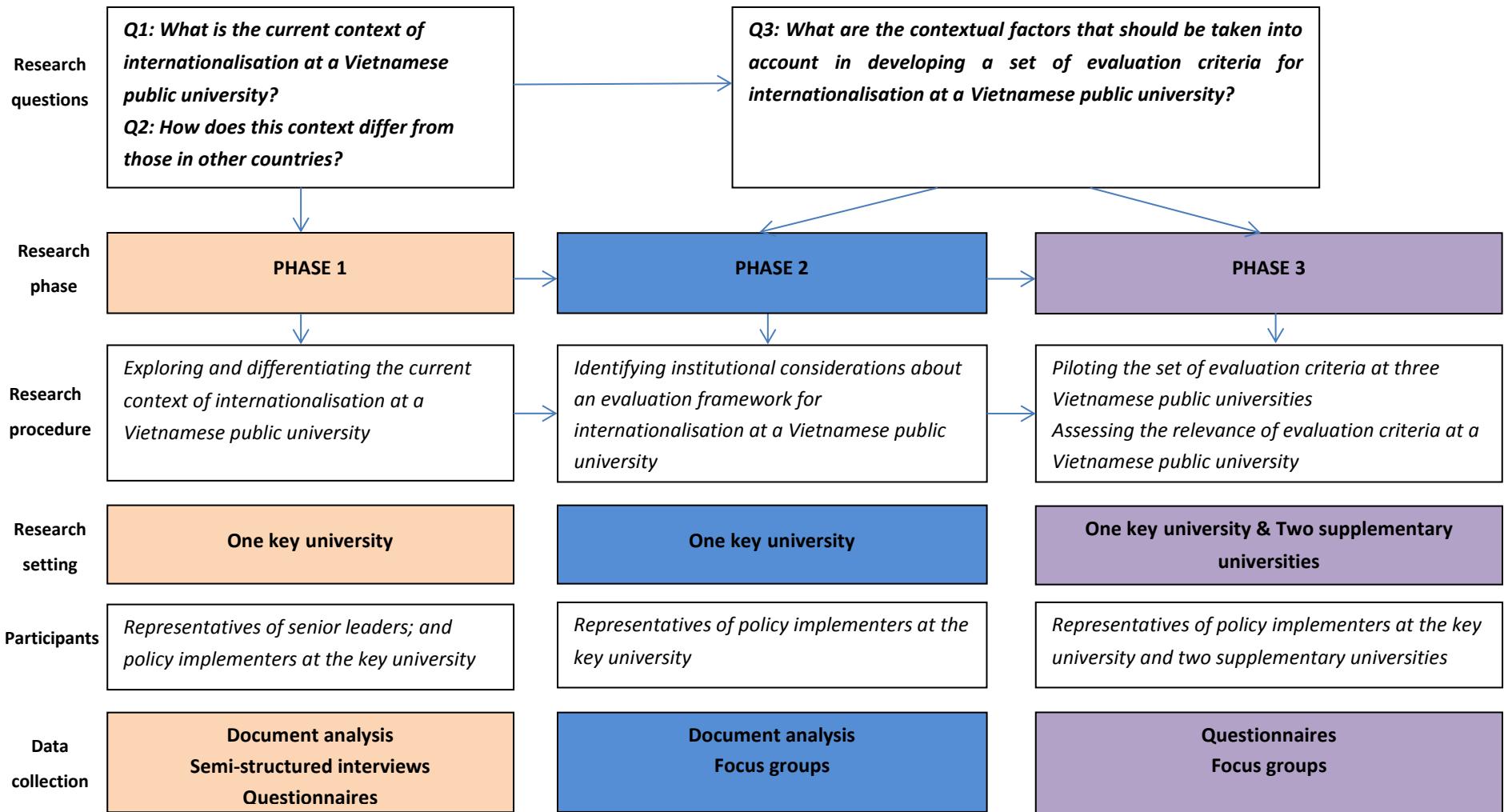


Figure 3.1: Procedure of the research in terms of phases

### **3.5. The research settings**

The study was conducted at three Vietnamese public universities. Among these three universities, one university was selected as the key university that participated in all three phases of the study. The other two universities, which participated in Phase Three of the study, are referred to as *supplementary universities*. The selection and description of the key university as well as the two supplementary universities are presented below.

#### **3.5.1. Selecting the key university**

As suggested by Patton (2008), intended users decide the use of the results of a study; therefore, they should be involved in making decisions related to the study from the beginning. In this study, the intended user was the key university, which was represented by the participants who took part in the holistic process of developing the set of evaluation criteria.

The selection of the key university was decided upon because of its potentially visible tendency for engaging in internationalisation. As indicated in Chapter 2, little information is known about the internationalisation at Vietnamese universities in the contemporary context of Vietnamese higher education system. Therefore, the strength of their international perspectives was based on their involvement in delivering a range of programs related to foreign languages. These characteristics provided the main reason for selecting this university as the key one in this study. In addition, an inclination towards internationalisation was also influenced by the contemporary political position of this university in Vietnam. The key university is a member of a leading national university which has been especially supported by the Vietnamese government to become an international standard university.

The key university was also selected in terms of its convenience. As suggested by Cohen et al. (2011), convenience sampling allows for the selection of a sample to which the researcher has easy access. In this study, the researcher was familiar with the context and the people at the key university. That familiarity was an advantage for conducting a study which required a collaborative partnership to be formed, and the outcomes to be geared towards the utility of the final set of evaluation criteria.

In addition, this university also represented the predominant mono-disciplinary structure on which most Vietnamese public universities have been operating, as a result of Soviet influence. The selection of a key university as the sample for the study, therefore,

facilitated the ability of the research to demonstrate how a set of evaluation criteria can be contextualised for a particular mono-disciplinary Vietnamese public university, but that could also be adopted by other Vietnamese public universities.

### **3.5.2. Description of the key university**

Established in 1955, the key university is a public university that has a reasonably long development history and has been moving in line with changes in the country. The university was merged with other 2 universities to form a comprehensive national university in 1993. However, it has still maintained its autonomous management system, to some extent, as have other public universities in Vietnam. The university provides education programs, from bachelor's to doctoral level, in foreign language education and foreign language teacher training. Among many areas of social sciences, foreign language education has frequently been mentioned as a key area in internationalisation of higher education (de Wit, 2000). In particular, foreign language education has been included in national policies on internationalisation of higher education in Japan and China (Hashimoto, 2009; L. Pan, 2011; Sun et al., 2017; Whitsed & Wright, 2013). With the academic discipline of foreign language education, the key university, therefore, was expected to be an early leader in internationalisation in Vietnam.

The organisational structure of the university involves four management units, including the education and research council, the management board, the communist party committee, and the labour union committee. These management units will be described further in the section on selecting senior leaders as participants in the study. Under these management units, there are both academic and administrative units. In the academic and research areas, the university has faculties, centres, and divisions. There are nine key faculties of foreign language education, in addition to two rare foreign language programs under a smaller management of division. The university also has a postgraduate faculty, which manages masterate and doctoral degree programs in foreign languages. There are also specific centres and divisions that are involved in academic and research activities. In addition, the administrative support area in the university has 11 departments and centres. Figure 3.2 below shows the organisational structure of the university in 2016 when the research was conducted.

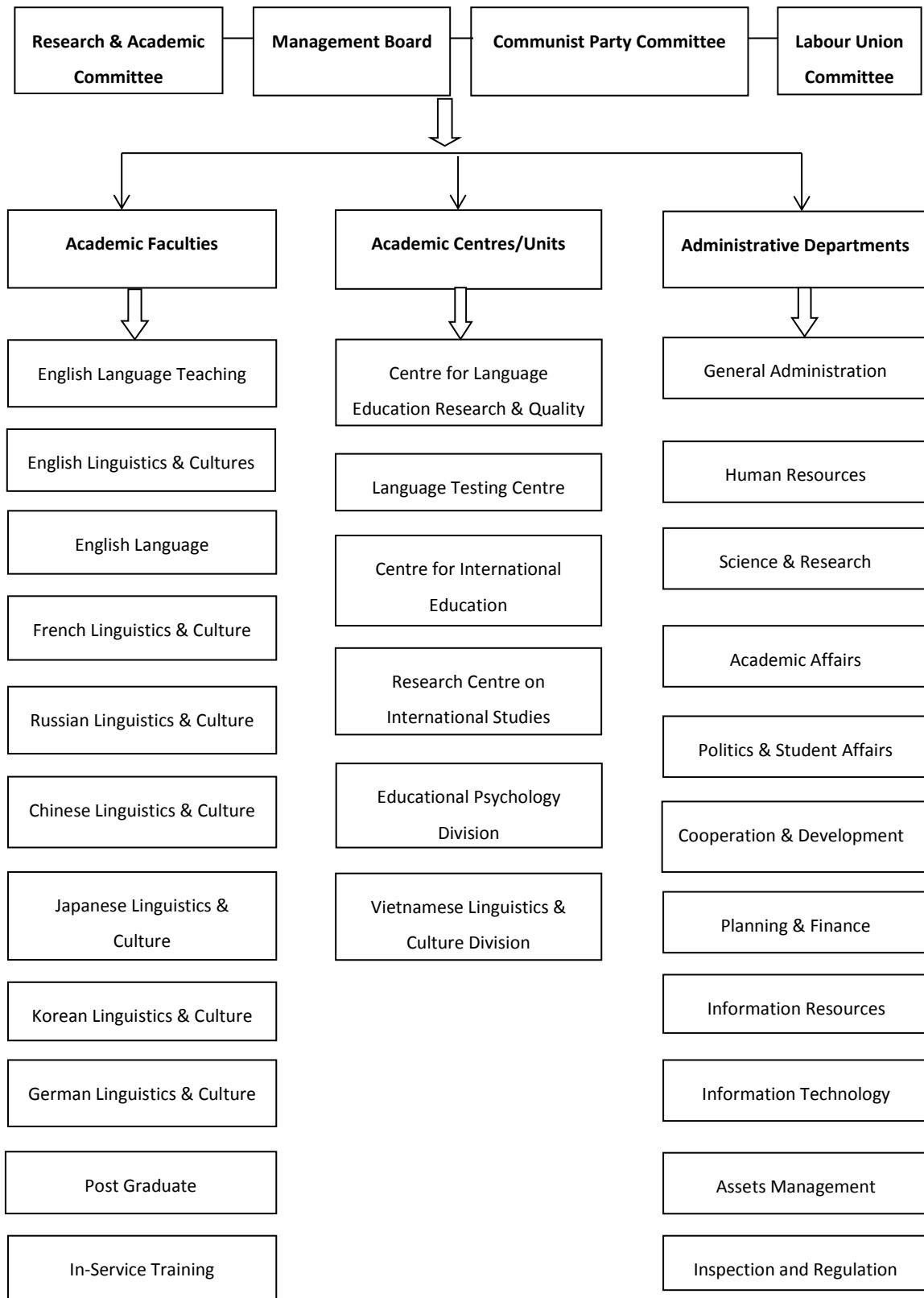


Figure 3.2: Organisational chart of the key university (as in 2016 from university website)

### **3.5.3. Selection of two supplementary universities**

In Phase Three, two further universities were selected to trial the set of evaluation criteria that had been initially developed as a result of Phase Two. Following the philosophy of a utilization-focused evaluation approach, the set of evaluation criteria was firstly contextually developed for and with the key university. The participation of these two supplementary universities and their respondents, however, helped to explore the potential extent of a wider applicability in other universities in Vietnam.

Keeping the number of supplementary universities at only two is supported by the practical sampling design framework suggested by Henry (2009). According to Henry, if a subpopulation is not the focal point for separate analysis, a small number of the subpopulation members are appropriate for reliable analysis. In addition, the limited resources and time constraints of the study prevented a larger selection of supplementary universities.

The two supplementary universities were purposefully selected in order to satisfy the current study's criteria, as suggested by Cohen et al. (2011). As most Vietnamese universities are mono-disciplinary, a complete difference in academic discipline would potentially result in a very different focus in implementing and evaluating internationalisation. Therefore, the organisational structure and educational area of the supplementary universities needed to be similar, to some extent, to that of the key university in order to ensure the applicability of the evaluation criteria. The two supplementary universities selected were: a university in social sciences and humanities, and a university in business and economics. These two universities were under the same 'umbrella' of a leading national university as the key university. This status assured that they had the same organisational and development agenda of the 'mother' university.

As internationalisation had not yet been examined before in any Vietnamese public university, the extent of internationalisation at these two universities was estimated through the information presented in their official websites. For the university specialising in business and economics, a similar level of internationalisation to the key university could be expected due to the international nature of this subject matter, as noted by Stiglitz (1993). However, De Wit and Callan (1995) observed that the social sciences and humanities areas might be less advanced than other disciplines in their internationalisation because of their greater domestic embeddedness. However, being

under the same federation structure of a national university ensures that these universities started their internationalisation at roughly the same time.

### **3.6. Research participants**

The study involved different participants during the research process. The key university was the intended user of the set of evaluation criteria contextualised in the current study. Therefore, the recruitment of participants representing this key university was guided by the stakeholder analysis using the *Power Versus Interest* grid, as suggested by Patton (2012). The application of this grid in utilization-focused evaluation practice enabled the researcher to select and work effectively with the stakeholders at the key university, as noted by Patton (2012). With the two supplementary universities, participants were recruited for piloting the set of evaluation criteria in Phase Three. These supplementary participants were in similar organisational positions as those at the key university. The following sections present the process of identifying research participants for the study, and how the participants were involved in each phase of the study.

#### **3.6.1. Identifying research participants**

Participants in this study included those from the key university and those from the two supplementary universities. Each of these participant groups is described in turn below.

##### ***Participants from the key university***

The organisational structure of the key university (see Figure 3.2) indicated that there were many stakeholders involved in the internationalisation process, so they represented different perspectives. In line with Greene's (2005) observation, the stakeholders involved in the internationalisation at a university might include: the management board and committees; heads of faculties, departments and centres as representatives of policy implementers; academic and administrative staff as both implementers and beneficiaries of internationalisation; students; and potential employers as beneficiaries. An analysis of these stakeholders was developed on the basis of the *Power Versus Interest* grid. According to Patton (2012), this analysis helped the researcher identify appropriate intended users and decide the extent of their involvement in developing the set of evaluation criteria.

The *Power Versus Interest* grid that Patton (2008) adapted from Eden and Ackermann (1998) and Bryson (2004) suggests that there are four groups of potential stakeholders. These groups were considered in selecting stakeholders for the current study. The analysis of the organisational structure and the description of functions and responsibilities of units in the university in relation to the internationalisation effort helped the researcher build the grid, which is presented in Figure 3.3. The figure demonstrates the power versus interest of potential stakeholders regarding the use of the set of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at the key university.

	<b>Low-Power stakeholders</b>	<b>High-Power stakeholders</b>
<b>High-Interest stakeholders</b>	Students Academic staff Non-academic staff	Research and Academic Committee Management Board Communist Party Committee Heads of Faculties/Centres/Departments
<b>Low-Interest stakeholders</b>	Employers	Labour Union Committee

*Figure 3.3: Grid of power versus interest among potential stakeholders at the key university (adapted from Patton, 2008).*

The first group shown in Figure 3.3, with high-interest but low-power, is categorised as the ‘subjects’ (Patton, 2008), who are the potential beneficiaries of or affected by the findings in the study. This group includes students, academic and administrative staff at the key university. These stakeholders could be directly influenced by the implementation of any policies or practices of internationalisation. However, their power over decision-making process on these policies and practices was the least.

The second group, with low-power and low-interest, is categorised as a ‘crowd’ (Patton, 2008) as they may raise possible contention over the study findings. This group involved employers of graduates provided by the university. In Vietnam, the connection between potential employers and Vietnamese universities is still loose although there are many complaints about the quality of graduates (T. T. Tran, 2012, 2014). In addition, the current study focused on the involvement of institutional stakeholders rather than all potential stakeholders in relation to the evaluation of internationalisation at the key university. Therefore, in the current study, employers were classified as low-

power and low-interest group regarding this evaluation at the key university, so they were not invited to participate.

The third group, with high-power and high-interest, is seen as the ‘key players’ (Patton, 2008) since they are in prime position to affect the use of the study findings. They may use the results themselves as well as draw them to the attention of others. At the key university, while the committees and management board could make decisions over the use of research findings, the heads of faculties/centres/departments were not only able to contribute to this decision making process but they were also able to draw it to the attention of other staff in their units.

The fourth group, with high-power and low-interest, is classified as the ‘context setters’ (Patton, 2008), whose interest needs to be cultivated in case they become barriers to the use of the findings. In considering the organisational structure and functional nature of institutional units, the Labour Union Committee was put into this group. Although the Labour Union Committee is one of four management units of the university, its defined functions and responsibilities indicated that it was not directly involved in the decision-making process related to internationalisation as well as the use of the evaluation after the study. However, this committee might be a barrier to the application of the evaluation for studying internationalisation at the key university if this process affected the labour rights and benefits of its members. It was, therefore, suggested that the study results would need to be conveyed to the members of this committee in order to reduce any barrier to the application of findings.

Amongst these four groups, the most likely potential intended users at the key university, of the set of evaluation criteria, were the three management units and heads of faculties, centres, and departments at the key university. For the heads of faculties, centres, and departments, although they are categorised as the ‘key players’, their actual power was not as high as those in the three management units. Therefore, they are more realistically positioned in between the low-power extreme of (academic and administrative) staff and high-power extreme of committees and management board. In this study, the two committees (Research and Academic, and Communist Party) and the management board are referred to as the senior leaders. The heads of faculties, centres, and departments are considered to be representatives of policy implementers for the purposes of this study. How these two groups of participants participated in each phase of the study will be presented later (see section 3.6.2 to section 3.6.4).

### ***Participants from the two supplementary universities***

At the two supplementary universities, a purposeful sampling strategy was implemented in recruiting participants for the study. This fits with the suggestion by Cohen et al. (2011) that purposeful sampling enables the researchers to obtain a sample that is satisfactory to their specific needs. In Phase Three of the study, the set of evaluation criteria developed at the key university was piloted with the policy implementers, who could be expected to have good knowledge of their contemporary internationalisation issues. For this purpose, the researcher needed to recruit policy implementers at the two supplementary universities who were in similar positions to those at the key university. Therefore, the participants in each of the two supplementary universities were selected on the basis of the researcher's judgement of their similarity in terms of organisational and functional positions, as suggested by Cohen et al. (2011).

A detailed description of the research participants in each phase follows.

#### **3.6.2. Research participants in Phase One**

Phase One involved participants from the key university in exploring their current context of internationalisation for the first time. The representatives of both senior leaders and policy implementers were identified and invited to participate in the study. A total of 30 participants, including 4 representatives of the senior leaders and 26 policy implementers at the key university, agreed to participate in the study.

##### ***Recruitment of representatives of the senior leaders***

The grid of *power versus interest* helped identify the group of senior leaders who were likely to be the specific intended users of an evaluation of internationalisation at the key university. The decision to select representatives among these senior leaders who would participate in the study was made on the basis of a stakeholder analysis in terms of personal factor considerations, as suggested by Patton (2008). These personal factor considerations included: interest, influence, importance, availability, connections, and capacity for contributing to the study and its future use (Patton, 2008). As indicated in the organisational chart (see Figure 3.2), senior leaders were those from the three highest management units, including the research and academic committee, the management board, and communist party representatives. The functions defined for these units indicated that they had direct influence and interest regarding policies related to internationalisation in the university. Their positions also indicated that they would

be able to provide useful input, contributing to the process of developing the set of evaluation criteria.

The first management unit was the Research and Academic Council, which acted as the advisor to the university's strategic development in terms of education and research. This council consisted of up to 25 professors, associate professors, and doctorally qualified staff, who had higher profiles in research and academic experience in the university and sometimes outside the university. At the time of the study, this unit was led by the former university president. The second management unit was the Management Board, which was made up of the university president and three vice-presidents, who were responsible for managing and operating the university. The university president was responsible for the overall operation of the university. The three vice-presidents supported the president in their specific areas, which included cooperation and development, academic affairs and finance. They were initially elected into these positions for a five year term by all university staff before being officially approved from the higher management level. The third management unit was the Communist Party Committee, which represented the voice of the communist party currently governing the nation in all areas. The university president concurrently held the position of chair of this committee. This committee was composed of most heads of faculties, departments and centres in the university. These members were elected by communist party members, who included both academic and administrative staff in the university.

After obtaining verbal permission from the university president for conducting the research, the researcher sent him the official invitation to participate in the research (see Appendix B). In this invitation, the researcher also asked for his recommendations on other appropriate representatives in the three management units who might be invited to participate in the research. This procedure aimed to establish a collaborative partnership as the university president was the first primary user involved in making decisions regarding participants, as suggested by Chouinard and Cousins (2012). In addition, this procedure also confirmed the researcher's sensitivity to cultural and contextual factors through conducting an initial stakeholder analysis, as recommended by Patton (2008). It is Vietnamese culture that the highest leader of an organisation expects to be consulted regarding activities conducted at his organisation, with his staff, and for his organisation's benefit. His suggestion about the other three representatives of senior

leaders from three management units also matched with the researcher's analysis of senior leaders in terms of their interest, importance, availability and potential contribution to the research. The other three senior leaders, who agreed to participate in the study, were: (1) vice-president for international cooperation and development; (2) the former president (currently the chair of Research and Academic Council); and (3) the director of the Centre for International Education who is concurrently a member of communist party committee.

In Phase One, the representatives of the senior leaders participated in semi-structured interviews with the researcher (see Section 3.7.1). These interviews were conducted to elicit initial information about the current level of institutional internationalisation as well as to determine their needs for an evaluation of their internationalisation effort.

#### ***Recruitment of the representatives of the policy implementers***

In this study, the policy implementers included academic and administrative staff in 28 academic faculties, units, departments, and centres at the key university, which were involved in the implementation of the internationalisation effort. These 28 faculties, units, departments, and centres were represented by the heads (deans and managers). These heads were voted into their positions by all academic and administrative staff, for the same five-year term as the management board. They were supposed to be the "tipping point connectors" who are in a strategic position and being looked to by others for leadership and information (Patton, 2008, p. 82). On one hand, these heads were looked to by their staff, for decisions made by the senior leaders regarding the institutional internationalisation effort. On the other hand, they were also looked to by the management board for information regarding the implementation of such effort. Therefore, they were potential contributors to the development of evaluation criteria for internationalisation from a different perspective to the senior leaders, ensuring the diversity of stakeholders, as recommended by Chouinard and Cousins (2012).

In Phase One, the 28 representatives of the policy implementers (addressed as policy implementers in short) were also provided with the official information sheet about the research, together with the questionnaire (see Appendix C). Those, who agreed to participate, returned the completed the questionnaire. There were 26 responses from the policy implementers at the key university. Those who were from academic units are referred to as *academics* throughout the rest of the thesis. Those who were from

administrative units are referred to as *administrators*. Further demographic information on these 26 policy implementers is provided in Section 4.2 of Chapter Four.

### **3.6.3. Research participants in Phase Two**

Phase Two involved participants from the key university in exploring the institutional considerations with regard to the applicability of international dimensions in developing a framework for evaluating internationalisation at their university. A stakeholder analysis, in terms of personal factors, was also conducted to identify the appropriate participants for this phase. There were 20 representatives of the policy implementers who participated in Phase Two of the study.

In conducting a study with a utilization-focused evaluation approach, it is recognised that not all stakeholders can be involved in the study to the same degree (Patton, 2008). A stakeholder analysis regarding personal factor considerations, therefore, helped decide the “different degree of potential involvement for different stakeholders” (Patton, 2012, p. 72). An analysis was undertaken regarding personal factors after Phase One in order to enable the researcher to identify the appropriate degree of their involvement in the two following phases of the study. This was particularly important as the development of contextually relevant evaluation criteria required the researcher and the participants to work closely in data collection and analysis, as suggested by Chouinard and Cousins (2012).

The involvement of the senior leaders, who were invited in Phase One, moved from a level of fully collaborating to a level of informing from Phase Two onwards, as recommended by Patton (2008). These senior leaders were not invited to participate in intensive focus group discussions on the framework and considerations regarding the development of evaluation criteria. This decision was consistent with the recommendation regarding the level of participation by individual stakeholders by Chouinard and Cousins (2012). These senior leaders showed high interest in internationalisation issues as well as their potential influence and capacity for putting the set of evaluation criteria into use. Their responses to interviews also provided a useful contribution to the understanding of the context and the stakeholders’ perspectives on internationalisation, as advocated by Chouinard and Cousins (2012). However, their availability for participating in all three phases of the study was not high due to the time constraints of their working schedule. In addition to these senior leaders,

the deans of academic faculties/units and managers of administrative departments, who represented the policy implementers at the university, were also a part of the high-interest and high-power group of intended users (see Figure 3.3). The senior leaders indicated that they trusted these policy implementers to represent the views of the general staff in the university in developing a set of relevant criteria for evaluating their internationalisation effort. However, they still wanted to be kept informed about the results of each phase. In particular, the university president said that he wanted to know which dimensions were prioritised by the participating policy implementers in evaluating the university's internationalisation.

In contrast to the senior leaders, the involvement of the policy implementers, who participated in Phase One, remained at the level of fully collaborating. Their strategic position between the senior leaders and general staff enabled them to provide a useful contribution to the development of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at their university. However, not all of these representatives showed interest and were available for participating intensively in the study.

When administering the Phase One questionnaires to all the 28 heads of faculties, centres, and departments, the researcher also enclosed the consent form for the Phase Two focus groups, inviting them to participate in intensive discussions on developing the set of evaluation criteria (see Appendix F). From the 26 respondents to the Phase One questionnaires, 20 signed consent forms indicating their willingness to participate in the focus groups in Phase Two of the study. These 20 policy implementers were from key faculties, centres, and departments of the university. Therefore, they could accurately represent the university concerns about evaluating internationalisation.

### **3.6.4. Research participants in Phase Three**

Phase Three involved the research participants in piloting the set of evaluation criteria developed as a result of Phase Two, and in examining the relevance of these criteria in the light of contextual factors at the key university. The pilot for the set of evaluation criteria took the form of a questionnaire that was conducted not only at the key university but also at the two supplementary universities. The participants in the initial pilot in Phase Three included both the policy implementers at the key university and those in similar positions at the two supplementary universities. As they were responding to the questionnaires in this pilot step, the participants from the three

universities will be collectively addressed as *respondents* in presenting the findings of the thesis.

After this final questionnaire, the policy implementers at the key university participated in focus groups to further consider the relevance of the criteria that had been developed during the study.

#### ***Research participants from the key university***

The participants from the key university who took part in Phase Three were the same policy implementers who had participated in the previous two phases. In line with the philosophy of practical participatory evaluation and utilization-focused evaluation approaches, the ongoing collaboration between the researcher and the participants, as well as the participants' in-depth involvement, were critical to the process of developing the set of evaluation criteria. Therefore, after the focus groups in Phase Two, the researcher discussed the plan for the data gathering procedure in Phase Three with those 20 participants, and invited them to participate in this phase. Reflecting their increasing interest in internationalisation issues, all 20 participants from Phase Two confirmed their participation in Phase Three with the researcher.

#### ***Research participants from the two supplementary universities***

At the two supplementary universities, deans and managers of faculties, departments and centres, who were at similar positions as the representatives of policy implementers at the key university, were invited to participate in trying out the set of evaluation criteria. The information sheet of the study was sent to the university president and vice-president at these two universities to ask for their permission and support (see Appendix D). After obtaining permission, similar information sheet and questionnaires were sent from the researcher to all deans and managers via both emails and hard copies. Out of the 50 invited, 32 deans and managers agreed to participate and returned the questionnaires providing their personal feedback.

### **3.7. Data collection tools**

Different data collection tools were used during each of the three phases of the study, in order to develop a contextualised set of criteria for evaluating internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university. In the following sections, tools employed in each phase are described.

### **3.7.1. Data collection tools in Phase One**

Three data collection tools were used in Phase One, including: document analysis, semi-structured interviews with the representatives of the senior leaders, and a questionnaire administered to the representatives of the policy implementers. According to Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, and Walker (2013), multiple data sources are important because they help enhance the corroboration of the findings and extend understanding of the issue being investigated. In the first phase, information from the three data sources (university documents, interviews and questionnaire) were merged together in order to gain a holistic understanding of the internationalisation context at the key university. These tools are described next, beginning with document analysis.

#### ***Document analysis***

In Phase One, document analysis was used to gain a preliminary understanding of the institutional context in which internationalisation was implemented, as suggested by Stufflebeam (2000) and Stufflebeam and Coryn (2014). Document analysis is a qualitative data collection tool that enables the researcher “to draw a picture of presuppositions and meanings that constitute the cultural world of which the textual material is a specimen” (Perakyla & Ruusuvuori, 2011, p.530). In using documents as data, the researcher used content analysis to describe and interpret the relevant information in written documents (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). By focusing on the content, the researcher identified the presence, meanings, and relationships of words, and could then make inferences about the messages on internationalisation policy and practices, as suggested by Marshall and Rossman (2016). In addition, as recommended by Cohen et al. (2011), the context of the documents being examined including broad educational, social, political, economic, and other relationships also helped in “explaining the contemporary meaning of the documents” (p. 253). Therefore, documents from the ‘mother’ university and Vietnamese government policies on higher education in relation to the development period of 2010-2015 of the key university were also examined.

To enable examination of the internationalisation-related information, the document analysis in this study focused on the university’s strategic documents as well as its relevant annual reports. There were two main groups of university documents analysed: (1) the Development Plan for the period of 2010 – 2015 and vision to 2020; and (2)

annual reports by the key university between 2010 and 2015. These documents provided insights into the context in which university's internationalisation strategies were developed and implemented.

In addition to readily accessible and existing source of documents, such as the university website, the most pertinent information was also sought on site, as suggested by Stufflebeam and Coryn (2014). Therefore, the researcher asked for permission from the key university's president (see Appendix A) to access relevant documents through the General Administration department, at the same time assuring that ethical issues related to data and privacy protection were considered, as suggested by Cohen et al. (2011) and Stufflebeam and Coryn (2014).

As the meaning of some documents may not always be transparent, the researcher needs to seek corroboration of the meaning through other tools (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). In this study, the input from stakeholders helped verify the completeness of the information, and assisted the researcher in cross-checking information in any areas of conflict and clearing up ambiguities.

### ***The semi-structured interviews***

Interview was the second tool used for gathering information in Phase One of the study. Interview is said to be one of the most useful qualitative data collection tools because it provides opportunities for the researcher to seek more depth information, though typically on a narrower range of issues (Rubin & Rubin, 2012); and to learn the perspectives, attitudes, behaviours, and experiences of stakeholders (Fitzpatrick et al., 2012). Interviews in the first phase of the study enabled the researcher to obtain descriptive and evaluative information based on stakeholders' insights into the actual interpretation and implementation of the internationalisation effort.

### **Development of semi-structured interviews**

According to Galletta (2012), a semi-structured interview is made up of open-ended and more theoretically driven questions, which can help elicit "data grounded in the experience of the participant as well as data guided by existing constructs in the particular discipline within which one is conducting research" (p. 51). In this study, open-ended questions were developed based on dimensions and criteria which were used to examine the institutional internationalisation identified from the literature review (see Section 2.5.3). In particular, semi-structured interviews were specifically

selected for collecting data from the senior leaders on their current perceptions and implementation of internationalisation at the key university. Semi-structured interviewing also left space for the senior leaders to offer their own perspectives with regard to the development of a contextually relevant set of evaluation criteria for their internationalisation effort, as suggested by Galletta (2012), May (2011), and Rubin and Rubin (2012).

The construction of semi-structured interviews allowed the senior leaders to actively engage in the interview, and at the same time enabled the researcher to probe each individual participant's responses for clarification, meaning making, and critical reflection, as recommended by Galletta (2012). As is the general practice, the semi-structured interviews used pre-prepared questions, but these were open for modification during the interview process (Ary et al., 2013). The prepared questions on internationalisation policies and practices provided the university leaders with opportunities to talk openly about each of these issues in their interviews (see Appendix H). The researcher was also able to maintain the flow of these conversations by referring to the interview guiding questions.

#### *Pilot of interview guiding questions*

The interview questions were trialled and revised before the actual interviews. The initial draft of the interview questions was piloted by two people: a Vietnamese doctoral student (in New Zealand) who had worked as a vice-dean at a Vietnamese public university; and a manager of a unit at the key university. This review process provided feedback on the content, question sequence, comprehensibility, and the length of the interview. The feedback from these two people, therefore, provided the researcher with opportunities to review and refine both the questions and the interview process in preparation for the actual interviews.

#### *Preparation before interviews*

A useful piece of feedback from the pilot was that the questions were comprehensive and involved many aspects of institutional operation. It was suggested that the interviewees should be given time to think about the questions. As a result, the researcher decided to send the interview questions to the senior leaders two weeks prior to the actual interviews. In consideration of their tight working schedule, this advance notice also gave the senior leaders time to look at and think about the questions.

Being aware of the high level of complexity in the questions, the researcher added probes during the interview to gain further clarification and additional information from the interviewees, as recommended by Galletta (2012) and Herzog (1996). One of the two people, who helped to pilot the interview format, commented that there should be questions such as, *Do you mean so by saying that?; Can you tell me more about what you said?; Which do you think is the most urgent/important task for this unit to do among the tasks you mentioned?* As these interviews were in the first stage of the study, having a good advance plan of the main questions, probes, and ways to paraphrase questions helped the researcher not only to build a good rapport with the interviewees but also helped to steer interviewees on to the issues that were central to the study, as recommended by Bogdan and Biklen (2006).

### Conducting interviews

With permission from the interviewees, their responses were audio-recorded. The interviewees signed the Consent form (see Appendix E) before starting the interviews. The recordings allowed the researcher to maintain the conversations with the senior leaders more comfortably, without worrying about taking notes. The interviews began by the researcher first saying that '*The interview today will follow the tentative content that I sent you in advance*', which was intended to make the interviewees feel more confident and ready to talk.

Each interview took approximately one and a half hours. In total, the interview data collection in Phase One took 6 hours from 4 interviews. Each interview was undertaken outside of office hours, in the individual senior leader's office at the university. Vietnamese language was used during the interviews, to enable the senior leaders to express their perspectives in the most effective manner. Key quotes from the recorded interviews were later transcribed, for the purpose of understanding the university setting and developing data collection processes in Phase Two.

### **Questionnaire**

The purpose of administering the questionnaire in Phase One was to get to know the initial perceptions of the policy implementers regarding the implementation of internationalisation policies and practices at the key university. According to Creswell (2014), questionnaires can be useful when there is a desire to have information from many individuals and to provide a quantitative description of trends, attitudes, and

opinions of a sample. However, that usefulness can only be guaranteed by the time taken to develop, pilot, and refine the questionnaire “from the likely limited flexibility of response” (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 317).

### *Questionnaire development*

Having a good questionnaire design is important. A failure in design can lead to poor data being collected, as advised by Herzog (1996) and May (2011). How the questionnaire was developed for Phase One to ensure the instrument validity and reliability is described below.

Given the defined purpose, the content of the first phase questionnaire was based on both research and local knowledge, the combination of which helps to establish its content validity, as suggested by Cox and Cox (2008). In this study, the research-based knowledge informing this questionnaire was the criteria for evaluating internationalisation, which were drawn from the international literature. Meanwhile, local knowledge was drawn from the analysis of university documents and previous interviews with the senior leaders regarding the perceptions and implementation of internationalisation at the key university.

The Phase One questionnaire used closed questions, and the uniformity of the set of alternative answers was intended to facilitate comparisons among responses, as recommended by Herzog (1996), Rea and Parker (2014), and (May, 2011). In designing the closed questions, the clarity and specificity of wording was taken into account in order to minimise varied interpretations of the responses, as suggested by Cox and Cox (2008). Therefore, simple language and structures were applied in developing this questionnaire. According to Cox and Cox (2008) and May (2011), it is important to avoid using technical terms and ambiguous language to limit the possibility of confusion among the participants in reading the questions for the first time. To make the questionnaire simple, the same direction was provided at the beginning of each section, and the same structure was used for all questions in each section. As the questionnaire was later translated into Vietnamese, particular attention was paid to the use of participants’ vocabulary and popular terminology, as advised by Cox and Cox (2008).

Selecting an appropriate scale for demonstrating attitude responses is also seen as crucial to developing a good questionnaire (Bernhardt & Geise, 2009; Cox & Cox, 2008; May, 2011; Tomal, 2010). A scale was also used in the questionnaire to measure

the degree to which each policy implementer exhibited certain attitudes toward the existence of contemporary internationalisation policies and practices, as suggested by Ary et al. (2013). In this study, a four-point scale was adapted from a Likert-type scale. This scale is seen as useful as it provides a quantitative measure of meaning in relation to subjective dimensions (Fowler, 1995; Henerson, Morris, & Fitz-Gibbon, 1987; May, 2011). In addition, an ‘equal semantic distance’ between adjacent choices for each pre-established response was also recommended by Cox and Cox (2008). Based on these recommendations, the participants in the current study were asked to tick the relevant box from four boxes placed between a pair of opposite concepts, ‘*A lot*’ and ‘*Not at all*’. Moreover, as suggested by Rea and Parker (2014), an alternative of ‘*Don’t know*’ was added to the fixed-response format in order to reduce the risk of any participant not being able to detect the subtle distinctions between the pre-established responses. The respondents were able to tick this option if they had no idea about a particular internationalisation policy and practice.

The questionnaire was developed with two main sections: (1) the internationalisation policies and practices which were identified at the institutional level; and (2) the implementation of internationalisation practices which were supposed to take place at unit level, including faculties, centres, and departments. In addition, there was a section on background information of participants, which helped provide additional demographic information on the policy implementers at the key university (see Appendix I and Appendix J).

Three questions were included in the background section providing demographic information of the participants. That was followed by Section 1, with 22 questions investigating the extent to which the implementation of internationalisation policies and practices had taken place at the university level as a whole. Questions in Section 1 were completed by both the academics and administrators. However, Section 2 had two separate versions – one for the academics and one for the administrators. For the academics, Section 2 had 28 questions relating to the extent to which internationalisation policies and practices had been implemented in their units. For the administrators, Section 2 focused on finding out the extent of their support for the implementation of internationalisation. This Section 2 included: 19 questions applied for all administrative units, and 9 questions for management unit(s) related to international cooperation activities which were the most frequently observed in the

2010-2015 internationalisation period from the university documents and interviews to the senior leaders.

#### *Questionnaire trial*

Trialling the questionnaire was necessary, as suggested by Fink (2013) and Fowler (2014). With this in mind, the researcher sent the questionnaire (both English and Vietnamese versions) to one Vietnamese PhD student and two staff at the key university to try it out and gain feedback, before the final version of the questionnaire was administered. It was suggested in the feedback that the translation of technical terms related to internationalisation should take into consideration the Vietnamese university context, and the need to find appropriate Vietnamese words and expressions. Therefore, the researcher adopted terms and expressions, which were found in university documents, in wording questions in the questionnaire.

#### **3.7.2. Data collection tools in Phase Two**

Two data collection tools were used in Phase Two: document analysis with regard to tools for evaluating internationalisation in different international contexts; and focus groups in which the policy implementers at the key university could elaborate on how international evaluation dimensions could be used in developing a framework for evaluating internationalisation in their context.

##### *Document analysis*

In Phase Two, document analysis was used to review existing evaluation tools for internationalisation. Stufflebeam and Coryn (2014) have suggested that a literature review can be used in evaluation as an additional method of document analysis, which can help the researcher to identify and examine the tools used in similar evaluations in order to plan an evaluation. In this study, the review of relevant literature on evaluation tools for institutional internationalisation helped the researcher to identify dimensions and criteria frequently used in different countries. Those dimensions could then be adapted for the context of a Vietnamese public university. The researcher first conducted an analysis and synthesis of the information from international studies of evaluation tools for internationalisation. This knowledge was then combined with the local knowledge from the policy implementers in focus groups, as suggested by Stufflebeam and Coryn (2014). This process aimed at answering the research question

regarding the contextual factors taken into account in developing a set of criteria for evaluating the internationalisation effort.

### ***Focus groups***

Focus groups were used in Phase Two to allow the researcher to discuss with the policy implementers their considerations with regard to dimensions which could be applicable for evaluating internationalisation at their university. Focus group discussion is a special type of interview, which is used to obtain in-depth qualitative information from a group of individuals on a topic about which little is known (Ary et al., 2013; Creswell, 2012; Fitzpatrick et al., 2012; Stewart, Shamdasani, & Rook, 2009). The advantage of focus groups is that participants “not only respond to the researcher but also to other participants and their responses” (Ary et al., 2013, p. 408). The interaction in focus groups conducted in this study enabled the researcher and the policy implementers to confirm or disconfirm their ideas regarding internationalisation and evaluating internationalisation at the planning stage of developing evaluation criteria, as suggested by Fitzpatrick et al. (2012). In addition, focus groups helped the researcher gather a range of suggestions for the initial framework of dimensions in developing a contextualised set of evaluation criteria, as suggested by Stewart et al. (2009) and Patton (2008).

#### *Preparation for focus groups*

As recommended by Stewart, Shamdasani, and Rook (2007), a focus group is not meant to be a ‘freewheeling conversation’, but needs a clear focus and identifiable agenda. The focus group guiding questions in Phase Two, therefore, were developed on the basis of results gained from Phase One and the analysis of evaluation tools for internationalisation in different contexts (see Appendix K).

It has also been suggested that a focus group can be the most effective when participating members share a common interest (Fitzpatrick et al., 2012). In this study, therefore, the researcher decided to divide the participating policy implementers into two groups with common interests: administrators and academics. This decision was supported by the significant difference in their responses to the questionnaire in Phase One, which is discussed in Chapter 4.

One limitation of focus groups is that participants can be challenged by the power dynamics because a powerful participant can influence other opinions (Marshall &

Rossmann, 2016). Therefore, it was appropriate that focus groups in this study were conducted among the policy implementers without the participation of senior leaders, who were in power positions.

#### Conducting focus groups

There were three focus groups organised among the 20 academics and administrators at the key university. As suggested by Hennink, Bailey, and Hutter (2010) and Stewart et al. (2007), each focus group was composed of between six to 12 participants in order to help the researcher facilitate it in the most effective way. These writers also suggested that recruiting more participants than required for each group discussion could help the researcher to avoid the risk of absent participants. Therefore, the researcher decided to organise three focus groups for the twenty participants, with each comprising six to eight participants. There were seven academics in Focus group 1, five academics in Focus group 2 and eight administrators in Focus group 3.

The focus groups were conducted during lunch time in order to get the maximum number of participants, since the policy implementers were not able to be available during working hours. The focus groups were held at meeting rooms in the university. Each focus group took about one and a half hours. Vietnamese was used during the focus groups to enable the participants to express their perspectives in the most effective manner. An mp3 recorder was used to record the discussions after gaining informed consent from all participants. Key points from the recorded focus groups were transcribed to identify the participants' viewpoints regarding internationalisation and evaluating internationalisation in their context. This procedure enabled the development of an initial framework of evaluation dimensions. After each focus group, a final consensus on dimensions used for evaluating their internationalisation process was reached, as recommended by Ary et al. (2013).

#### **3.7.3. Data collection tools in Phase Three**

Two data collection tools were used in Phase Three: a newly developed questionnaire and further focus groups. After administering the questionnaire at the key university and the two supplementary universities, focus groups were organised with the policy implementers at the key university in order to assess the relevance of criteria provided in the questionnaire.

### ***Questionnaire***

The questionnaire in Phase Three was different from that used in Phase One. The questionnaire in Phase Three comprised a comprehensive set of questions which were linked to the evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at the key university. This set of evaluation criteria was presented under the framework of dimensions which were identified in the Phase Two focus groups. These evaluation criteria were developed from the researcher's analysis of the international literature and also local perspectives regarding internationalisation, as advocated by Cox and Cox (2008) to ensure the content validity. The administration of this questionnaire aimed to ascertain the applicability of evaluation criteria in different dimensions for examining internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university.

In addition to the key university, the questionnaire was piloted at the other two supplementary universities, in order to examine the commonality of evaluation criteria that were relevant beyond the key university. At the two supplementary universities, this questionnaire was accompanied by some additional background questions.

### ***Questionnaire development***

The Phase Three questionnaire used closed questions to facilitate comparisons among responses, as advocated by May (2011) and Rea and Parker (2014). The closed questions also helped to limit extraneous and irrelevant responses, as advised by Rea and Parker (2014), because it was the first time that a set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation had been introduced at a Vietnamese public university. The questions and responses were, therefore, devised systematically in terms of structure and expression. In that way they represented evaluation criteria while at the same time paying consideration to utilising simple wording and avoiding complex terminology, as suggested by Cox and Cox (2008) and May (2011).

There were two types of closed questions used in this questionnaire. The first type used a fixed list of alternatives for a single criterion. The second type utilised Yes-No questions. However, in order to avoid the risk in closed questions that participants tend to choose the 'closest representation' of their actual response, as suggested Cox and Cox (2008), two other alternatives were added in the fixed-response formats. These include '*Other, please specify*', for the questions with a fixed list of alternatives, and '*Not sure*' for Yes-No questions.

The questionnaire included two parts (see Appendix M). The first part of Background information had six questions designed to explore the contemporary context of internationalisation in the two supplementary universities. The second part was made up of 36 questions which investigated 10 key dimensions and three additional questions for miscellaneous items.

#### *Questionnaire trial*

According to Fink (2013) and Fowler (2014), pre-testing the questionnaire is necessary. However, this questionnaire was designed to represent a set of evaluation criteria and its administration was a large-scale pilot that would be revised later. Therefore, the trial of the questionnaire before actual administration was conducted on a small scale in order to identify technical issues including word usage, question structure and information consistency, as recommended by Fink (2013). The researcher asked a colleague at the key university and a Vietnamese PhD student in the same office to try out the questionnaire. The feedback was that appropriate consideration should be given to finding words and expressions in Vietnamese language so that it would not be misleading to participants, especially as they were responding to this kind of evaluation items for the first time. Feedback was also received about the comprehensiveness of the questionnaire which required a significant amount of time to respond properly. An amendment was made to the ethics procedure regarding the provision of small gifts for participants in recognition of their time and effort spent on the questionnaire.

#### ***Focus groups***

While the same procedure for organising focus groups as in Phase Two was applied, the purpose of the focus groups in Phase Three was different. In this phase, focus groups were conducted as a follow-up activity after the administration of the questionnaire, a procedure suggested by Rea and Parker (2014) and Stewart et al. (2009), in order to validate the relevance of the evaluation criteria for studying the internationalisation effort at the key university,

#### *Preparation for focus groups*

The focus groups in Phase Three were organised with the policy implementers at the key university, who participated in Phase Two. After Phase Two focus groups, both the academics and administrators showed their openness and constructive attitude to the evaluation of their internationalisation effort. Therefore, in Phase Three, they were

invited to attend any one of the three focus groups that suited their schedules. Based on the procedure followed in organising focus groups in Phase Two, the senior leaders were not invited to participate but were kept updated after the results were gained.

The guiding questions used in Phase Three focus groups were developed on the basis of results of the questionnaire that was previously administered at the key university and the two supplementary universities. The questions in the focus groups focused on examining and explaining any differences in questionnaire responses (see Appendix N). The participants were asked to talk about their experiences of, or reactions to the criteria used in the questionnaire, the barriers they faced as well as changes they would like to make, as recommended by Fitzpatrick et al. (2012). These focus groups helped the researcher identify issues that might arise when this set of evaluation criteria was used for examining internationalisation at the key university.

#### Conducting focus groups

The same procedures for conducting the focus groups in Phase Two were adopted in Phase Three, regarding the time slot, venue, duration, language use, and recording. There were three focus groups organized among the 18 academics and administrators showing up at three scheduled dates at the key university. There were five administrators in Focus group 1, five academics in Focus group 2 and a mixture of eight academics and administrators in Focus group 3. The data resulting from these focus groups contributed to the final consensus on the specific relevance of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at the key university.

### **3.8. Data analysis**

In this study, the analysis of data was conducted on an ongoing basis because the data from one phase was to be used as a basis for collecting data in the following phases. The study involved both qualitative and quantitative analyses. The qualitative data were collected from university documents, interview results, and focus groups results in three phases of the study. The quantitative data were collected from the two questionnaires in Phase One and Phase Three. Further discussion on the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data in phases is presented below.

### **3.8.1. Analysis of qualitative data**

The analysis of qualitative data from this study involved a thematic analysis approach, as suggested by Bryman (2016) and Patton (2015). According to Bryman (2016), qualitative data analysis is like “finding a path through the thicket of prose” (p. 565), in which searching for themes is a discerning activity. Patton (2015) has also considered themes to be the core meanings found through a content analysis. In thematic analysis, a theme is defined as: (1) a category identified by the researcher through her data; (2) that relates to her research focus (research questions); (3) that builds on codes identified in transcripts and notes; and (4) that provides the researcher with the basis for a theoretical understanding of her data (Bryman, 2016, p. 580). In the current study, the thematic analysis was based on themes identified by the researcher through her previous review of literature on internationalisation and evaluation of internationalisation. These themes were also correlated to themes identified in transcripts of interviews and focus groups at the key university in order to provide answers to the research questions throughout the study.

#### ***Analysis of Phase One university documents***

The document sources in the first phase consisted of printed documents and electronic documents from the official website of the key university. These documents were classified into two groups, including development strategies and annual reports of the university for the period of 2010-2015. While the strategic development strategies revealed policies regarding aspects of internationalisation, the annual reports could indicate about the actual internationalisation practices.

In analysing the data from university documents in Phase One, the objectives of exploring the institutional interpretation and implementation of internationalisation were kept in the foreground throughout this process. The data collected from university documents related to university policies and practices with regard to internationalisation. These data were collated and categorised so as to facilitate the understanding of the institutional context in which the internationalisation effort fitted. The data from documents were then organised under key themes related to institutional perceptions of internationalisation, position of internationalisation in institutional development, institutional organisational support, and the implementation of internationalisation in different dimensions. In addition, the advice by May (2011) and

Rapley (2007), that exploring a text does not mean just looking at what it contains but also what it leaves out, was also heeded. After investigating what was left out in the university documents, the researcher was able to consider any significant gaps in the data in the following interviews with the senior leaders.

### ***Analysis of Phase One interviews***

The data collected from interviews were firstly coded with the pseudonym of the participant and the time and date of data collection. As interviews served as a source to merge with the data collected from document analysis and the following questionnaire, transcribing these data was a priority task. Transcripts from interviews were organised and sent to the senior leaders so as to provide them with an opportunity to edit and confirm whether their meaning and intent were correctly understood, as suggested by Marshall and Rossman (2016). This process is also required by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (2016). The senior leaders then signed the form providing Transcript Release Authority (see Appendix G).

The analysis of interview data involved three steps. The first step related to organising these data. That step also required the researcher to read and reread the notes and transcripts and listen repeatedly to audiotapes to become familiar with the data and identify potential themes, as suggested by Ary et al. (2013). The second recommended step involved coding and refining the researcher's understanding of the subject matter (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2016). The data were then scrutinized and attached meaning on the basis of the key themes which were applied in the analysis of university documents, as well as emerging sub-themes which filled in any gaps identified from the initial document analysis. This process facilitated constructing a framework to communicate the essence of what the data revealed about the context of internationalisation at the key university, as suggested by Patton (2015) and Taylor et al. (2016).

### ***Analysis of Phase Two documents***

In Phase Two, the analysis of international literature on evaluation tools for internationalisation was also conducted using the thematic analysis approach. This approach was adopted to identify the common dimensions and key criteria used for evaluating institutional internationalisation. Different from the analysis of university documents in Phase One, the analysis of international evaluation tools in the literature

required the examination and interpretation of data in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge, as suggested by Bowen (2009) and Corbin and Strauss (2015). A careful review was then conducted following chronological order from the earliest tools to the latest tools in different countries. In addition to the identification of key common dimensions and criteria, the analysis also provided an understanding of the contexts, the methods, and the structure on which the international evaluation tools had been developed for examining institutional internationalisation. The findings from this analysis were subsequently used to build a framework of dimensions and key criteria for evaluating internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university.

#### ***Analysis of Phase Two and Phase Three focus groups***

The analysis of focus group results is determined by the purpose for which the data are collected (Stewart et al., 2009). In light of thematic analysis approach, the analysis of data collected from focus groups aimed at identifying the key themes related to the particular research focus in Phase Two and Phase Three.

In Phase Two, the purpose of conducting focus groups was to gain the views of the policy implementers regarding internationally applicable dimensions that were considered to be relevant in evaluating internationalisation in their context. Therefore, the analysis of focus group results in this phase emphasised identifying prioritised dimensions, as well as different considerations among the policy implementers regarding these dimensions, in developing the initial framework for a set of evaluation criteria. A sample of the initial analysis for focus group transcription in Vietnamese is included in Appendix L. This sample shows the various concerns of the policy implementers regarding dimensions used for developing an evaluation framework for internationalisation in their context.

In Phase Three, the focus groups aimed at exploring further considerations of the policy implementers at the key university regarding the relevance of evaluation criteria, piloted in the previous questionnaire, to study their internationalisation. Therefore, the analysis of focus group results in this phase focused on identifying factors influencing the relevance of specific criteria that might be applicable at the key university.

The same process of analysing the data was applied for both the focus groups in Phase Two and Phase Three. For the first step in analysing the data, the researcher read and

reread the notes and transcripts, listened repeatedly to audiotapes to become familiar with the data, and identified potential themes, as suggested by Ary et al. (2013). The second data analysis step involved coding and refining the researcher's understanding of the focus group content in terms of key themes (Taylor et al., 2016). In the final step, data were scrutinized and attached meaning regarding the essence of what was revealed in accordance with the purposes of the focus group, as advised by Taylor et al. (2016).

### **3.8.2. Analysis of quantitative data**

An exploratory data analysis was used for the quantitative data in the current study, as suggested by Cohen et al. (2011). According to these researchers, this form of analysis is most closely concerned with seeing what the data themselves suggest. In the current study, the quantitative data in Phase One were expected to provide information about the availability of internationalisation policies and practices at both institutional and unit levels at the key university. In Phase Three of the study, the quantitative data were expected to reveal the availability of specific internationalisation practices under the specific dimensions that were evaluated. These data were descriptive, as defined by Cohen et al. (2011). The frequencies, percentages, and graphical presentation of the resulting descriptive SPSS statistics were used to explore the quantitative data in Phase One and Phase Three.

#### *Analysis of Phase One questionnaire*

In Phase One, cross-tabulation analysis was employed to present the quantitative data from Section 1 of the questionnaire, with regard to the viewpoints of academics and administrators towards internationalisation policies and practices at institutional level. Combining categories was useful in showing the general trends of responding, as suggested by Cohen et al. (2011), between the academics and the administrators at the key university. For the quantitative data from Section 2 of the questionnaire, frequencies were used to identify the trends of implementing internationalisation practices at academic and administrative units respectively. These data were used together with the results of university document analysis and interviews with the senior leaders to provide a comprehensive picture of internationalisation context at the key university.

### ***Analysis of Phase Three questionnaire***

In Phase Three, cross-tabulation analysis of the questionnaire data was used to demonstrate the trends of responding among the three universities, including the key university and the two supplementary universities, with regard to the availability of internationalisation practices examined in the questionnaire. These data were then presented in graphs in order to visually emphasise differences among these universities. These findings were subsequently presented for further discussion in the follow-up focus groups.

### **3.9. Role of researcher**

The process of developing a contextualised set of criteria for evaluating internationalisation at the Vietnamese public university required the researcher to collaborate closely with participants, as suggested by Chouinard and Cousins (2012). In discussing the stance of the researcher vis-à-vis participants, Merriam and Tisdell (2016) mention the importance of being a “collaborative partner” (p.145). This role is defined as being the closest to being a complete insider on the insider-outsider continuum, which often occurs when the investigator’s identity is clearly known to everyone involved (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In facilitating the tool development process in this study, the researcher considered her role was positioned in the middle of the insider-outsider continuum, as suggested in this process by Merriam and Tisdell (2016) and Patton (2015). The movement along this insider-outsider continuum can be seen in the way the researcher took up roles in each phase presented below.

#### **3.9.1. In Phase One**

Phase One involved setting the scene for the study. In this phase, the researcher made use of her knowledge as an insider who worked at the key university for more than 10 years, as well as her experience of working in an international education area and at university management level for more than 5 years. In this sense, the researcher was familiar with the institutional setting, people, and possible issues related to internationalisation at the university. The researcher was also able to approach senior leaders and heads of faculties, departments, and centres without difficulty.

However, in conducting the analysis of university documents and interviews with representatives of senior leaders, the researcher kept moving across the insider-outsider continuum, as suggested by Merriam and Tisdell (2016). Despite having close

affiliation with the key university, the researcher had the opportunity to be in a different academic setting in her doctoral study. With this different standing as an outsider, the researcher conducted an intensive review of literature on internationalisation, which guided the analysis of university documents, and in preparing questions for the interviews with the senior leaders, and questionnaire to the policy implementers. In providing questions and probes during the interviews with the senior leaders in Phase One, the researcher moved back from the extreme role of an insider in order to ensure that the senior leaders talked openly about their internationalisation policies and practices. Still, the fact that the researcher's identity was clearly known to the senior leaders indicated there was a collaborative partnership, which made the senior leaders feel safe to talk freely.

### **3.9.2. In Phase Two**

In Phase Two, the facilitating role of researcher was significant in focus group discussions, when the collaborative relationship needed to be strengthened with the participants, as suggested by Chouinard and Cousins (2012). In the position of a focus group facilitator, the researcher needed to balance her role between considering what is important to participants and what is important to the study itself, as noted by Fitzpatrick et al. (2012), Rubin and Rubin (2012) and Stewart et al. (2009). In focus groups with the policy implementers, the researcher managed to have them talk openly about the internationalisation policies and practices at the university while also monitoring the time and ensuring that critical questions were covered. During the focus groups, the researcher was comfortable with the role of an insider working with the participating policy implementers who knew the researcher well. This position created a comfortable and safe atmosphere for participants. They not only voiced their own views but also showed their agreement or disagreement with other participants in the discussion. However, the researcher sometimes purposely positioned herself as more of an outsider, by sharing the literature knowledge related to internationalisation in order to lead the participants in effective reflection on similar issues at their university.

### **3.9.3. In Phase Three**

In Phase Three, the researcher's task was to develop the initial set of evaluation criteria for the pilot, and to conduct focus groups with the representatives of the policy implementers in order to assess the relevance of the developed criteria.

In constructing the set of evaluation criteria in the form of the questionnaire, the researcher took the role as both outsider and insider. As an outsider looking at the context of a Vietnamese public university, the researcher incorporated the results collected from Phase Two with the examination of literature on evaluation tools for institutional internationalisation in different contexts. This enabled her to develop specific criteria which were considered relevant for evaluating internationalisation in the context of the Vietnamese public university. However, in developing questions and responses for the questionnaire and dealing with terms and language used in the questionnaire, the researcher took on the role of an insider in order to consider the appropriate language expressions and structures so that they were contextually relevant and comprehensible to those who provided responses to the questionnaire.

In facilitating focus groups in the final phase, the researcher took the role of a complete insider. In these focus groups, she aimed at listening to feedback and comments from the policy implementers at the key university regarding the relevance of evaluation criteria piloted in the questionnaire. As suggested by Stewart et al. (2009), the researcher needs to find a balance between what is important to participants and what is important to the study. However, in the current study the researcher had a commitment to encouraging the use of study findings by the policy implementers who participated in Phase Two focus groups, and also came to Phase Three focus groups. Therefore, it was decided that there was a similar concern between the researcher and participants with regard to the relevance of these criteria to their specific context. Being a complete insider, who had been a member of the key university, was an appropriate role for the researcher at this stage. This position was also intended not to disrupt the natural activity of the group, as advised by Merriam and Tisdell (2016).

### **3.10. Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations are an important part of any research process. A consideration of these issues serves to reduce the likelihood of harm being experienced by anyone involved in the research process (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2015). This study adhered to the Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants (MUCEC). In discussion with the supervisors, the research was judged as ‘low risk’ by meeting the guidelines as set out in the Massey University Human Ethics Screening Questionnaire. An application to Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC) for a low risk notification was

approved for the study procedures. The application was submitted with required documents including the Screening Questionnaire, the Information Sheet, the Consent Form, and the Authority for Release of Transcripts. An amendment was also submitted regarding the token and gifts for participants in Phase Three of the study. This was in keeping with the cultural norm of the research context. Receipt of the research proposal was recorded by MUHEC in October 2015 with the Ethics Notification Number of 4000015082.

The data collection process in this study took account of MUHEC's ethical principles including informed and voluntary consent, and respect for privacy and confidentiality (Massey University Human Ethics Committee, 2016). How these principles were applied is described below.

### **3.10.1. Informed and voluntary consent**

Full information about the study was given to all participants. At the key university, the written information sheets were given to the senior leaders and policy implementers participating in the study. At the two supplementary universities, the written information sheets were first sent to the president and vice president with whom the researcher had initial communication about the research. That information sheet was then sent to all respondents together with the questionnaires in both electronic and paper versions, following the university leaders' notification of the survey to be conducted at the two universities. In addition, clear contact details were provided to participants of both the researcher and her supervisors in case participants wished to clarify anything about the research.

The participation of the universities and their staff was voluntary. Before the project started at the key university, the researcher sent the university president the Project Information Sheets in MUHEC format and an official letter asking for permission to conduct the research. Afterwards, Project Information Sheets and Consent forms for interviews and focus groups, in MUHEC format, were sent to the representatives of senior leaders and representatives of policy implementers, inviting them to participate in the study. Those who agreed to participate all returned the signed consent forms to the researcher. The forms providing Authority to Release Transcripts were later sent to and signed by the senior leaders, after they had an opportunity to review the transcripts.

In relation to interviews and focus groups, the participants were also given opportunities to discuss the details of the research and ask any questions before participating.

The principle of informed consent also includes the avoidance of unnecessary deception. All participants were given truthful and full information regarding the purposes and procedures of this research project.

### **3.10.2. Confidentiality**

For the purpose of this research, the term *confidentiality* was used to mean that the identities of those participants who engaged in discussion with the researcher and participants were not shared publicly, as suggested by Cohen et al. (2011). In this study, although the researcher knew who provided the information, or was able to identify participants from the information given and recorded during the interviews or focus groups, it was important that these identities were not shared with the public. In this study, the confidentiality was also maintained between the two different groups of institutional stakeholders, academics and administrators. Specifically, this study involved the policy implementers in commenting on their university's internationalisation policies and practices. Therefore, the protection of their identity was important in later reports to the senior leaders.

Translation of any documents used for the purpose of this study was undertaken by the researcher. As not all university documents are open to the public, the researcher consulted the university president before accessing any information source, and guaranteed to safeguard the rights of anyone associated with the information, as suggested by Stufflebeam and Coryn (2014).

## **3.11. Summary**

This chapter has described the evaluation approaches, research methods, tools, and procedures implemented in this study. The sections in the chapter covered the existing evaluation approaches used in supporting the development of a contextualised set of criteria for evaluating internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university; the relevance of evaluation research and methods to the study; the research design which included a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods; the three phases in the research procedure; and the data collection tools and analysis process in each phase of the study. The chapter concluded by describing the researcher's role and how specific ethical issues involved in the study were addressed.

In the following chapters, Chapter Four, Chapter Five, and Chapter Six, findings for each phase of the study are presented respectively. The presentation of findings is guided by the three questions.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PHASE ONE FINDINGS**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, the findings from Phase One of the study are presented to provide a picture of the context of internationalisation at the key university. Findings from this phase directly address the first two research questions. The findings in this phase were merged from three sources of data including university documents, interviews with the senior leaders, and questionnaires filled by the policy implementers at the key university. The chapter begins by presenting the demographic information of the policy implementers. The next section will move on to the findings on different interpretations of internationalisation identified at the key university. The chapter will continue with the findings on how internationalisation was positioned in the institutional development. The findings on the organisational support to internationalisation are then presented. These are followed by the findings on the implementation of internationalisation practices in different dimensions. In the final section of the chapter, a summary of key findings from Phase One of the study is provided.

#### **4.2. Demographic information of the policy implementers**

There were a total of 26 responses to the questionnaires in Phase One at the key university. These included 14 academic policy implementers (*academics*) and 11 administrative policy implementers (*administrators*). By the time the survey was conducted in 2016, a majority of these policy implementers (12 academics and 9 administrators) had been working at the key university for more than 10 years. The other five had been employed between 2-5 years and 6-10 years. This information indicates that they were all able to witness the implementation of internationalisation at the key university. In addition, 12 academics said that they had obtained doctoral qualifications and had studied overseas. There were also four out of 11 administrators who had doctoral qualifications, and six administrators had studied overseas.

#### **4.3. Interpretations of internationalisation at the key university**

How internationalisation was perceived at the key university during the period from 2010 to 2015 was initially examined by analysing the Development Plan document for

2010-2015. These initial findings were then further clarified by the data from the interviews with the senior leaders.

The internationalisation perspective at the key university was represented by the term *international standards* in university documents. This key term was first alluded to in the Mission Statement of the key university. The Mission of the key university stated that:

*“The university is to contribute to the national development by training highly-qualified human resources through the improvement of research, and provision of educational products and services to international standards”* (Key University, 2010, p. 1)

This mission statement was further supported by more specific targets of “becoming a regionally [ASEAN] reputed research university in foreign language education” and “providing education programs of international standards” in the Development Plan for the 2010-2015 period (Key University, 2010, p. 6). This finding indicates that the key university had a commitment to internationalisation, with the focus being on bringing their education and research to *international standards*.

The analysis of this Development Plan also indicated that the commitment tended to be driven by a contextual factor, the national development. This was relevant to the task defined for Vietnamese higher education system in the Law on Education in 2009 and the Law on Higher Education in 2012. These laws state that Vietnamese higher education institutions were expected to “provide human resources for the national requirements of socio-economic development, security and international integration” (Vietnam National Assembly, 2012, p. 2).

How these initial indications of internationalisation in the key university were implemented in practice was clarified by the senior leaders during the interviews. According to the interviewed senior leaders, the movement towards international standards at their university involved increasing domestic students’ knowledge levels; improving professional quality among domestic staff; and international integration with consideration to local identity. Each of these views is examined in more detail below.

#### **4.3.1. Internationalisation means increasing domestic students' knowledge levels**

In considering internationalisation as an increase in domestic students' knowledge levels, the senior leaders appeared to affirm a focus on domestic education programs in the university's internationalisation efforts. The SL4 gave a personalised explanation of their contemporary internationalisation:

*"We have recently provided new courses with international perspectives such as western civilization, ASEAN culture. The inclusion of these courses helped to narrow the knowledge gap between our students and students elsewhere in the world. As a student, you can't integrate yourself into the world outside if your knowledge is not at the same level with the others. That is what internationalisation means to us." (SL4)*

According to this senior leader, provision of new courses with international perspectives was significant evidence of the internationalisation effort. In addition, the interviews with the other senior leaders also revealed a number of practices which were considered as a part of the internationalisation of domestic education programs. For example, "*the provision of more elective courses in recently revised education programs*" and "*the import of more new textbooks and reference books from foreign publishers over this 5 year period*" were mentioned as a part of this process by SL2 and SL1 respectively.

#### **4.3.2. Internationalisation means improving professional competence of domestic staff**

The improvement of professional competence among domestic staff, including both academic and administrative staff, was another interpretation for implementing *international standards* in the internationalisation effort at the key university. In further discussing this view of internationalisation, SL4 stated that:

*"Internationalisation is a kind of higher standard that a university like us wishes to achieve. That is not only applied to education programs but also different aspects, particularly, the professional competence of our staff" (SL4)*

In elaborating on this statement, this senior leader added that "*having academic staff with doctoral qualifications*" and "*having professional administrative skills*" were the standards that the university aimed for with regard to the domestic staff. These words reveal that there appeared to be an evolution in the way the internationalisation concept

was interpreted by this senior leader. That shows the expanded scope covered in the internationalisation effort, from education programs to other dimensions, particularly human resources.

#### **4.3.3. Internationalisation means international integration with attention to cultural identity**

The interpretation of “*international integration for wider recognition with attention to [Vietnamese] cultural identity*” (SL1) implies that internationalisation was seen as an improvement of the university’s operation regarding both international recognition and national cultural identity. According to this senior leader, “*there are shared standards such as knowledge level and education quality*” that the key university needed to achieve for “*being recognised in the world academic community*.” In mentioning shared standards and world recognition, this senior leader considered internationalisation at the key university as a process to achieve those shared standards. However, this interpretation also includes a concern about maintaining a sense of cultural identity as an important aspect of the internationalisation process. The experience of working with Japanese partners was mentioned by this senior leader as an example:

*“We have been working with Japanese universities, we are aware of how we have to be different from Japanese people. That is our special identity which we should consider in internationalisation.” (SL1)*

This viewpoint indicates an awareness of the tension in developing an international identity while maintaining the particular national identity. In quoting a popular motto of ‘*think globally, act locally*’ in opening the interview about institutional strategy for internationalisation, SL4 raised a similar viewpoint regarding this tension. These comments indicate that the senior leaders were aware of both promoting internationalisation and persevering cultural identity at their university. SL1 also added that the tension between promoting international perspectives and sustaining cultural identity was discussed in the institutional annual meeting for their five-year development plan to 2020 more than it had been in the period between 2010 and 2015.

The senior leaders gave different interpretations of internationalisation. However, they shared two fundamental viewpoints regarding their internationalisation. Firstly, internationalisation involved the process of lifting operational dimensions of the university to a higher level to be on an “*equal playing field*” (SL4). Secondly, provision

of human resources for national development was referred to as the rationale for the internationalisation by all senior leaders during the interviews.

#### **4.4. Position of internationalisation in institutional development**

As acknowledged by SL4, internationalisation was “*not yet at the centre of the institutional development in practice*” between 2010 and 2015. That internationalisation practices in institutional dimensions were not consistently reported in the university’s Annual Reports supported this viewpoint. This view was also demonstrated by the different responses of the policy implementers in the questionnaire regarding the position of internationalisation in development strategy *at institutional level* (see Figure 4.1), and *at the unit level* (see Figure 4.2).



*Figure 4.1: Responses of Academics and Administrators on position of internationalisation in development strategy at institutional level*

As can be seen from Figure 4.1, both academics and administrators had relatively positive responses with regard to the position of internationalisation in development strategy *at institutional level*. For example, in responding to Q1S1 about the inclusion of international goals in institutional development strategy, a majority of academics and administrators (73% respectively) reported that international goals were included in the vision and mission of the university “to some extent”. Similar positive responses from

both of these two groups were also found for Q2S1 and Q3S1 regarding the priority to and planning for implementing internationalisation *at institutional level*.

However, the academics appeared to be less positive than administrators regarding the positioning of internationalisation *at the unit level*.

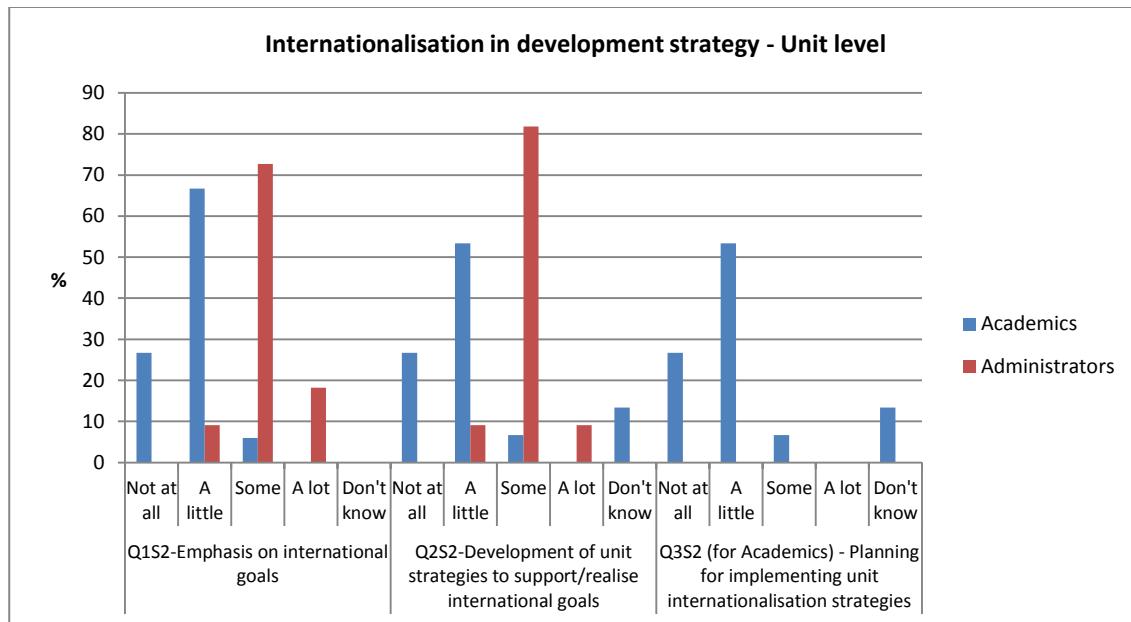


Figure 4.2: Responses of Academics and Administrators on position of internationalisation in development strategy at the unit level (Q3S2: This question is for Academics only)

As can be seen from Figure 4.2, in responding to the question about the emphasis on international goals in their unit's development strategy (Q1S2), the number of administrators (73%) selecting "to some extent" stood out significantly in comparison to that of academics (7%). Similarly, a larger percentage (82%) of administrators said that their units developed plans for supporting internationalisation strategies "to some extent" at their unit (Q2S2) in contrast to only 7% of academics. On the other hand, more of the academics' responses for these two questions (Q1S2 and Q2S2) were clustered around "a little" (67% and 53% respectively) and "not at all" (27% respectively).

These findings indicate that the policy implementers, overall, perceived that the implementation of internationalisation had been included to some extent during the 5 year period of 2010-2015 *at institutional level*. However, *at the unit level*, the academics did not think this had been included in their unit's annual planning as much as the administrators. This is a paradox since academic activities appeared to be the focus as indicated by the interpretations of internationalisation. The difference in

responses between the academics and administrators, however, might explain the fact that they were all “*in a process of self-awareness*” regarding internationalisation, as mentioned by SL4.

## **4.5. Organisational support for internationalisation**

The organisational support for internationalisation was not yet clearly defined for the period of 2010-2015 at the key university. The analysis of university documents did not indicate how the support for internationalisation was organised. However, the findings from the interviews with the senior leaders and questionnaires completed by the policy implementers reveal how internationalisation practices were coordinated as well as the administrative support system for these practices.

### **4.5.1. Coordination of internationalisation practices**

The coordination of internationalisation practices did not appear to be systematically formulated at the key university. According to SL2 and SL4, the key university “*did not have a particular plan for coordinating the internationalisation effort or have a separate unit to manage this process*”. It was also noted by SL4 that they had just started to have tasks related to internationalisation “*defined for specific units as an extension of their traditional functions and responsibilities since 2015*”. This change was further indicated in different responses of the academics and administrators regarding these issues ***at institutional level*** and ***at the unit level***.

***At institutional level***, the academics and administrators had roughly similar responses regarding the existence of organisational support for internationalisation. Both academics and administrators reported that the university had defined the internationalisation tasks in functions and responsibilities of related units “to some extent” (40% and 64% respectively); and had “to some extent” developed coordination among related units (67% and 55% respectively).

However, ***at the unit level***, more administrators believed that they had been involved “to some extent” in organisational support to internationalisation than the academics (see Figure 4.3).

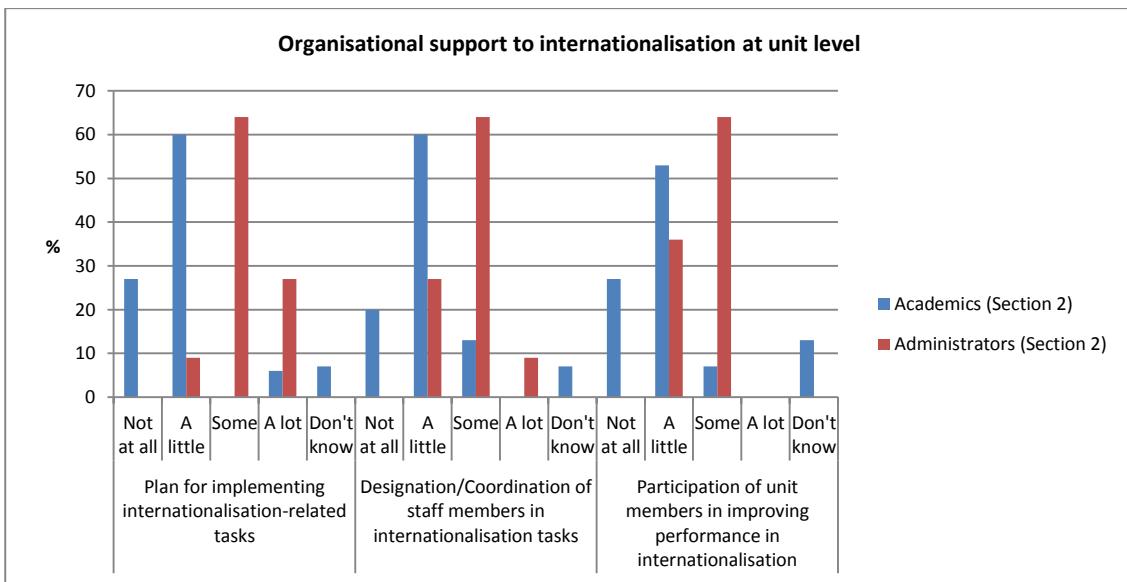


Figure 4.3: Views of Academics and Administrators on the organisational support to internationalisation at unit level

As can be seen from Figure 4.3, most of the administrators (64%) agreed that their units had been involved to “some extent” in two activities of: (1) planning for implementation of designating/coordinating their staff in internationalisation-related activities; and (2) having their staff participate in performance improvement regarding internationalisation. In contrast, most responses from the academics (60%) fell into the “a little” option regarding these two activities.

The inconsistent responses among the academics and administrators indicate that the coordinating structure for internationalisation at the key university might not have been thoroughly translated from the institutional level to unit level. The difference might also correspond to the fact mentioned by SL4, that only relevant units were involved in internationalisation practices.

#### **4.5.2. Administrative support system**

Between 2010 and 2015, the role of the administrative support system in the internationalisation effort was identified to be significant in international cooperation; however, the professional performance of the administrative staff was raised as an issue in this process. These aspects are explained further below.

##### ***Administrative support in international cooperation***

Although international cooperation was recognised as an “*important indicator for internationalisation*” (SL1), this aspect tended to involve more the administrative

procedures at the key university. Through the analysis of Annual Reports, specific activities were reported, such as signing agreements with international universities, organising international conferences, organising overseas exchange programs, and hosting international visitors. However, not all of these activities were consistently reported across the years between 2010 and 2015. The findings imply that these practices seemed to be a collection of administrative tasks rather than demonstrating a proactive plan for international cooperation.

The interview and questionnaire findings also indicate that international cooperation mainly involved reactive administrative work in supporting internationalisation. It was acknowledged by SL1 and SL2 that “*international cooperation activities have been undertaken mostly by academic faculties without prior planning*”. In addition, these two senior leaders mentioned that the international cooperation unit “*just do what they are told to do and [focus on] the paperwork*”. This viewpoint was supported by the responses from the academics. A large number of academics (67%) agreed that international cooperation contributed “to some extent” to the realisation of **institutional-level** internationalisation goals (Q22-Section 1). However, **at the unit level**, the academics responded “a little” (47%) and “not at all” (27%) regarding the contribution that international cooperation had made to their internationalisation practices (Q28-Section 2).

In addition, the administrators also had positive responses regarding the administrative support to international cooperation activities. For example, regarding the contribution to the improvement of services provided to international students (Q10-Section 2), 64% of the administrators reported that their units had contributed “to some extent”, while 36% reported “a little”. Regarding the improvement of administrative procedures for attracting international teachers/experts (Q15-Section 2), the contribution was reported by the administrators to be either “a little” (46%) or “to some extent” (36%). For the administrators, whose units were directly involved in managing international cooperation activities, positive responses were also identified. For example, an increase in their unit activities and designation of specific staff for promoting international cooperation were reported by all four units. The administrators appeared to be positive about their administrative contribution to institutional internationalisation practices. However, it did not seem to be what was expected of them by the senior leaders, who raised issues in professional performance of their administrative staff.

### ***Professional performance issues of the administrative staff***

The professional performance of the administrative staff was raised as an obstacle in the internationalisation process at the key university. In addition to the concerns about the international cooperation unit “*providing only paperwork support rather than being a consultant to the university leaders*” (SL1 and SL2), the senior leaders also expressed their concerns about professional performance of the overall administrative support system. For example, two senior leaders (SL3 and SL4) considered “*the professional and friendly working style*” as the most critical issue, complaining that “*they have been remiss in supporting [academic faculties] in promoting internationalisation the last 5 years*” (SL3). Another senior leader (SL1) voiced a concern about foreign language competence of the administrative staff. According to this senior leader, they “*cannot support academic faculties in coordinating activities with international visitors or students because they cannot speak foreign languages*”. These statements reveal that a mismatch might exist between the administrative support performance and their expected contribution to the internationalisation effort.

#### **4.5.3. Financial and infrastructure support**

The financial and infrastructural support for internationalisation practices at the key university were both reported to be limited. These findings are detailed below.

##### ***Financial support***

The analysis of university documents and interviews indicated that there were two main sources of financial support for the institutional internationalisation: the institutional budget and external funding.

The limited institutional budget for internationalisation was acknowledged to be the biggest obstacle for the university. According to SL4, the university did not have “*a government allocated budget or a separate institutional budget for internationalisation*”. This statement was confirmed by the responses from both the academics and administrators in responding to the questionnaire. There were 67% of the academics and 55% of the administrators reporting “a little” with regard to institutional priority in annual spending for internationalisation ***at institutional level*** (Q7-Section 1). Moreover, most of the academics’ responses to the university budget allocated for ***unit-level*** internationalisation practices (Q7-Section 2) were clustered around “don’t know” (40%) and “not at all” (34%). In addition, only 13% of the academics reported an

increase “to some extent” in university budget allocated to their units. For the administrators, only 27% reported an increase “to some extent” in university budget allocated for their activities supporting internationalisation, compared to 46% saying “a little”.

In contrast to the limited institutional budget, the key university benefited from external funding sources from international donors. Various information was recorded on external funding sources in Annual Reports between 2010 and 2015. For example, equipment was sponsored for an online teaching program from South Korea, and scholarships were awarded to domestic academic staff from different countries (Key University, 2013, 2014). However, information about external funding sources was no longer found in the 2014-2015 Annual Report. It was acknowledged by SL1 that the key university received “*different sponsorship ranging from books donated, and facilities sponsored, to a financial package for a new modern four-storey building*” between 2010 and 2015. However, it was agreed by SL1 and SL4 that “*external sponsorship is not a sustainable source*” for internationalisation.

The unsustainability of external funding sources was validated by different responses from the academics and administrators. At ***institutional level***, 60% of the academics reported that “a little” had been done regarding plans for attracting external funding sources for internationalisation, while only 20% believed the university had done this “to some extent” (Q8-Section 1). In contrast, a number of administrators believed that the university had done “a lot” (46%) and “to some extent” (36%) to attract external funding sources. At ***the unit level***, the academics did not appear to be positive about an increase in external funding sources for their unit internationalisation (Q8-Section 2), with responses clustering around “don’t know” (33%), “not at all” (27%), and “a little” (20%). However, the administrators still indicated that there was an increase “to some extent” (46%) or “a little” (36%) in external funding sources for their units in supporting internationalisation practices (Q7-Section 2). These findings show that the academics and administrators seemed to differ on their views about external funding sources for internationalisation.

Overall, the findings indicate that the key university did not have government funding but made use of different external funding sources for their internationalisation practices. However, those external resources did not seem to make a significant

contribution to internationalisation practices at the key university due to their inconsistency.

### ***Infrastructure support***

The support of infrastructure and facilities for the institutional internationalisation was acknowledged to be “*still far from an international standard*” (SL2). However, the SL2 was confident that “*the recent improvement in the infrastructure supported the internationalisation effort to some extent*”. This viewpoint was supported by both the academics and administrators, who believed that the ***institutional-level*** improvement in infrastructure and facilities supported the internationalisation effort “to some extent” (40% and 46% respectively) or “a little” (47% and 27% respectively). However, only the administrators were positive about such support ***at the unit level*** (Q8-Section 2), with 36% selecting “a little” and 46% selecting “some extent”. In contrast, the academics appeared to be less positive, reporting “a little” (47%) and “not at all” (27%) with regard to the improvement of support for infrastructure/facilities to ***their units’*** internationalisation practices (Q9, Q10-Section 2).

## **4.6. The implementation of internationalisation in various dimensions at the key university**

By merging the analysis of Annual Reports between 2010 and 2015 with interview and questionnaire results, internationalisation aspects were identified to involve: *education programs, research, academic staff, international teachers/experts, and students*. For example, internationalisation of domestic education programs was reported to be included in institutional goals (Q13-Section 1) by a majority of the academics (73%) and administrators (73%). International research was also reported by the academics to be a priority in the institutional research agenda “to some extent” (47%) or “a little” (40%). In the following sections, the findings are presented on the extent to which internationalisation practices were reportedly implemented in each of these five dimensions at the key university, beginning with education programs.

### **4.6.1. Education programs**

A synthesis of information from Annual Reports and interview and questionnaire results indicated that there were two types of education programs with international perspectives at the key university. These included: domestic education programs and international joint programs.

### ***Domestic education programs***

Domestic education programs were reported to be the focus of the internationalisation effort at the key university between 2010 and 2015. There were two main strategies in internationalising domestic education programs identified at the key university. These included: ***revising domestic degree programs***, and ***changing the testing and assessment system***. It was mentioned by SL2 that the implementation of these strategies came as a result of the national higher education reform of “*replacing the traditional fixed term-based system with the internationally popular credit system since 2006*”.

#### ***Revising domestic degree programs***

Referring to “*similar international education programs in terms of number of courses and course content*” (SL1 and SL2) was seen as the main approach in revising domestic degree programs regardless of doubts about its effect. A number of activities were reportedly implemented, such as “*adding new courses with international perspectives*” (SL4), “*providing more elective courses*” (SL2), “*consulting with relevant foreign experts*” (SL1), “*using foreign textbooks*” (SL1), and “*applying a consistent number of credits*” (SL3).

However, there was doubt about the actual improvement in international perspectives in this internationalisation approach. SL3 mentioned that the extent of these internationalisation practices “*was only superficial because the course content has not changed much.*” This limitation was also acknowledged by SL2, who mentioned that the university needed “*more time for an in-depth revision and improvement in the content of education programs.*” The academic policy implementers also indicated doubts about the extent to which domestic education programs had been effectively improved in terms of international perspectives. This was reflected through their responses regarding the inclusion of internationalisation in improving [domestic] program/course content (Q14-Section 2) and textbooks usage (Q15-Section 2). Some academics reported that internationalisation was included “to some extent” in the improvement of program/course content and textbooks usage, (27% and 33% respectively). However, many academics saw “a little” improvement in program/course content (53%) and textbooks usage (40%) with regard to international perspectives.

The application of ICT in course delivery was reportedly implemented as an internationalisation practice, but was “*not yet the priority*” (SL4). According to this

senior leader, the application of ICT was not prioritised because “*a bricks and mortar approach is still preferred in the current Vietnamese context*” (SL4). In addition, “*the investment on the ICT infrastructure is too costly*” was the reason given by SL2 in explaining the preference for the traditional face-to-face teaching approach. These comments indicate that the traditional face-to-face approach was and would still remain a part of the internationalisation effort in education programs at the key university.

The increasing flexibility of the key university in recognizing credits earned abroad was also seen as a part of the internationalisation of domestic education programs. It was mentioned that the university had been “*supportive and flexible in recognizing credits that students earned abroad*” (SL1). However, it was noted that “*there has not yet been any official guidelines or agreement with other foreign universities regarding credit transfer or recognition*” (SL2).

The infrequent application of ICT and recognition of overseas credits were also confirmed by responses of the academics in responding to Q16 and Q17 in Section 2 of the questionnaire. For example, responses were found to fall into “not at all” (20%) and “a little” (47%) regarding the application of ICT. With regard to the recognition of overseas credits, it was also reported by the academics to be “a little” (47%) and “not at all” (27%).

#### *Changing the testing and assessment system*

The application of continuous assessment in domestic education programs and an international language proficiency framework were identified as “*international norms in the testing and assessment system that the university achieved*” (SL2). The interview with SL2 revealed that continuous assessment had been applied in each individual domestic education program “*replacing the traditional one-final exam method of the term-based system.*” In addition, the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) was applied for “*setting the graduation requirement for domestic students’ language proficiency and developing a standardized test of language proficiency for Vietnamese people*” (SL2). These changes were also recorded in the Annual Reports between 2010 and 2015. Such changes in the testing and assessment system at the key university were evidences of the existence of the Soviet model, which have been gradually removed from the Vietnamese higher education system.

In addition to the revision of domestic degree programs and changes to the testing and assessment system, an application for AUN (ASEAN University Network) regional accreditation was also noted. Two domestic degree programs were accredited by the AUN in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 academic years (Key University, 2013, 2014). However, the Annual Report for the 2014-2015 academic year did not mention any program accreditation. It was further noted by the senior leaders that the practice was “*not the key focus in internationalising education*” (SL1) and “*the limited resources haven’t allowed this.*” (SL2)

### ***International joint programs***

In spite of being considered as a “*good indicator of internationalisation*” (SL1), the provision of international joint programs was seen as more for the purpose of internationalising domestic programs at the key university. According to SL1 and SL2, this practice helped with “*bringing international perspectives and norms into managing the domestic education programs.*” The SL3 expanded on this, saying that international joint programs were a “*good model for domestic degree programs in terms of program structure, course design, course content, and use of books.*” However, this senior leader also acknowledged that the university “*does not have any specific development strategy for international joint programs*”, explaining that such development was “*limited by government policies on public universities and national university structure*” (SL3). That might be the reason why the academics were not consistent about the position of these programs in the institutional internationalisation effort.

A large number of both academics (67%) and administrators (73%) acknowledged that the available international joint programs contributed “to some extent” to the ***institutional-level*** international goals. However, more than half of the academics (53%) thought that international joint programs contributed just “a little” to the internationalisation of [domestic] education programs ***at their units***. In addition, 34% even said that there was “no” contribution at all. This finding indicates that there might have been little connection between the internationalisation of domestic education programs and the development of international joint programs during the period of 2010-2015. This finding also reveals that the participation in providing international joint programs might have varied among academic faculties.

#### **4.6.2. Research**

The internationalisation of research at the key university was represented by the improvement of domestic research and promotion of international cooperation in research.

##### ***Improving domestic research***

According to the senior leaders, ***improving domestic research*** was the focus of their internationalisation effort. This strategy was represented by two main practices: “*applying international requirements in publishing domestic research*” (SL4) and “*making research a compulsory professional performance for the academic staff*” (SL2). The implementation of these two practices reportedly resulted from the traditionally established role of the key university “*as a training college of teaching professional skills in foreign languages instead of being an actual university*” with “*more focus on providing practical training on use of foreign languages rather than doing research [in this area]*” (SL4). According to SL2 and SL4, the largest challenge in implementing these two practices was the view of the domestic academic staff that their job consisted “*more of teaching than doing research.*” This comment does not only provide insights into the situation of the key university but also into the general context of Vietnamese higher education system, in which teaching and research have been two separate tasks, with teaching being undertaken in the university and research being undertaken at research institutes.

According to SL4, the 2010-2015 period saw the official application of international standards in domestic research, particularly in publication formatting and reviewing because “*no such specific requirements existed before.*” This senior leader also added that the establishment of the official review panel “*with leading domestic experts and participation of foreign experts*” was another example of applying international standards in journal publication during this period (SL4).

Regarding the practice of making research a compulsory professional performance for the academic staff, it was reported to be “*hard to achieve over the last period [2010-2015]*” (SL2 and SL4). Most research activities were “*at the university level only*” while there were a few research activities “*at national and international levels*” (SL4). It was also acknowledged by senior leaders that the university had “*financial incentives to encourage the academic staff to publish internationally*” (SL2 and SL1). The analysis

of Annual Reports recorded that a grant of 9,000,000 VND (approximately equivalent to \$600NZD) was awarded for each international publication. However, these senior leaders acknowledged that they were “*not successful in promoting international research as planned.*”

The effort of improving domestic research resulted in an increase in international publications and presentations although the number was not significant. For example, the 2011- 2012 and 2012- 2013 Annual Reports recorded that 30 and 64 academic staff respectively participated in international conferences (Key University, 2012, 2013). This number had decreased to seven in the 2013-2014 Annual Report and was not found at all in the 2014-2015 academic year. However, there was an increase in the number of international articles between 2013 and 2015. Eight international articles were reported in the Annual Report for the academic year of 2012-2013 and 11 in 2013-2014. However, 36 articles were reported in 2014-2015 Annual Report (Key University, 2013, 2014, 2015). It was evident that there was a large increase in international publications for the 2014-2015 academic year. This increase might suggest that the practices implemented for internationalising the domestic research had begun to take effect by the end of the 2010-2015 period.

The findings on practices for improving domestic research indicate that the implementation of internationalisation in this dimension seemed to be at an emerging stage in the 2010-2015 period.

### ***International cooperation in research***

Although international cooperation in research was reported at the key university, it did not seem to be systematically planned. The analysis of Annual Reports indicated single international cooperation activities in research, rather than a strategic plan for this aspect. For example, two research projects in cooperation with South Korean or US partners were recorded in only the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 Annual Reports (Key University, 2013, 2014). However, there was no international cooperation research reported in the 2014-2015 academic year (Key University, 2015). Every year between 2010 and 2014, one international conference on foreign languages was reportedly hosted by the university in cooperation with sponsoring foreign organisations. However, it was indicated that the sources of sponsorship, as an external funding source were not consistent. These findings, therefore, suggest that these international conferences might

be one-off international cooperation activities rather than being part of an institutional plan for promoting international cooperation in research.

The findings from the document analysis reveal that international cooperation in research seemed to be spontaneous rather than proactively planned. This was further explained in the interview and questionnaires findings. It was mentioned by two senior leaders (SL1 and SL3) during the interviews that “*not many domestic academic staff had chances to join in international research projects.*” According to SL1 and SL3, international research projects were “*mainly offered by foreign individuals or organisations instead of being actively pursued by the [domestic] academic staff.*” In addition, in responding to the question regarding the increase in international research at their units, responses of the academics were clustered around “a little” (47%) and “not at all” (33%). Promoting international cooperation in research, therefore, did not seem to be a key target in internationalising the research dimension during the 2010-2015 period.

#### **4.6.3. Academic staff**

The term ***academic staff***, referred to by the senior leaders during the interviews, was used to refer to ***domestic academic staff***. This dimension was mentioned as one of the foci at the key university by SL4 in interpreting their internationalisation effort. The corroboration of three sources of data identified higher qualifications and international experience as the two main internationalisation practices in this dimension at the key university.

##### ***Improving higher qualifications of academic staff***

Improving higher qualifications was seen as the key practice to internationalise the domestic academic staff at the key university. In analysing the Annual Reports, information about the numbers of academic staff gaining higher qualification in domestic and abroad programs had been reported annually since 2011. For example, in the 2013-2014 Annual Report, there were 24 academic staff reported to enrol for Doctoral degree programs (10 in domestic programs and 14 in international programs) while nine academic staff enrolled for Master’s degree programs (seven in domestic programs and two in international programs) (Key University, 2014). A similar number was also reported in the 2014-2015 Annual Report.

The importance of improving higher qualifications among academic staff was further clarified by the senior leaders. The SL4 explained that “*having a kind of standard licence [master's degree at least] is important for a person to teach at the university level.*” This was further confirmed by SL2 when he talked about the institutional human resource development policies. According to this senior leader, “*higher qualifications are considered as a requirement in the professional development plan for academic staff*” and “*master's degree is a prerequisite recruiting requirement*” (SL2).

However, efforts to improve higher qualifications at the key university did not involve preference for international higher qualifications. It was noted by SL4 that “*there is no preference for an international qualification over a domestic one*” in the institutional human resource policies. In talking about the number of academic staff studying overseas, he acknowledged that the university “*does not provide a financial package for their studying overseas*”, and “*supports with paperwork only*” (SL4). This senior leader explained that the academic staff obtained scholarships from the Vietnamese government programs or from other foreign countries. The dependence on outside financial support for academic staff studying abroad might explain why gaining an international qualification was not a priority in institutional efforts to improve the qualification levels of the academic staff.

### ***International experience for academic staff***

Although *international experience for academic staff* was reportedly implemented, it did not seem to get appropriate attention at the key university. The analysis of the Annual Reports indicated inconsistent numbers of academic staff participating in overseas short training courses or exchanges, other than qualifications training. It was explained by SL1 that “*some academic staff attended exchange programs when opportunities were offered by foreign partner universities.*” This senior leader also acknowledged that “*the university has not had any particular policy to encourage the academic staff to attend short-term training or exchange programs abroad.*” There was, however, a strong argument from SL3 that the academic staff had been demotivated by “*the hesitation from the leaders about having any specific guidelines in human resource policies regarding activities of short-term training, teaching or doing research abroad for academic staff*”. These viewpoints might explain why the specific number of academic staff participating in these kinds of programs was not consistently reported in Annual Reports.

Little institutional concern regarding *international qualifications and experience for academic staff* was also confirmed by the responses from academics and administrators. Regarding the *institutional-level* policy on improvement in terms of international qualifications for the academic staff (Q15-Section 1), the number of academics and administrators reporting “to some extent” were 33% and 46% respectively. However, there were also 33% and 27% of academics and administrators, respectively, who believed that the improvement was “a little”. In addition, more than half of the academics (53%) reported “a little” on policy improvement regarding international experience (Q16-Section 1) compared to 37% of the administrators. *At the unit level*, responses from the academics mainly fell into “a little” and “not at all” regarding the increase in international qualifications and experience among the academic staff. For example, increase in international experience of the academic staff at academic units was reported to be “a little” by 33% and “not at all” by 34% of the academics. These findings indicate that the *institutional-level* policy for improving international qualifications and experience for academic staff did not seem to be translated into the implementation at *unit level* at the key university.

#### **4.6.4. International teachers/experts**

Although the use of international teachers/experts was identified at the key university, their academic position in the institutional internationalisation effort was not yet defined.

The analysis of university Annual Reports did not show how international teachers/experts participated in internationalisation practices at the key university between 2010 and 2015. Different numbers of international teachers/experts were reported to work on a long-term (more than one academic year) and a short-term (less than one academic year) basis annually at the key university between 2010 and 2015. However, only the 2014-2015 Annual Report recorded specifically that there was one expert in foreign language testing from a program funded by the American Embassy, while no similar information was found in other Annual Reports.

The undefined academic position of international teachers/experts was further confirmed by the senior leaders in the interviews. According to SL1 and SL2, the university depended on “*the support from international partners and sponsors*” for international teachers/experts, most of whom “*are voluntary language teachers without*

*teaching or research experience.”* These comments indicate that the key university tended to be take a passive position in making decisions on how this group could contribute to its internationalisation effort. The senior leaders also held different views regarding the role of the international teachers/experts in the internationalisation process at the key university. The SL4 showed uncertainty about “*what contribution that the international teachers/experts have made.*” However, there was a feeling of confidence from SL2 that “*they help with making sure that we are targeting the right international norms and standards*”, recalling the case of a foreign expert helping with redesigning the curriculum of an honour degree program for AUN (Asian University Network) accreditation. However, this case seemed to be rare at the key university. Both SL3 and SL1 agreed that international teachers/experts were more “*representative of foreign cultures and language and knowledge from different parts of the world.*”

The different responses from the academics and administrators also indicate that the key university did not have a specific strategy regarding international teachers/experts in its internationalisation effort. For example, more than half of the administrators (55%) reported improvement “to some extent” in the ***institutional-level*** policy in terms of attracting international teachers/experts (Q17). In contrast, academics’ responses to this question mainly fell into “a little” (40%) and “not at all” (20%). In addition, the academics did not show positive views regarding the ***unit-level*** increase in the number of international teachers/experts and their contribution to internationalisation practices in education and research activities (Q22 – Q24 of Section 2). The majority of responses to these questions were clustered around “a little” and “not at all”. For example, an increase in the number of international teachers/experts at academic faculties was reported to be “not at all” by 47% and “a little” by 33% of the academics.

The comments of the senior leaders and responses from the policy implementers indicate that the involvement of international teachers/experts was seen as valuable but more of a cultural opportunity. However, the role of international teachers/experts was not clearly defined in supporting internationalisation practices at the key university.

#### **4.6.5. Students**

That not many international practices for students (both ***domestic*** and ***international students***) were identified in Phase One of the study indicates that the students were not

yet the focus of the institutional internationalisation effort at the key university during 2010-2015.

### ***Domestic students***

International practices for domestic students did not appear to be planned as a part of the internationalisation effort at the key university. The analysis of university Annual Reports indicated international practices for domestic students were not consistently reported between 2010 and 2015. For example, the number of domestic students having a one-year exchange program in China was reported in the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 Annual Reports. However, it was no longer reported after 2013. As seen in the report for the 2014-2015 academic year, no international practices were reported in regard to domestic students. This point was further supported by the findings from the interviews and questionnaires, as noted below.

Both SL1 and SL2 acknowledged that the university “*has not planned or been active in promoting international practices for domestic students*” because the priority of institutional internationalisation was “*more on education programs and academic staff*.<sup>10</sup>” However, it was added by SL2 that the recent increase in international cooperation had brought “*more international exchange opportunities and chances to meet and talk with international visitors*” for domestic students.

The lack of planning for international practices for domestic students also received inconsistent responses from the academics and administrators. The administrators believed that they contributed to the improvement in policies and administrative support for international activities for students. A large number (73%) of the administrators reported improvement “to some extent” in the policy for organising international activities for domestic students on campus (Q19), whereas more than half (55%) reported “a lot” of improvement in the administrative procedures supporting students’ participation in international activities (Q20). However, the academics tended to show their uncertainty in responding to these two questions. For example, their answers ranged among the three options of “not at all” (27%), “a little” (40%), and “to some extent” (26%) for Q19 regarding the policy for organising international activities for domestic students on campus. Regarding the improvement in administrative support for domestic students’ participation in international activities (Q20), 46% of academics reported “to some extent”, whereas 47% said “a little”. Moreover, uncertainty among

the academics was also found in their responses regarding the increase of international practices for domestic students ***at the unit level***. Most of the academics reported either “a little” (40%) or “not at all” (33%) in terms of any increase in international activities organised for domestic students (Q25). Most of the academics also believed that the improvement in administrative support provided “not at all” (47%) or “a little” (33%) support for increasing the number of domestic students participating in international activities (Q26).

The different responses among the academics and administrators might explain the fact that the key university did not have any specific strategy for improving international practices for students, although there had been an improvement in administrative procedures or overall policies.

### ***International students***

How international students were positioned in the internationalisation effort was not yet defined at the key university. The university Development Plan for 2010-2015 showed an intention to increase the number of international students and to develop Vietnamese language courses as well as courses taught in English. However, the analysis of the Annual Reports revealed a decrease in the number of international students coming to the campus for short-term exchange and Vietnamese language courses between 2010 and 2015. For example, a total of 201 international students from four countries was recorded in the 2012-2013 Annual Report. However, a lower number was recorded, at 72, in the 2014-2015 Annual Report.

The extent of internationalisation in relation to international students was further examined in the interviews with the senior leaders and in questionnaires for the policy implementers. It was asserted by both SL2 and SL4 that the institutional focus was “*more on domestic students*” in terms of internationalisation during 2010-2015 period. According to senior leaders, having international students on campus was “*an indicator of being an internationalised university*” (SL1 and SL4). However, these senior leaders acknowledged that “*providing high-quality [domestic] human resources for the national development is the main focus for internationalisation.*” This viewpoint was also supported by the responses from the academics and administrators. It was reported by both administrators (64%) and academics (47%) that the institutional improvement policy for attracting international students ***at institutional level*** (Q21-Section 1) had

taken place “to some extent”. However, *at the unit level*, the academics’ responses regarding the increase in the number of international students (Q27-Section 2) were clustered around “not at all” (47%), “a little” (27%), and “don’t know” (20%). This finding shows that there might be *policy improvement at institutional level*; however, an *actual increase* in the number of international students *at the unit level* did not happen.

#### **4.7. Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, the examination of data from three sources (university documents, interviews with the senior leaders, and questionnaires for the policy implementers) provided information about the context of internationalisation at the key university.

The existence of such terms as *international standards* and *regionally reputed institution* in the institutional Development Plan for 2010-2015, together with the interpretations of internationalisation from the senior leaders, indicate that internationalisation at the key university tended to focus on improving the quality of domestic factors by targeting *international standards*. The different interpretations of the senior leaders and the findings regarding internationalisation in institutional development suggest that the university might still be at an early stage of internationalisation in the 2010-2015 period. In addition, the analysis of documents and interpretations of the senior leaders also reveals the dual concerns about national socio-economic development and (national) cultural identity in implementing internationalisation at the key university.

The findings on the extent to which internationalisation practices were implemented show that the domestic factors related to education programs, research, and academic staff were the focus of the internationalisation effort between 2010 and 2015. In particular, domestic degree programs were the target of internationalising education programs, although that still seemed to be rather a superficial change. In research, improving domestic research, including research publications and research competence of the domestic academic staff, was the main goal for internationalising research, whereas the promotion of international research had not yet become visible. For academic staff, the focus of the internationalisation effort was on higher qualifications rather than international qualifications and experience. Although students were not yet a

focus of the internationalisation effort, priority was focused on planning for domestic students rather than international students.

The findings also indicate that the implementation of internationalisation was integrated into the regular functions and responsibilities of related units at the key university, instead of having a separate unit responsible for coordinating the internationalisation effort. This was represented by different levels of involvement as well as different responses with regard to the internationalisation effort among academic and administrative units at the key university.

The findings on financial and infrastructure support for internationalisation reveal that financial constraints were encountered by the key university in moving forward with their internationalisation efforts, since the government did not provide separate funding for internationalisation practices.

Finally, the findings indicate that the administrators appeared to have more positive viewpoints than the academics, regarding the extent to which internationalisation practices were implemented. It is a paradox as the findings note that the focus of internationalisation practices mostly involved the academic units. As indicated in the demographic information, a majority of the academics responding to the questionnaire had previously studied abroad. It is suggested that these international experiences might have enabled them to compare internationalisation in differing contexts. Such comparative viewpoints, hence, influenced their less positive responses regarding the level of internationalisation at the key university. The difference in viewpoints between the academics and administrators was taken into account during the focus group discussions in Phase Two.

The findings in this chapter served as a foundation for Phase Two focus group discussions on developing a framework of evaluation for studying the internationalisation effort at the key university. The findings from Phase Two are presented in the next chapter.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **PHASE TWO FINDINGS**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, the findings from Phase Two of the study are presented. These findings served as preliminary input for developing a framework of evaluation dimensions in considering the context of internationalisation at the key university. The chapter begins with a brief explanation of the discussion process with the focus groups. The next section will move on to detailing findings on how each international dimension was viewed by the focus groups in relation to developing an evaluation for their institutional internationalisation effort. The chapter concludes with a summary of key findings on the institutional considerations in developing the initial framework for evaluating internationalisation at the key university.

#### **5.2. Brief on discussion process of focus groups at the key university**

In Phase Two, three focus groups were undertaken with the policy implementers at the key university, in order to identify the institutional considerations in developing a framework of dimensions for evaluating their internationalisation efforts.

Phase Two focus groups involved discussion of the applicability of evaluation dimensions synthesised from international evaluation tools in considering the context of internationalisation at the key university. In doing so, evaluation dimensions identified by reviewing the literature on evaluation tools for internationalisation were presented in contrast to the key university's internationalisation foci found in Phase One (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1: International evaluation dimensions verse internationalisation foci at the key university

International evaluation dimensions	Identified focus at your university
<i>Institutional commitment</i>	
<i>Management</i>	
<i>Education programs</i>	<i>Domestic education programs</i>
<i>Research</i>	<i>Domestic research</i>
<i>Academic staff (domestic and international)</i>	<i>Domestic academic staff</i>
<i>Administrative support system</i>	
<i>Students (domestic and international)</i>	
<i>Financial support</i>	
<i>Infrastructure support</i>	
<i>International cooperation activities</i>	

As shown in Table 5.1, the review of international evaluation tools indicates there were 10 dimensions frequently used for evaluating institutional internationalisation. However, the review of international evaluation tools reveals that not all of these 10 dimensions were used for evaluating internationalisation in any particular context. Rather, each context had its own priority in selecting evaluation dimensions, as well as in considering the focus of each dimension. For example, the ACE Review did not consider research or infrastructure and facilities as one of its dimensions for evaluating the internationalisation in American universities. In contrast, these two dimensions were taken into consideration by the Osaka tool in evaluating internationalisation at Japan universities. For the key university, the findings from Phase One indicate that the focus was on just three dimensions: domestic factors in education programs, academic staff and research. The list of international evaluation dimensions, and what was found about the focus of internationalisation at the key university, was then presented to the participants in the focus groups.

The policy implementers (academics and administrators) in the three focus groups at the key university discussed their viewpoints regarding the applicability of international dimensions in evaluating their internationalisation effort. It was found that the academics and administrators in the three focus groups (F1, F2, and F3) agreed that it would be useful to include all 10 dimensions. This decision was supported by the view that having a comprehensive evaluation could be “*useful for setting the target for internationalisation in different stages [of institutional development]*” (F1 and F2). Nonetheless, the academics and administrators in the three focus groups tended to give different priorities to various dimensions. The F3 administrators put *domestic education*

*programs, domestic academic staff, and research* as their top priorities for the evaluation. They explained that “*the internationalisation effort had mostly been implemented in these areas so far.*” Similarly, the F1 academics also gave more priority to these three dimensions but, in addition they also selected the administrative staff dimension. The academics in F2, however, put management and financial and infrastructure support as their priority dimensions, although they also included domestic academic staff and education programs in their priority list. The concern about prerequisites for effective internationalisation was indicated as the reason for the F2 academics’ selection. In doing so, these F2 academics tended to take the evaluation as a planning tool for their internationalisation strategy more than a review of the internationalisation effort. The F1 academics and F3 administrators also had different viewpoints regarding the evaluation practice. The findings on the reasons why the policy implementers, on behalf of the key university, chose certain international evaluation dimensions in considering their context of internationalisation, are provided in the section below.

### **5.3. Considerations for different evaluation dimensions at the key university**

In this section, insights are provided into how internationally popular dimensions were viewed, in terms of their applicability to the context of internationalisation at the key university. These findings, with regard to each dimension, are presented below, beginning with institutional commitment to internationalisation.

#### **5.3.1. Institutional commitment to internationalisation**

*Institutional commitment* to internationalisation was the dimension through which international evaluation tools examined the existence of institutional policies or goals and awareness related to internationalisation in relevant contexts. For example, in evaluating the institutional commitment of a Japanese university to internationalisation, the 2006 Osaka tool was specifically concerned about institutional articulation of the university’s medium and long-term plans.

For the key university in the current study, it was agreed by both the academics and administrators in the three focus groups that the institutional commitment to internationalisation was “*more obvious in education programs than in research.*” It was acknowledged among the policy implementers in the three focus groups that the internationalisation commitment for the 2010-2015 period was more on working

towards either *regional standards* (academics in F1 and F2) or *international standards* (administrators in F3) regarding education. It was also agreed by both administrators (F3) and academics (F1 and F2) that this institutional commitment was “*visible in the mission statement.*” These comments were consistent with the findings in Phase One, regarding the commitment for internationalising education programs at the key university (see Section 4.3.1). However, the academics in F1 admitted that they were not so sure “*what internationalisation means*”, explaining that “*we just do what we are told to do, and call it internationalisation because this term has been used more frequently in recent meetings.*” This admission implies that internationalisation might not have been officially defined among university staff, although the terms *international standards* or *regionally reputed university* were frequently used at the key university.

### **5.3.2. Management for internationalisation**

In international evaluation tools, the dimension of **management** examined the management mechanism for effective implementation of internationalisation practices, which always involved the responsibility of the individual or unit. For example, the IMPI tool investigated the staff assignment at central and sub-unit levels, and the availability of procedures for decision-making on the internationalisation goals of European universities.

At the key university, the **management** dimension for internationalisation was viewed in relation to the overall institutional management. The administrators in F3 described this dimension as “*untouchable*” because “*it is hard for a public university to make any change to organisational structure on its own.*” On the other hand, the academics in both F1 and F2 took this dimension to be an important one in directing the institutional internationalisation. Those in F1 pointed to the inflexible traditional management style as an obstacle leading to the “*slow progress in internationalisation.*” The academics in F2 specifically indicated that the traditional management style of collective responsibility and low remuneration system, in relation to the academic staff, were seen as “*obstacles to effective internationalisation.*” These F2 academics, therefore, categorised **management** as their second priority in evaluating internationalisation at the key university, explaining that this was a “*decisive key in implementing internationalisation effectively.*”

These comments show that the management of internationalisation might be viewed as involving the overall organisational management by both the academics and administrators. On one hand, these comments confirm the findings from Phase One that there was not a separate unit for coordinating internationalisation practices (see Section 4.5). On the other hand, they indicate that internationalisation might be centrally managed at the key university, which is the popular management structure at Vietnamese public universities. Moreover, the comments from focus groups reveal a paradox regarding the management structure at the key university. While this structure might not be changed, as mentioned by the F3 administrators, the comments from F1 and F2 academics suggest there was a high expectation for institutional change regarding this traditional management style.

### **5.3.3. Education programs**

In relation to other international evaluation tools, the dimension of *education programs* shows the most significant contextual difference for the key university. For example, the IMPI tool was particularly concerned about the incorporation of credit/degree mobility in degree programs of European universities. In contrast, the Osaka tool was concerned about the proportion of foreign language lessons taught by foreign native speakers, and the use of standard tests in language education in Japanese universities.

At the key university, *education programs* were acknowledged to be the most prioritised in the internationalisation effort, with special emphasis on the *domestic degree programs*. According to the academics in F1, what had been done with the domestic degree programs represented “*the institutional internationalisation effort most clearly.*” The F1 academics confirmed that improving their degree programs had received the most attention in their faculties. Both F1 and F2 academics agreed that meeting the “*requirements of regional accreditation (AUN standards)*” had been the target for improving domestic degree programs at their faculties. It was added by an administrator in F3, who was in charge of quality assurance procedures, that “*the compulsory application of the recently issued guidelines [03/2016] on program quality assurance by MOET, and the reports for QS assessment prepared in recent years [2015 and 2016]*” had become additional targets in internationalising domestic degree programs.

The explanations shared in the Phase Two focus groups indicate that both the academics and administrators were aware of the priority that their university had given to the dimension of ***education programs*** in the internationalisation effort. In particular, their concerns about accreditation requirements suggest that this aspect might be seen as an indicator of internationalisation at the key university.

Although ***education programs*** were acknowledged to be an institutional priority in internationalisation, this dimension was given different priority by the three focus groups in considering an evaluation of internationalisation. The administrators in F3 put education programs as the first priority, explaining that it was “*the area of greatest effort in the internationalisation*” during the 2010-2015 period. For the academics in F1, however, there was some hesitation about putting this dimension as the top prioritised dimension. It was argued that “*the quality of internationalisation depends on the quality of the academic staff*” (F1). Nonetheless, it was agreed among these academics that “*putting the education programs as the first dimension is common in an official evaluation*” (F1). The argument from F1 academics was supported by the academics in F2, who put education programs at the fourth prioritised position. They argued that “*having an education program of international standard is important, but the actual internationalisation of such programs is decided by how the academic staff implemented them*” (F2). In emphasising the importance of academic staff, these academics pointed out that the minimal change in teaching methods and inappropriate attention to evaluation of learning outcomes “*diminished the value of the recently internationalised programs*” (F2). The concerns about the important role of academic staff among the F1 and F2 academics were further indicated in their later discussion on this dimension.

#### **5.3.4. Research**

***Research*** was another important dimension significantly demonstrating the contextual difference at the key university from contexts for other international evaluation tools. For example, the IMPI tool comprehensively evaluated six aspects of internationalisation in research at European universities, including researcher profiles, visiting researchers, international research activity, international profile of the institution, publications and citations, and patents. On the other hand, the Osaka tool particularly focused on international development of research activities, and the support system for international researchers in Japanese universities.

For the key university, it was acknowledged by the academics that not much internationalisation had been done in research, although it was “*one of the institutional internationalisation foci between 2010 and 2015*” (F1 and F2). This comment was also supported by a self-evaluation statement from the administrators in F3 that “*less has been achieved in this dimension than the other two prioritised dimensions [domestic education program and domestic academic staff]*.”

The focus groups each gave different reasons for the slow progress in research internationalisation at the key university. According to F1 academics, the “*little improvement in research competence for the domestic academic staff*”; and “*lack of updated information on international research trends*” resulted in little achievement in the effort of internationalising this dimension. The administrators in F3, however, blamed it on the research competence of the domestic academic staff. According to the administrators, the academic staff members were not active in “*doing research, although it is now a part of their academic performance requirements, or using available supporting resources for research*.” These comments from F1 and F3 appeared to be consistent with what a senior leader talked about, in Phase One, the university’s traditional focus on teaching only, rather than both teaching and research. In contrast, the academics in F2 appeared to be concerned about the lack of incentives to promote research when noting that the “*large number of teaching hours*” and “*inappropriate compensation*” were contributing factors to the slow improvement in research internationalisation. All of the comments on this dimension indicate that the internationalisation of research was at an early stage during the 2010-2015 period. It seems that not only the research competence of the academic staff, but also policies on promoting research engagement, needed to be included in the internationalisation effort.

**Research** was also put into a different priority position by the three focus groups. F1 academics and F3 administrators put **research** as the third prioritised dimension in evaluating internationalisation when it was seen as one of the focus in their institutional internationalisation effort. Although these F2 academics acknowledged that the university had implemented a certain number of practices to internationalise this dimension, they mentioned it as a “*failure*” and “*very minimal success*”. In not considering this dimension as a priority in conducting the evaluation, the F2 academics explained that “*internationalisation should be conducted first with regard to academic staff and management, who decide and implement the internationalisation of both*

*education programs and research.*” These comments indicate that these F2 academics had a different viewpoint from the other two focus groups with regard to the practice of evaluating internationalisation. These comments also suggest that the F2 academics tended to focus on what might enable effective institutional internationalisation in the future, rather than just looking at what had been implemented the most in their current internationalisation effort.

### 5.3.5. Academic staff

In other international evaluation tools, the *academic staff* dimension commonly included both *domestic* and *international academic staff*. However, the level at which these two groups were evaluated, with regard to institutional internationalisation, was found to differ according to the context. For example, the IMPI tool was concerned about the foreign citizenship status and the ratio of international academic staff out of the total number of academic staff in European universities. However, the Peking tool was only concerned about the number of international academic staff working on the campus of Chinese universities.

At the key university, the term *academic staff* was used to indicate the *domestic academic staff*. This viewpoint was previously identified from the Phase One interviews with the senior leaders, who emphasised the importance of strengthening their academic staff without defining an academic role for international teachers/experts. This view was consistent with similar comments from the Phase Two focus groups, with a common explanation that “*the current focus is on domestic academic staff.*” The administrators in F3 referred to institutional policies on human resources in giving their explanation. According to them, “*there is no policy to recruit a foreigner as an official and permanent staff member in a public university*” (F3).

The dimension of *academic staff* was acknowledged to be important in the internationalisation effort by the three focus groups though priority given to it varied among them. The academics in F1 considered this dimension to be “*as important as the education programs*” if an evaluation of internationalisation was conducted. It was argued that “*having qualified academic staff is the key to effective internationalisation of education programs*” (F1). Although they agreed to put this dimension as the second priority in evaluating their internationalisation, they suggested “*giving the same weight to both education programs and academic staff.*” They also expected that the evaluation

of internationalisation in academic staff would help to “*raise awareness by the university leaders in planning for internationalisation*” (F1).

The academics in F2 shared a similar view with the academics in F1, explaining that the professional competence of academic staff would “*decide the success or failure of the internationalisation effort in education programs*” (F2). According to these academics, the recent implementation of “internationalised” programs did not come up to expectation due to the fact that “*the academic staff were not well prepared with the updated knowledge and methods*” and “*those [academic staff] who developed the new programs were not involved in any teaching so they could deal with any problems arising*” (F2). These academics, therefore, put **academic staff** as the top prioritised dimension in evaluating internationalisation at their university.

By putting **academic staff** as the second in their priority order, the F3 administrators showed their consistency in taking what had been done so far in the institutional internationalisation as the most important factor for evaluation. In addition, these administrators also had a different viewpoint from the academics in F1 and F2 regarding the current internationalisation effort. According to the F3 administrators, the academic staff became one of the foci in their institutional internationalisation process “*as a result of the requirements for improving domestic education programs.*” The administrators believed the practices of compulsory completion of higher qualifications and grant provision for completion of doctoral qualifications were examples of the institutional effort in internationalising the domestic academic staff. It was acknowledged among the administrators that “*the university leaders are aware that having qualified [domestic] academic staff is important in the internationalisation process*” (F3).

Whether **academic staff** was ranked as the first or second priority by the academics and administrators, the findings show a shared concern among the three focus groups regarding the professional competence of academic staff in implementing internationalisation. It also become visible that the administrators in F3 tended to make decisions over the priority by referring to the extent of internationalisation practices implemented in this dimension compared to the other dimensions. In contrast, the academics in both F1 and F2 tended to decide the priority by considering the level of importance that the academic staff played in the success of the internationalisation effort.

### **5.3.6. Students**

The dimension of *students* consisted of *domestic* and *international students* in international evaluation tools. Each national context, however, had a different focus in evaluating the internationalisation in this dimension. Evaluation tools from Western countries, such as the ACE Review, IMPI, and MINT, tended to consider different mobility programs for domestic students and the number of international students for degree or non-degree programs on the campus. On the other hand, the Osaka tool focused only on international students, especially regarding the number enrolling, relevant courses, and support services for international students at Japanese universities.

At the key university, the three focus groups did not consider this dimension as a priority in evaluating their internationalisation. It was suggested by F1 academics that “*the university has not had any education programs designed for international students or any strategy to attract them in the coming years.*” However, they added that the focus would be on “*developing our domestic students rather than having international students*” if there was any policy for this dimension. This viewpoint is consistent with the findings from Phase One regarding the institutional intention of focusing on internationalisation for domestic students (see Section 4.6.5).

### **5.3.7. Administrative support system**

In the dimension of *administrative support system*, the two main aspects frequently investigated by the international evaluation tools included: the provision of support by administrative units and the international competence of administrative staff. The extent to which these aspects were evaluated in institutional internationalisation also varied among international evaluation tools in different countries. In particular, the Peking tool did not include the competence of administrative staff in evaluating internationalisation at Chinese universities, although that was examined to a different extent in other evaluation tools.

In looking at the administrative support for internationalisation at the key university, it was proposed by participants in the three focus groups that the focus of this dimension was on the *professional competence* of the administrative staff rather than the *assignment of administrative support*. These focus groups also showed different concerns about this dimension in considering their institutional internationalisation.

The academics in F1 put administrative staff in the second priority position, equal with the academic staff in evaluating internationalisation at the key university. They argued that “*how this system can support the internationalisation actually depends on the competence and attitude of the administrative staff.*” In describing the implementation of internationalisation practices as a two-way relationship, these academics stated that their academic jobs [in internationalisation] “*cannot be completed without support and communication from the administrative staff*” (F1). In particular, two academics in F1 attributed the institutional failure in receiving just a small number of international students last year [2015] to the lack of communication and support from the administrative staff regarding relevant administrative procedures and program information. Therefore, the academics in F1 considered internationalising the ***professional performance*** of the ***administrative staff*** to be a priority.

Although the academics in F2 and the administrators in F3 showed their concern about the professional performance of the administrative staff, they did not consider it as an important dimension in evaluating the institutional internationalisation effort. For the academics in F2, “*the traditional pastoral attitude of the administrative staff- being supportive to those who are close to them*” was a concern in considering the administrative support for internationalisation. In contrast, the issue of professional development for the administrative staff was a particular concern of two administrators in F3. These two administrators stated that “*not having appropriate [internationally] relevant professional skills and knowledge*”; “*resistance to change*”; and “*not being able to communicate with foreign visitors*” (F3) were the current issues that the administrative staff had in supporting internationalisation practices. However, the other administrators in F3 believed that they were doing their administrative jobs well in terms of supporting internationalisation.

The comments from participants in the three focus groups indicate a shared concern about the professional competence of the administrative staff in the institutional internationalisation process. In addition, the prevalence of a positive attitude among the administrators in the focus group discussions is consistent with their positive responses to the Phase One questionnaire. These findings suggest that the perception of the administrators regarding their internationalisation efforts might be shaped by comparing the institutional contemporary context with the past, rather than referring to any existing external conceptualisations of internationalisation.

### **5.3.8. Financial and infrastructure support**

In international evaluation tools, the evaluation of *financial support* and *infrastructure support* were examined separately and in different ways from the key university. For example, the Osaka tool only evaluated support services and facilities for international researchers and students, together with the budgeting for internationalisation at Japanese universities. However, the Peking tool did not have any criteria examining this dimension at Chinese universities.

At the key university, the two dimensions of *financial and infrastructure support* were suggested to be combined into one in conducting an evaluation of internationalisation, and this dimension was considered as one of the top priorities by only the F2 academics.

For the F3 administrators and the F1 academics, this dimension of *financial and infrastructure support* was considered to be a “*mission without a feasible solution*” since this dimension did not have sufficient support to impact on the internationalisation process. According to the F1 academics, including this dimension in the evaluation was more “*for the purpose of having a comprehensive set of evaluation criteria*” than evaluating the actual support. It was acknowledged by a financial administrator that “*most of the financial support [for internationalisation] from the university has been on improving domestic degree programs, but the budget is still limited*” (F3). These comments indicate that both the academics and administrators were aware of the financial constraints that the key university had encountered in internationalisation.

However, the academics in F2 ranked this combined dimension as the third priority in the evaluation. According to the F2 academics, finance and infrastructure was “*one of the key factors in a chain effect of management, implementation of and financing [for internationalisation]*” (F2). These academics indicated that “*in requiring the domestic academic staff to internationalise their teaching and research, not only the financial support but also the supporting infrastructure should be appropriately provided*” (F2). The existing out-dated technology for a language interpretation course was raised by F2 academics as an example of how infrastructure issues held back the effort of internationalising domestic degree programs.

The comments from F2 academics indicate that they were considering the priority for the finance and infrastructural dimension from the perspective of planning internationalisation, rather than evaluating the university’s actual internationalisation

practices. In contrast, the lower priority, which was attached to this dimension by the F1 academics and F3 administrators, suggests that they might reflect on the contemporary context of internationalisation in developing an evaluation.

### **5.3.9. International cooperation**

*International cooperation* was examined in different ways by the international evaluation tools in comparison to the key university. This dimension was included in sections examining the internationalisation of research and education programs by such evaluation tools as MINT and IMPI. In contrast, evaluation tools such as Osaka investigated this dimension separately, with a focus on multifaceted promotion of international affiliations. The Peking tool also looked at the cooperation of Chinese universities with international institutions.

In discussing *international cooperation* at the key university, the F1 academics considered that dimension to be important for planning institutional internationalisation, rather than evaluating the contemporary practice. Although not all of the academics in this focus group saw much evidence of international cooperation in their units, they agreed that the inclusion of this dimension could be helpful “*in setting a plan for improving international cooperation to support internationalisation*” at the key university. It was mentioned that the examination of *international cooperation* would help the key university reflect and continue their efforts in “*getting us known more by other international universities, organisations and corporations not only abroad but inside the country*” (F1).

## 5.4. Chapter summary

How different dimensions that were frequently examined by the international evaluation tools were considered and prioritised, with regard to developing an evaluation of internationalisation at the key university, is summarised in Table 5.2 below.

*Table 5.2: International evaluation dimensions vs institutional considerations in evaluating internationalisation at the key university*

N o	International evaluation dimensions	Priorities in implementing internationalisation	Priorities in developing an evaluation of internationalisation	Priority (1 as the most priority)		
				F1 academics	F2 academics	F3 administrators
1	Institutional commitment					
2	Management				2	
3	Education program	Domestic education programs	Domestic education programs	1	4	1
4	Research	Domestic research	Domestic research competence	3		3
5	Academic staff	Domestic academic staff	Domestic academic staff	2	1	2
6	Students		Domestic students			
7	Administrative support system		Administrative staff	2		
8	Financial support		Financial and infrastructure support		3	
9	Infrastructure support					
10	International cooperation		International cooperation activities			

The findings reveal that the priorities for evaluation were placed on domestic factors, which were the focus of the internationalisation effort being implemented in the key university. In evaluating the internationalisation of *education programs*, the improvement of the domestic degree programs was, therefore, the priority. With regard to the internationalisation of *research* dimension, developing the research competence of domestic academic staff was the priority. With regard to *academic staff*, it was found that the professional competence of domestic academic staff was also prioritised in evaluating internationalisation at the key university. Although the *students* dimension was not one of the prioritised ones in the contemporary internationalisation at the key university, concern was about implementing internationalisation for domestic students.

However, in addition to priorities given to dimensions which related to the domestic focus in implementing internationalisation, the findings indicate a number of other

prioritised dimensions were raised by the focus group participants. These additional dimensions included: *management*, *administrative staff*, and *financial and infrastructure support*. These dimensions were included as priorities in an evaluation due to their important influence on the success of the internationalisation effort rather than their actual implementation in practice. This finding suggests that the policy implementers might hold different views when considering an evaluation of their internationalisation effort. In particular, the administrators in F3 tended to see the evaluation as a review of their internationalisation efforts at home, so they gave the highest priority to the three key dimensions for which most internationalisation practices had been implemented. However, the academics in F2 appeared to view the evaluation as a tool for better planning the university's future internationalisation effort by including additional dimensions, other than those prioritised in their contemporary internationalisation effort. The academics in F1 tended to stand between these two extremes by recommending that different weights should be given to different dimensions over different stages of internationalisation, in order to satisfy both reviewing and planning purposes.

The considerations raised by the policy implementers in this phase provided a preliminary framework of potential dimensions and key criteria for developing a set of criteria for evaluating internationalisation at the key university. The findings from the pilot using this set of criteria, and further institutional concerns regarding the development of a contextualised set of criteria, are presented in the next chapter.



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **PHASE THREE FINDINGS**

#### **6.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, findings from Phase Three of the study are presented. The findings from this phase contributed to completing the development of a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at the key university. Chapter Six begins with the findings on the general context of internationalisation at the two supplementary universities, which were invited to pilot the set of evaluation criteria developed as a result of the previous phase of the study. The chapter then moves on to presenting the questionnaire findings on how the three participating universities responded to the criteria for evaluating internationalisation practices in each dimension. Following that, the findings from the final focus groups conducted with the policy implementers at the key university are presented. These findings reveal further concerns regarding the relevance of evaluation criteria in studying the internationalisation effort at the key university. In the final section, a summary of key findings from this phase is presented.

#### **6.2. General context of internationalisation at two supplementary universities**

In addition to the 26 policy implementers at the key university who participated in Phase One, 50 policy implementers from the two supplementary universities (25 each) were invited to trial the set of evaluation criteria in the form of a questionnaire in Phase Three. There were 32 completed questionnaires returned from the two supplementary universities: 16 from supplementary university 1 (SU1) and 16 from supplementary university 2 (SU2) (64% in total). However, it should be noted that, of the 32 completed questionnaires returned from the two supplementary universities, just 31 were completely filled with regard to the Background questions on the contemporary context of internationalisation<sup>1</sup> in their particular university.

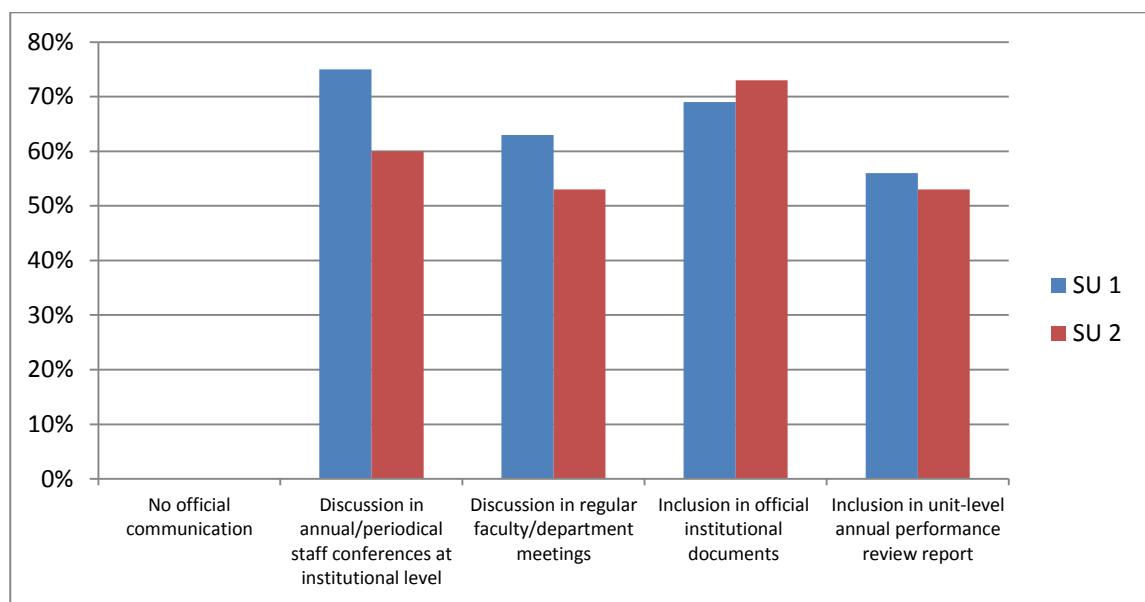
In responding to Q1 about the initiation of an institution-wide effort towards internationalisation, 97% of respondents from SU2 noted that their university started

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<sup>1</sup> One response was missed in SU2 for the Background questions

their internationalisation effort more than 5 years ago. However, just 44% of SU1 respondents thought their internationalisation effort had begun more than 5 years ago, and 56% said it had begun between 3 and 5 years ago. It is possible that the internationalisation effort at the two supplementary universities might have been initiated at the same time as the key university, which occurred after the Development Plan of the mother university, for the 5-year period of 2010-2015, was announced.

In looking at the responses to Q2 regarding the communication of the internationalisation initiative, it was found that there had been a range of official communications and opportunities for discussion about the internationalisation initiative at both SUs (see Figure 6.1).



*Figure 6.1: Availability of communication approaches for internationalisation at two supplementary universities (Q2- Background section)*

While discussion in annual/periodical staff conferences at the institutional level was considered to be the most frequent communication approach at SU1 (75%), the inclusion of internationalisation in official institutional documents was reported to be the main communication channel at SU2 (73%). In addition, other methods of communication (regular faculty/department meetings and unit-level annual performance review report) were also reported by more than half of the respondents at each SU. This finding indicates that a significant majority of the policy implementers at both SU1 and SU2 were aware of their internationalisation effort.

Regarding the dimensions with the most improvement in the recent internationalisation effort (Q3), the two supplementary universities seemed to have a similar focus in

implementing internationalisation as the key university. The most frequently selected dimensions at SU1 and SU2 were *education programs* (56% and 93% respectively); *research* (75% and 67% respectively); *international cooperation* (88% and 67% respectively); and *professional competence of academic staff* (44% and 60% respectively). These figures suggest that the internationalisation efforts at the two supplementary universities were also represented by the improvement in similar dimensions as the key university.

In considering the most challenging issues for the internationalisation effort (Q4), the respondents at SU1 and SU2 had different viewpoints. *Financial support* was not considered as the most challenging issue at SU1, with just 29%. However, it was considered to be the largest challenge by 87% of SU2 respondents. At SU1, the most challenging issue recognised by the largest number of respondents (44%) was the *competence of academic staff*, but only 7% of SU2 respondents considered it as the most challenging. It seems that only SU2 had similar financial constraints to the key university, nonetheless SU1 tended to share a concern about academic staff with the key university.

With regard to the evaluation of the internationalisation effort (Q5), the responses from both SU1 and SU2 indicate that they did not yet have this evaluation practice. Interestingly, 81% of SU1 respondents and 60% of SU2 respondents reported that internationalisation was mostly assessed as a part of internal evaluation. However, a number of respondents at SU1 and SU2 (31% and 47% respectively) reported that their university assessed internationalisation as a part of the accreditation process by the Asian University Network, and with regard to setting up international joint programs. These responses suggest that the two supplementary universities did not look into internationalisation through a separate evaluation practice, as at the key university.

In considering priorities given to various dimensions in evaluating internationalisation (Q6), the two supplementary universities shared some similar central concerns with the key university. The dimensions about which the SU1 and SU2 respondents were most concerned in evaluating their internationalisation included: *academic staff* (88% and 53% respectively); *education programs* (50% and 40% respectively); *research* (63% and 40% respectively); *financial support* (56% and 60% respectively); and *international cooperation* (56% and 53% respectively). In addition, 56% of SU1 respondents considered *students* to be an extremely important dimension in the evaluation of

internationalisation. This finding indicates that the policy implementers at the two supplementary universities might have similar concerns as those at the key university if an evaluation of their internationalisation effort was conducted.

The results from the background questions show that there was a similarity, to some extent, in terms of the priorities in implementing internationalisation, the challenges, as well as priorities in evaluating internationalisation between the two supplementary universities and the key university.

In the following section, responses from the three universities regarding the availability of specific internationalisation practices are examined for each dimension. In this regard, the number of completed questionnaires returned was 26/26 (100%) from the key university and 32/32 (100%) from the two supplementary universities.

### **6.3. Responses to internationalisation evaluation criteria from three universities**

In this section, key findings from the three universities' responses regarding the piloted evaluation criteria (provided as questions) are presented. These findings will be presented in relation to each dimension, beginning with the institutional commitment to internationalisation.

#### **6.3.1. Institutional commitment to internationalisation**

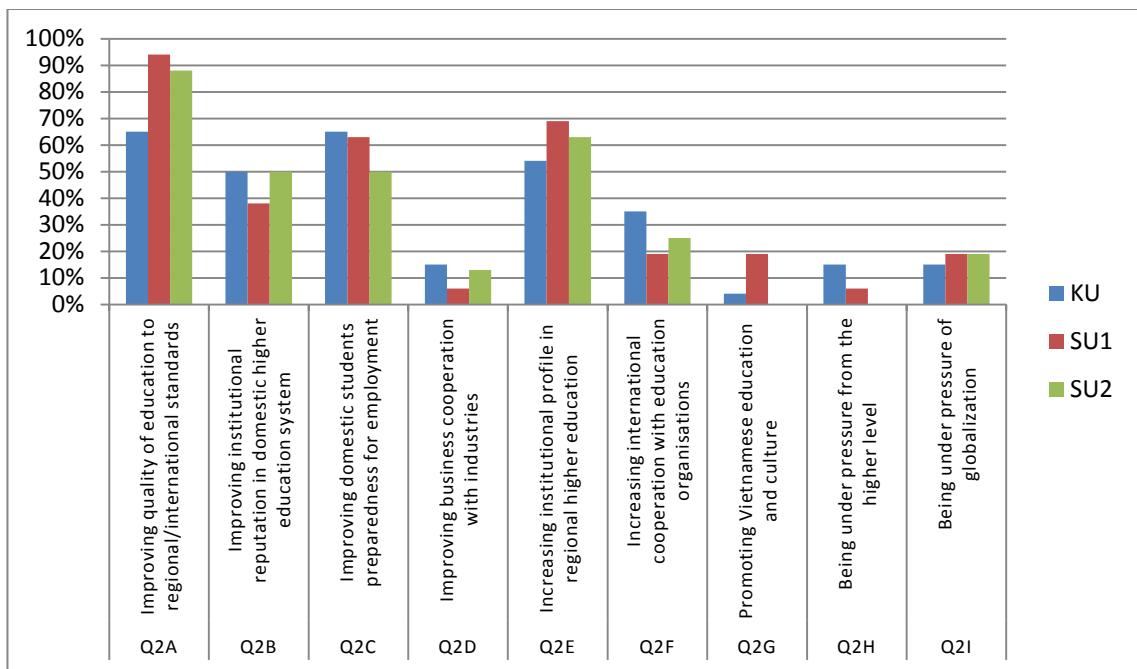
The institutional commitment to internationalisation was examined through the first three questions of the questionnaire (Q1 – Q3): internationalisation in each university's mission statement, reasons for internationalisation, and the focus of internationalisation. Responses to each of these questions are discussed in turn below.

##### ***Internationalisation in the mission statement***

In identifying how internationalisation had been referred to in the mission statement (Q1), the three universities appeared to have similar concerns. The term *international standard* was the most frequent selection by the respondents: 81% at KU, 81% at SU1, and 69% at SU2. Although *international education* ranked second as the most frequent term, it tended to be more popular at SU1 (44%) and SU2 (50%) than KU (35%). These responses do, however, indicate that the respondents at the three universities were familiar with these terms.

### ***Compelling reasons for implementing internationalisation***

In selecting the most compelling reasons for focusing on internationalisation (Q2), the three universities tended to have similar responses though the response rate appeared to be somewhat different (see Figure 6.2).



*Figure 6.2: Compelling reasons for implementing internationalisation at the three universities (Q2)*

As shown in Figure 6.2, *improving quality of education to regional/international standards* (Q2A) was the reason selected by the largest number of respondents from all three universities: 65% at KU, 94% at SU1, and 88% at SU2. In addition, three other compelling reasons frequently selected by the three universities were: *improving institutional reputation in domestic higher education system* (Q2B); *improving domestic students' preparedness for employment* (Q2C); *increasing institutional profile in regional higher education* (Q2E).

The similar responses from the three universities indicate that they might have a shared vision for internationalisation. Being public universities and in the same national university federation, this was not a surprising finding. This finding is also a reflection of the objective defined for the wider context of Vietnamese higher education, which is expected to “*provide human resources for the national requirement of socio-economic development and international integration*” (Vietnam National Assembly, 2012).

### ***Focus of internationalisation***

The three universities were also found to have a similar focus in the internationalisation effort (Q3). Three dimensions selected by the largest number of respondents at the three universities were: *education programs*, *research*, and *academic staff competence*. These three criteria were seen as the most relevant in reflecting the institutional commitment to internationalisation of the three participating universities.

The *education programs* was the most frequently selected dimension in the internationalisation effort at KU (89%), SU1 (94%) and SU2 (88%). The other two dimensions (*research* and *academic staff competence*) were selected slightly more frequently at SU1 (75% and 75% respectively) and SU2 (69% and 81% respectively) than at KU (54% and 62% respectively). Although *research* was rated lower than academic staff competence at SU2, it was ranked even lower at KU. However, the responses still indicate that all three universities tended to have similar priorities in identifying the focus in their internationalisation efforts.

### ***6.3.2. Management for internationalisation***

Criteria related to the management for internationalisation were investigated in three questions on: planning, coordination, and institutional funding for internationalisation (Q4 – Q6). Results on how each of these was regarded at the three universities are discussed below.

#### ***Planning for internationalisation***

Regarding how the planning for internationalisation was organised (Q4), all respondents at KU (100%) said that internationalisation was *integrated as a part of their overall development plan*. Similarly, a significant majority of the respondents from SU1 (88%) and SU2 (94%) made the same response.

#### ***Coordinating the implementation of internationalisation***

There was some variation among respondents from the three universities in describing how the implementation of internationalisation was coordinated (Q5). Nonetheless, the most selected response from the three universities was *integrating the implementation of internationalisation into functions and responsibilities of related units* (77% at KU, 81% at SU1, and 69% at SU2). It was interesting that 31% of respondents at KU believed that *there was a separate unit for organising the implementation*. Similarly,

38% at SU2 agreed with that idea. At SU1, while 13% said that *no specific coordination roles had been assigned for such implementation*, another 13% thought *a person/team assigned by the board of management coordinated the implementation of internationalisation*. These numbers mean that there were still respondents who thought that the coordination of internationalisation was managed by more than one approach at the same time. This finding implies that how the implementation of internationalisation was coordinated might not have been known to all respondents at each university.

### **Funding for internationalisation**

Regarding the sources of funding for internationalisation (Q6), the key university appeared to have the least funding compared with the other two supplementary universities (see Figure 6.3).

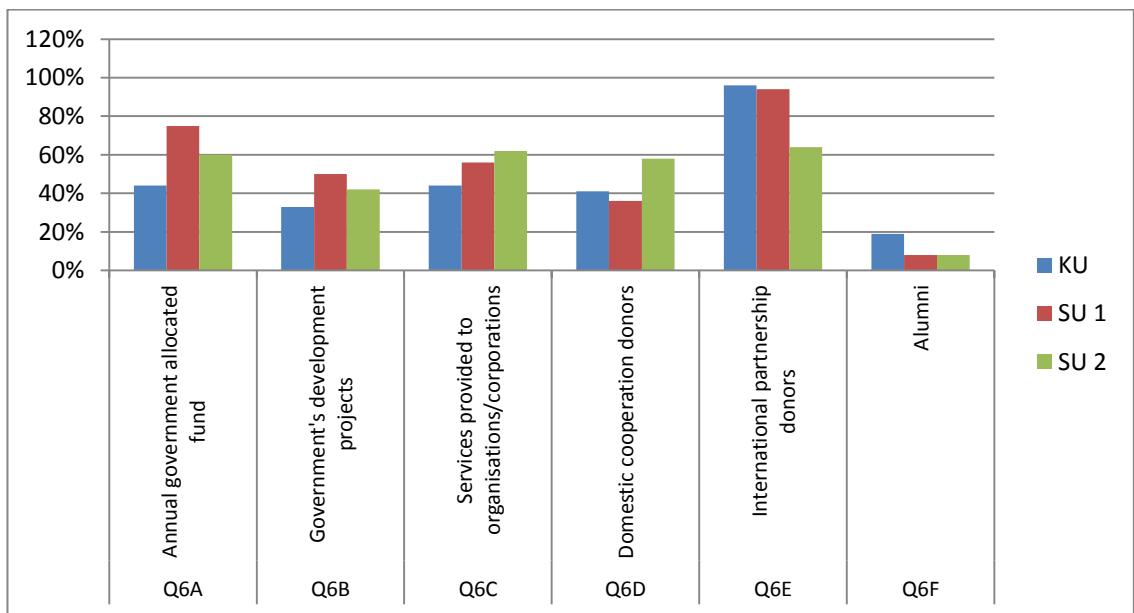


Figure 6.3: Respondents' views regarding the availability financial sources for internationalisation (Q6)

As shown in Figure 4.5, the biggest source of funding for internationalisation at all three universities was *international partnership donors* (Q6E), with 96% of responses at KU; 94% at SU1; and 64% at SU2. Three other sources of funding were frequently noted by the respondents: *annual government allocated fund* (Q6A); *services provided to organisations/corporations* (Q6C); and *domestic cooperation donors* (Q6D). However, compared to SU1 and SU2, fewer KU respondents reported these as their frequent sources of funding. In particular, the key university appeared to have the least government funding for internationalisation, with only 44% compared to 75% from SU1 and 60% from SU2.

### 6.3.3. Education programs

The criteria for evaluating internationalisation in *education programs* were explored through nine questions (Q10 - Q18). Key findings from these questions are described in the following sections, beginning with the academic levels and contexts of internationalisation.

#### *Academic levels and contexts of internationalisation*

In examining the internationalisation at three academic levels (*undergraduate, masterate and doctoral*), and with regard to four different contexts (*institution-wide, faculty, division<sup>2</sup> or program*) (Q10), the findings indicate that internationalisation mostly took place at the undergraduate level and in a specific program context.

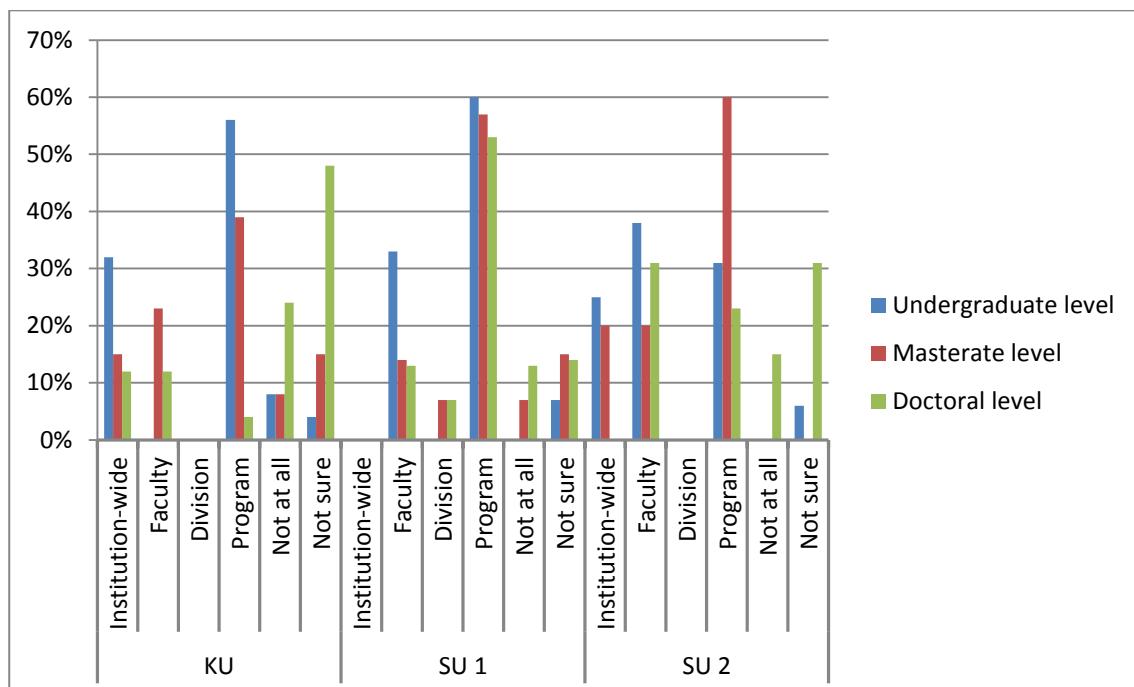


Figure 6.4: Responses from three universities regarding academic levels and contexts in the internationalisation effort (Q10)

As shown in Figure 6.4, internationalisation mostly took place at the *undergraduate level* in the three universities. At KU, undergraduate internationalisation was reported to occur mostly in the context of the *program* (56%), whereas just 32% of respondents reported that it took place *institution-wide*. For SU1, most of respondents noted that

<sup>2</sup> Division is a management unit which is smaller than faculty at a Vietnamese public university. There can be two or three independent divisions within a faculty. This unit can also be independent from a faculty.

internationalisation at the *undergraduate level* took place within the context of the *program* (60%) and *faculty* (33%). However, SU2 responses varied regarding the contexts for internationalisation: *institution-wide* (25%), *faculty* (38%), and *program* (31%).

In addition, no respondents at KU and SU2 reported that internationalisation took place in the *division* context for all three academic levels. There were also no SU1 respondents reporting that internationalisation was *institution-wide* for all three academic levels. These response patterns raise a question about the perceived relevance of this criterion to the contemporary internationalisation effort in education programs at these three universities. Further clarification, therefore, might be needed.

### ***Improving international perspectives in domestic degree programs***

All 14 practices for improving international perspectives of domestic degree programs investigated in Q11 were reported to be available at the three universities, although some were reported less frequently. For example, 100% of KU respondents believed that the *revision of program structure* (e.g., *number of credits, number of courses*) was undertaken to improve international perspectives, along with 81% at SU1 and 94% at SU2. Across the 14 practices, *development of online sections/courses in addition to traditional contact hours* was the practice which was the least frequently reported at the three universities (58% at KU, 56% at SU1, and 40% at SU2). These findings are consistent with the institutional goals in internationalising domestic degree programs at the three universities. The findings also imply that many internationalisation practices seemed to be frequently implemented at these universities in internationalising domestic degree programs.

### ***International perspectives in the content of domestic degree programs***

Regarding international perspectives in the recently revised content of domestic degree programs (Q12), there was a consensus among the respondents from the three universities about the inclusion of these perspectives. For instance, the inclusion of *foreign literature and materials* was reported by 92% respondents from KU, 75% from SU1, and 100% from SU2. However, the inclusion of an *international dimension/comparison of a subject* was the least frequent aspect at KU (58%), compared to 67% at SU1 and 94% at SU2. The different levels of concern in each university regarding international perspectives might have been influenced by their

different academic disciplines, in line with the prevalent mono-disciplinary focus of public universities in Vietnam.

### ***Credit transfer/recognition with international universities***

Regarding the transfer/recognition of credit with international universities (Q13, Q14), this was found to be frequently reported for *undergraduate level* and for *some education programs* at the three universities.

Q13 referred to the extent to which international credit transfer/recognition had been implemented at the three academic levels (*undergraduate, masterate, and doctoral*). The findings show that the credit transfer/recognition tended to be applied the most for *some programs* at the *undergraduate level* (65% at KU; 56% at SU1 and 75% at SU2). At the *masterate level*, the practice of credit transfer/recognition for *some programs* was reported by more respondents at KU (50%) and SU2 (60%), than at SU1 (38%). However, at the *doctoral level*, the practice of international credit transfer/recognition appeared to be less clear, with a number of the respondents from the three universities reporting “Not Sure” (65% at KU; 63% at SU1; 47% at SU2).

With regard to how international credits were transferred/recognized (Q14), the more popular approach reported at the three universities was through *mutual recognition by agreement with foreign partner universities* (85% at KU, 56% at SU1, and 94% at SU2). The recognition of *any credits earned in similar courses at any foreign universities* was also reported by 50% of KU respondents, but only 27% at both SU1 and SU2 reported this practice.

For all three universities, most credit transfer/recognition activities with international universities took place at the *undergraduate level* and for *some programs*. However, the key university appeared to be more flexible than the two supplementary universities in dealing with international credits from foreign universities.

### ***International joint programs***

While the availability of international joint programs (Q15) did not seem to be widely reported, the support of such programs to internationalising domestic degree programs (Q16) was positively recognised at the three universities.

With regard to Q15, the respondents had different views regarding different types of international joint programs available at the three universities (see Figure 6.5).

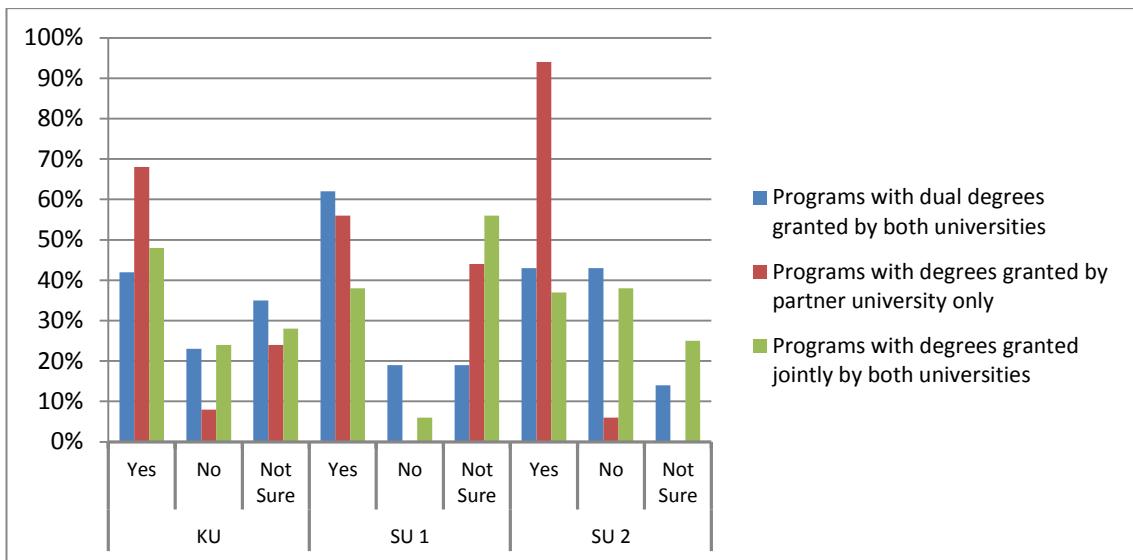


Figure 6.5: Responses from the three universities on the available types of international joint programs (Q15)

As shown in Figure 6.5, *programs with degrees granted by partner university only* were the most popular type at two universities (68% at KU and 94% at SU2). In contrast, *programs with dual degrees granted by both universities* was the most selected option at SU1 (62%) whereas being second at KU (42%) and SU2 (43%). However, there was also a number of “No” or “Not Sure” responses from all three universities regarding the availability of these programs. These various responses indicate that the availability of international joint programs was not widely known by the respondents at each university at the time of the study. Some further clarification on this, therefore, might be needed.

Despite the varied responses to types of international joint programs, there seemed to be a consensus regarding their contribution to the internationalisation of domestic education programs (Q16). Across the five domains (*teaching methods, program content and materials, program structure, program evaluation and management*), high percentages of “Yes” response were reported.

### ***Use of foreign language in teaching and learning***

The use of foreign language in teaching and learning (Q17) reportedly varied among the three universities. This practice was examined with regard to four types of program offerings: (1) *standard degree programs by your university*; (2) *international standard degree programs by your university*; (3) *international degree programs by partner university*; (4) *international dual degree programs by your university and partner*

*university*. With each type of degree program, three options were provided: *No course*; *Some courses*; and *All courses*.

For the first two types of degree programs provided by the three universities, the use of foreign languages in teaching and learning was mainly reported for *some courses*. In particular, 76% at KU, 69% at SU1 and 79% at SU2 reported that foreign languages were used for some courses in *standard degree programs by the university*. These percentages, however, were a bit higher than those for *international standard degree programs by the university* (35% at KU, 60% at SU1, and 56% at SU2). For the key university, this difference might be explained by the fact that it is a university providing foreign languages education. However, for the other two universities, the difference appeared to be unusual because foreign languages, particularly English language, were supposed to be used more frequently in *international standard degree programs* which were provided as a part of the project led by the mother university (Vietnam National University, 2014).

For the other two types of international degree/dual degree programs, the use of foreign languages in teaching and learning was reported differently among the three universities. For example, a large number of respondents at KU (64%) and SU2 (81%) noted that foreign languages were used in teaching and learning for *all courses* of *international degree programs by partner university*. However, respondents at SU1 tended to have differing views, with 31% saying ‘*for some courses*’, 38% ‘*for all courses*’, and 31% saying ‘*Not sure*’.

These findings raise a question regarding the use of foreign languages in different types of education programs among the three universities. Some further clarification, therefore, might be needed in terms of the relevance of this criterion to the context of each of these universities.

### ***Application for regional/international accreditation***

Among the three academic levels (*undergraduate, masterate, and doctoral*), the practice of *applying for regional/international accreditation* (Q18) was reported the most at the undergraduate level at all three universities (81% at KU, 75% at SU1 and 88% at SU2). For the *masterate level*, more KU respondents (73%) were confident about having *some programs accredited regionally/internationally* than at SU1 or SU2 (27% and 21% respectively). For the *doctoral level*, most of respondents reported “*No programs*” or

“Not sure”, indicating that doctoral programs generally tended to be internally accredited within individual universities.

#### **6.3.4. Research**

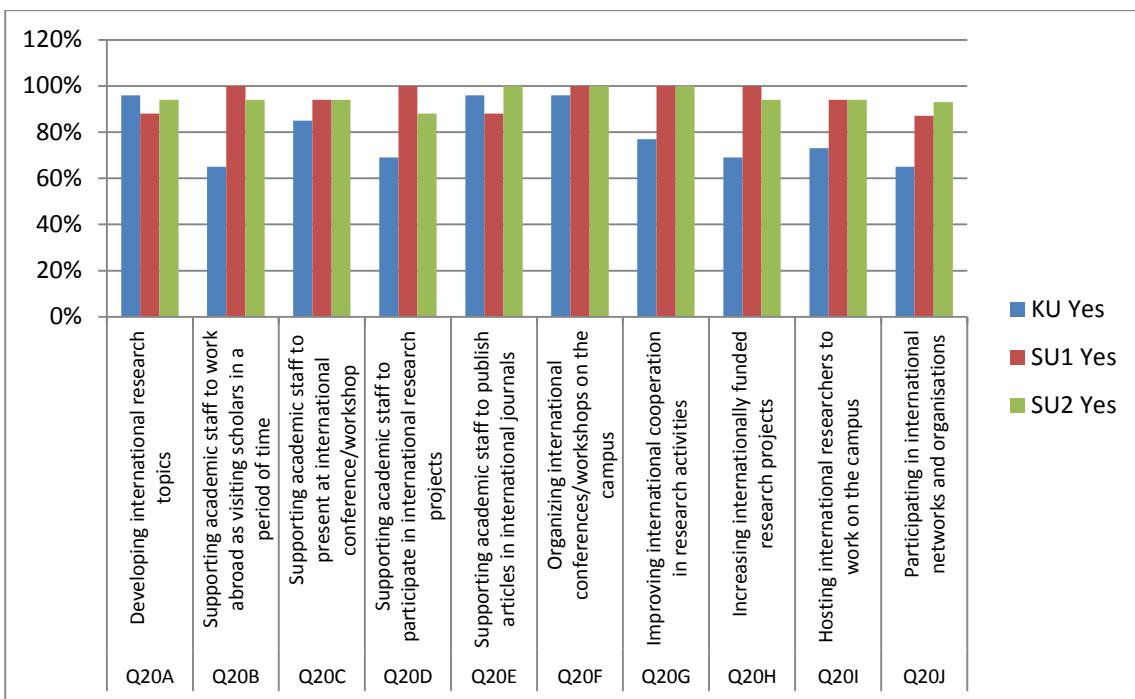
With regard to the dimension of research, two criteria investigated firstly the priority given to international research collaboration and secondly the practices for promoting internationalisation of research (Q19 and Q20). These results are discussed next.

##### ***Priority given to international research collaboration***

Most of the respondents from the three universities agreed that international research collaboration (Q19) was prioritised in their internationalisation effort (85% from KU, 100% from SU1 and 94% SU2). This result indicates that respondents from the two supplementary universities seemed to be more positive about this practice than those from the key university. This finding might result from the difference in academic disciplines among the three universities. Although the key university specialises in foreign language education, it had been reported by the senior leader in Phase One to focus more on teaching. This might be the reason why international research collaboration might not have been seen as a priority among their academics. However, the academic disciplines of the two supplementary universities (social science and humanities, and economics and business) might have involved more international collaboration.

##### ***Practices for promoting internationalisation of research***

All 10 practices for promoting internationalisation of research investigated in Q20 were reported to be available, but at a different level of frequency at each of the three universities (see Figure 6.6).



*Figure 6.6: Responses from the three universities on the availability of practices for promoting internationalisation of research (Q20)*

As can be seen from Figure 6.6, a majority of respondents at the three universities reported that all the ten practices identified in Q20 were available. However, the number of “Yes” responses by participants at KU was generally smaller than at SU1 and SU2, particularly for practices such as *supporting academic staff to work abroad as visiting scholars* (Q20B); *supporting academic staff to participate in international research projects* (Q20D) or *participating in international networks and organisations* (Q20J). For KU, this finding reflected, to some extent, the findings of previous phases regarding the lower frequency of internationalisation practices in research. Nonetheless, there was relatively strong interest among KU staff with regard to developing international research topics (Q20A). There was also more support provided at KU for publication than at SU1 (Q20E).

Overall, these findings indicate that all three universities had developed policies and practices to promote their institutional research although the achievement, which was identified at the key university through the Phase One findings, was still limited.

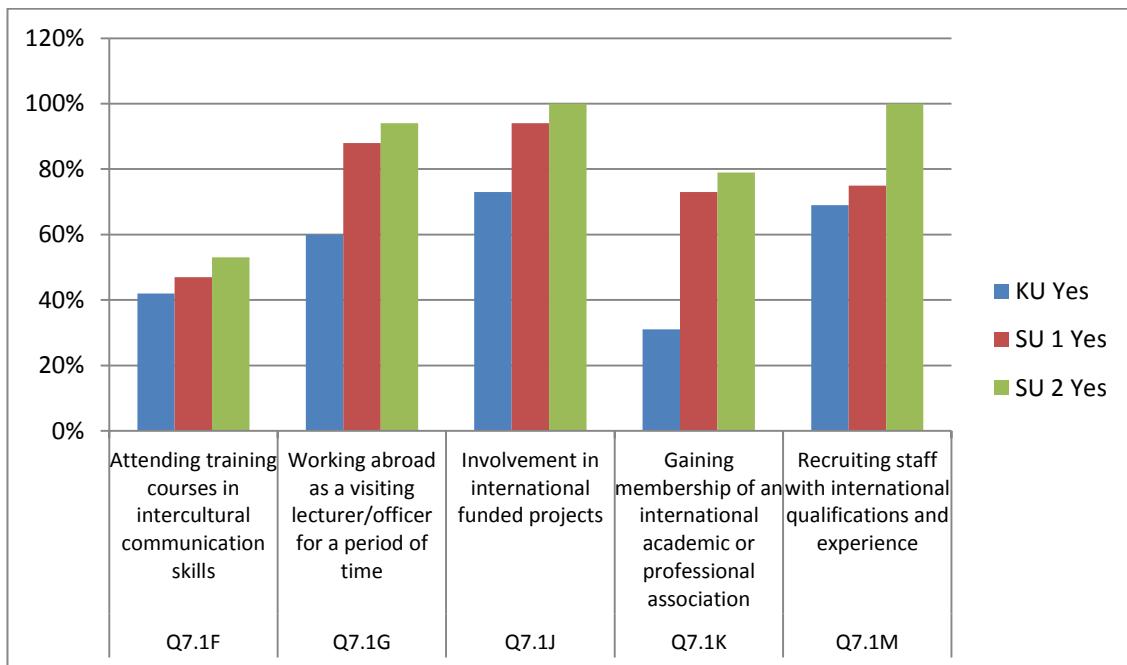
### **6.3.5. Staff development**

The dimension of staff development was examined in terms of practices for improving professional competence for internationalisation with regard to two groups of staff: *academic staff and administrative staff* (Q7.1 and Q7.2). In addition, there was a

criterion examining if international qualification/experience was considered in staff promotion (Q8).

### ***Academic staff development***

All 13 internationalisation practices for improving international competence for academic staff (Q7.1) were reported to be available; however, the availability of some practices at the key university was frequently reported to be less than at the other two supplementary universities (see Figure 6.7).



*Figure 6.7: Difference in particular internationalisation practices available for academic staff at three universities (Q7.1)*

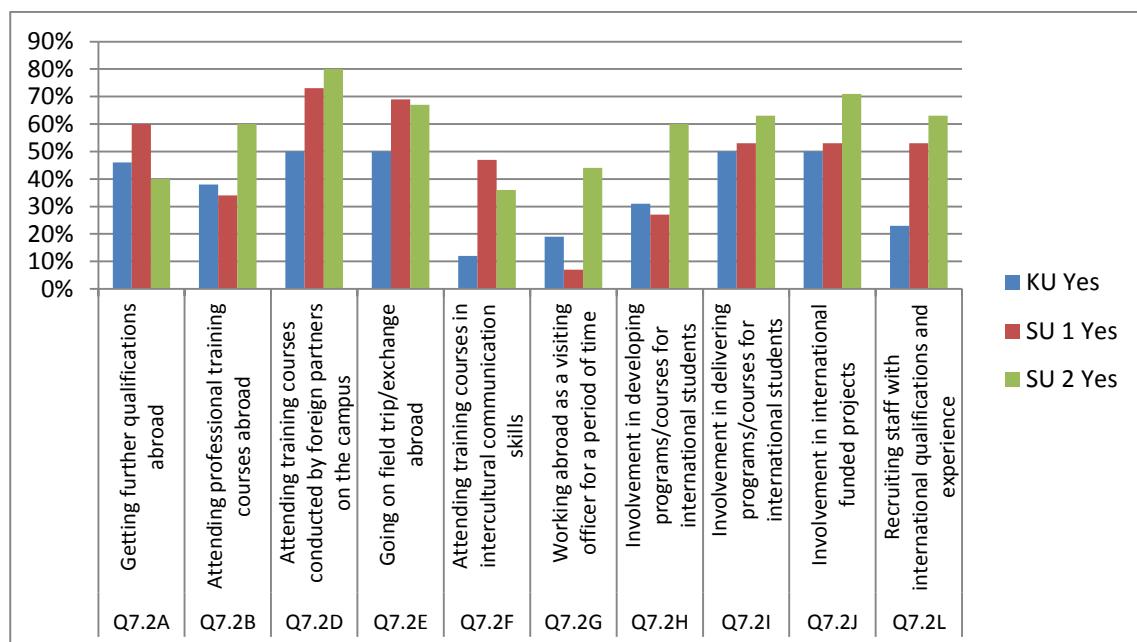
As shown in Figure 6.7, the number of “Yes” responses at KU was notably lower than at SU1 and SU2 for five specific practices. In particular, compared to 73% at SU1 and 79% at SU2, only 31% of KU respondents reported that *gaining membership of an international academic or professional association* (Q7.1K) was available at their university. This finding suggests that the difference in academic disciplines provided by each of the three universities might result in different availability of internationalisation practices for the academic staff.

### ***Administrative staff development***

There was also a difference among the three universities in their responses to the 12 internationalisation practices for improving international competence of the administrative staff evaluated (Q7.2).

Despite these differences, two practices were reported to be available by a large number of respondents at all three universities: *attending a foreign language (English or other) training program (Q7.2C)* (85% at KU; 88% at SU1; and 88% at SU2); and *involvement in organisation of international workshops/conferences (Q7.2K)* (73% at KU; 69% at SU1; and 73% at SU2).

Overall, however, the number of “Yes” responses at the key university was generally found to be lower than those at the two supplementary universities for most of the other ten internationalisation practices (see Figure 6.8).



*Figure 6.8: Difference in internationalisation practices available for administrative staff at three universities (Q7.2)*

As shown in Figure 6.8, the largest number of “Yes” responses at KU was 50%. These affirmative responses related to four activities: *attending training courses conducted by foreign partners on the campus (Q7.2D)*; *going on field trip/exchange abroad (Q7.2E)*; *involvement in delivering programs/courses for international students (Q7.2I)*; and *involvement in international funded projects (Q7.2J)*. However, these percentages still stood out as lower, compared to those from SU1 and SU2. The relatively smaller number of “Yes” responses at KU suggests that some of the practices explored in this item might not be widely applicable to that context.

#### ***International qualification/experience in staff promotion and tenure decisions***

Responses on whether international qualification and experience was considered in staff promotion and tenure decisions (Q8) differed among the three universities.

At the key university, a little under half of the respondents (42%) noted that international qualification and experience were considered in staff promotion and tenure decisions *for some faculties and departments*. However, there were a number of responses indicating “Not Sure” (23%) and “Not applicable” (23%) about this policy. In addition, only 12% thought that this policy was adopted in *all faculties and departments*.

Although the option of *not applicable* was not selected at SU1 and SU2, the responses from these universities varied among “yes, *for some faculties and departments*,” “yes, *for all faculties and departments*,” and “*not sure*”. About half of these respondents (47% at SU1 and 50% at SU2) noted that this policy was considered *for some faculties and departments*. However, 40% of respondents at SU1 reported that they were “Not Sure” about this policy, compared to only 19% from SU2 who indicated “Not Sure”. This finding suggests that a difference in institutional policy might exist across these public universities regarding this practice. The extent to which this policy was implemented was also likely to have an influence on staff development priorities in each of the three universities.

### **6.3.6. International teachers/experts**

Positive responses regarding the availability of different types of international teachers/experts in supporting institutional internationalisation (Q9) appeared to be more consistent at the key university compared to the two supplementary universities. Figure 6.9 below presents the results regarding the involvement of different types of international lecturers in two main functions (teaching and research) at the three universities.

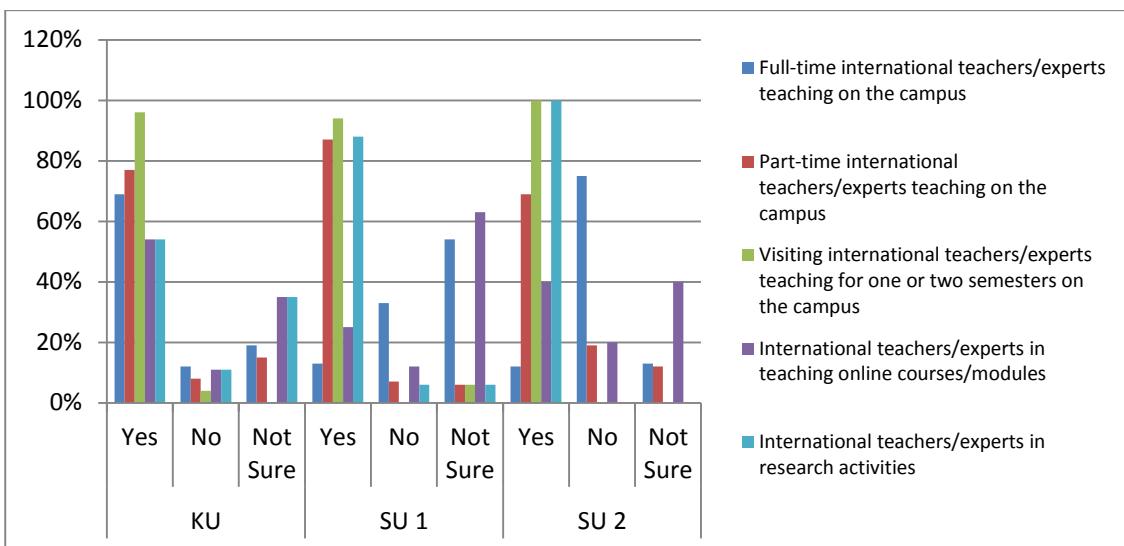


Figure 6.9: Responses on the involvement of different types of international teachers/experts at three universities (Q9)

Nonetheless, as indicated in Figure 6.9, visiting international lecturers teaching for one or two semesters on the campus was the most frequently reported activity at the three universities (96% at KU, 94% at SU1, 100% at SU2). There were also a number of KU respondents who thought that their university had full-time international lecturers teaching on the campus (69%), and a larger number (77%) knew about part-time international lecturers teaching on the campus. These numbers were relatively higher than those at the two supplementary universities. These findings suggest that the availability of different types of international teachers/experts might be a further factor linked to the difference in academic disciplines of the three universities.

### 6.3.7. Students

Three criteria were examined in relation to internationalisation practices with students: the available practices for improving international experience for domestic students (Q21), available education programs for international students (Q22), and available support services for international students (Q23).

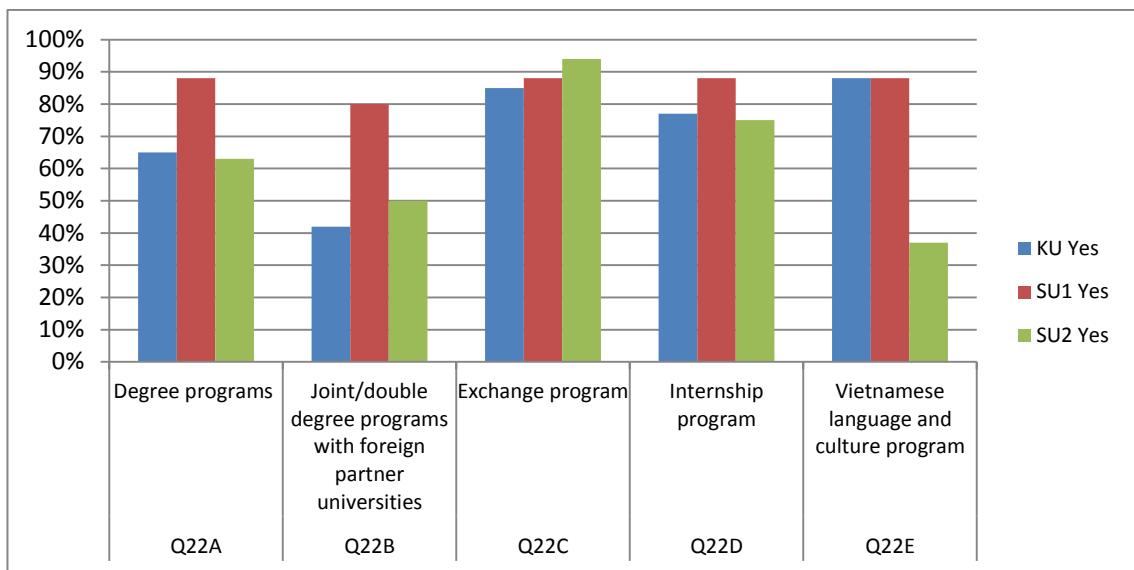
#### *Practices for improving international experiences for domestic students*

There were a large number of “Yes” responses from respondents at the three universities, about the availability of practices for improving international experience of domestic students (Q21). These practices were: (1) exchange programs with foreign universities, (2) internship abroad, (3) recognition of credits earned abroad, and (4) international activities on the campus. For example, exchange programs with foreign

*universities* were reported to be available by 96% of respondents at KU, 100% at SU1 and 88% at SU2. As indicated in Phase One findings at the key university, although these activities might be available, the extent of availability is questionable. However, the findings were a positive indicator of an upward trend for internationalisation in this area.

#### ***Available education programs for international students***

Regarding the availability of education programs for international students at the university (Q22), the responses varied among the three universities (see Figure 6.10).

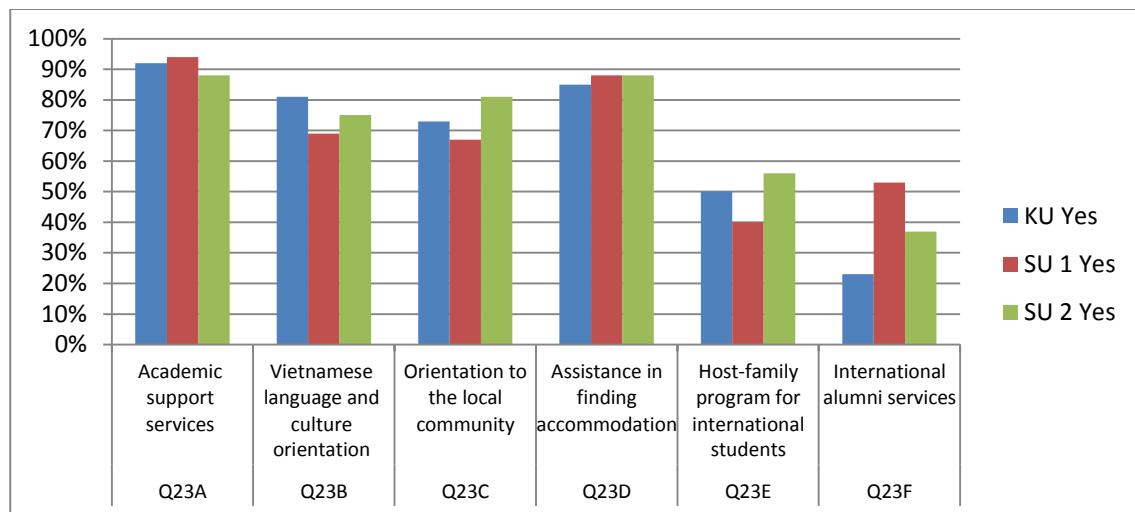


*Figure 6.10: Responses on the availability of education programs for international students at three universities (Q22)*

As shown in Figure 6.10, an *exchange program* (Q22C) was the most frequently reported by the respondents at the three universities (85% at KU; 88% at SU1, and 94% at SU2). In addition, KU and SU1 had a similarly high response regarding the availability of *Vietnamese language and culture program* for international students (88% for both). In contrast, only 37% SU2 respondents reported this kind of program. However, *joint/double degree programs with foreign partner universities* were not as popular at either KU (42%) or SU2 (50%) as they were at SU1 (80%). The difference regarding the availability of education programs for international students suggests that each university might have a different strategy for international students. It also indicates that the academic discipline of each university might influence this as well.

### ***Availability of support services for international students***

The six different types of support services for international students that were investigated in Q23 were reported to be available to a different extent at each of the three universities (see Figure 6.11).



*Figure 6.11: Responses on the availability of support services for international students at three universities (Q23)*

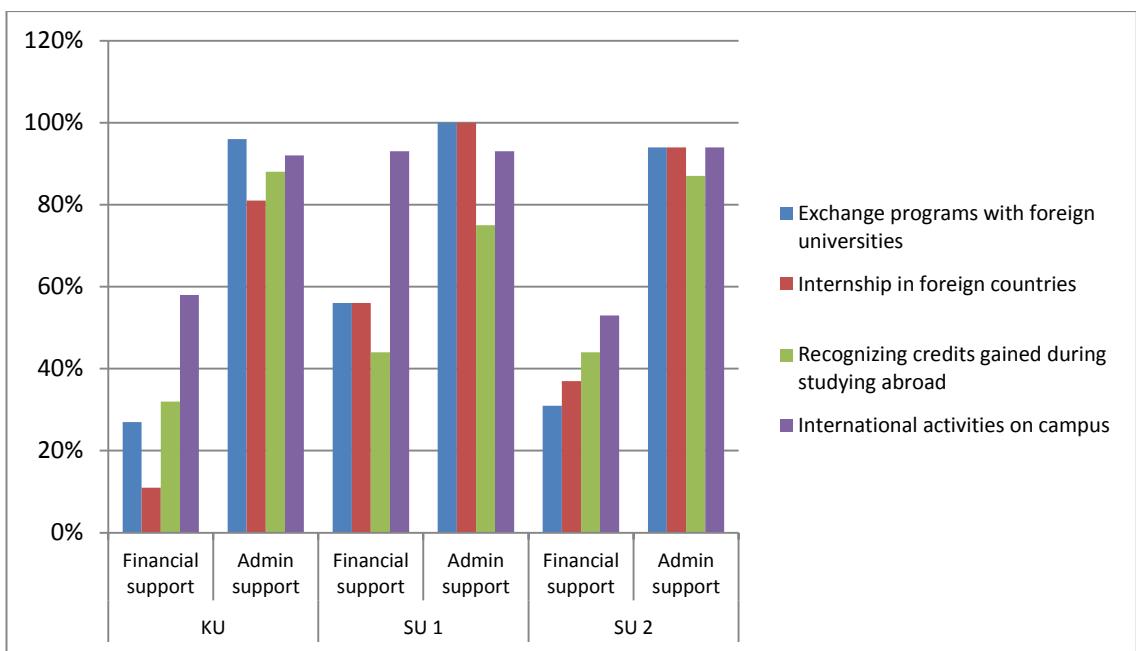
As shown in Figure 6.11, the four most frequently reported services for international students at the three universities were: *academic support services* (Q23A); *Vietnamese language and culture orientation* (Q23B); *orientation to the local community* (Q23C); and *assistance in finding accommodation* (Q23D). However, the number of KU respondents (23%) reporting the availability of *international alumni services* was relatively lower than at SU1 (53%) and SU2 (38%). These findings indicate that a different level of importance might be given to making some support services, particularly host family programs and alumni services, available for international students at these universities.

#### **6.3.8. Support systems**

Criteria for evaluating institutional support systems in the contemporary internationalisation focused on four aspects: financial support, administrative support procedures, infrastructure and facilities, international cooperation, and promotion and marketing.

### ***Financial and administrative support***

The financial and administrative systems were evaluated with regard to the support provided to the implementation of internationalisation practices across the different dimensions: *education programs, research, staff development, international teachers/experts and students*. A significant result in this section is that all three universities indicated financial support was less frequently available than administrative support in these dimensions. Figure 6.12 presents the remarkable difference between available financial and administrative support for domestic students in international practices.



*Figure 6.12: Responses on the availability of financial and administrative support for domestic students' international practices (Q21.1 and Q21.2)*

In addition, as indicated in Figure 6.12, the availability of financial support at KU was considerably less than that at SU1 and SU2. For example, the organisation of international activities on campus was said to be financially supported by 58% of KU respondents (the highest percentage given at KU) compared to 93% at SU1. The responses from KU respondents, however, were consistent with the comment by SL2 in Phase One that “*the university has almost no financial support for international activities for domestic students.*” These findings indicate that there appeared to be a difference in institutional policy on providing financial support for domestic students, although not so much in terms of administrative support. The availability of administrative support for international practices of domestic students was reported by a

majority of respondents from all three universities (96% at KU, 100% at SU1, and 94% at SU2).

### ***Infrastructure and facility support***

There was a relatively positive response regarding the extent to which the contemporary improvement of *infrastructure and facilities* supported the institutional internationalisation (Q25) among all three universities. Two areas reported to show the most improvement during the contemporary institutional internationalisation were: *classroom facilities* (*e.g., overhead projectors, screen, internet access*) and *information resources* (*books and e-database*) for education and research activities. However, the number of KU respondents (65%) reporting improvement in *classroom facilities* was found to be generally lower than in SU1 and SU2 (94% for both).

### ***International cooperation support***

The key university appeared to report less improvement in internationalisation practices linked to international cooperation in comparison to the two supplementary universities. This aspect was examined in Q26 (see Figure 6.13).

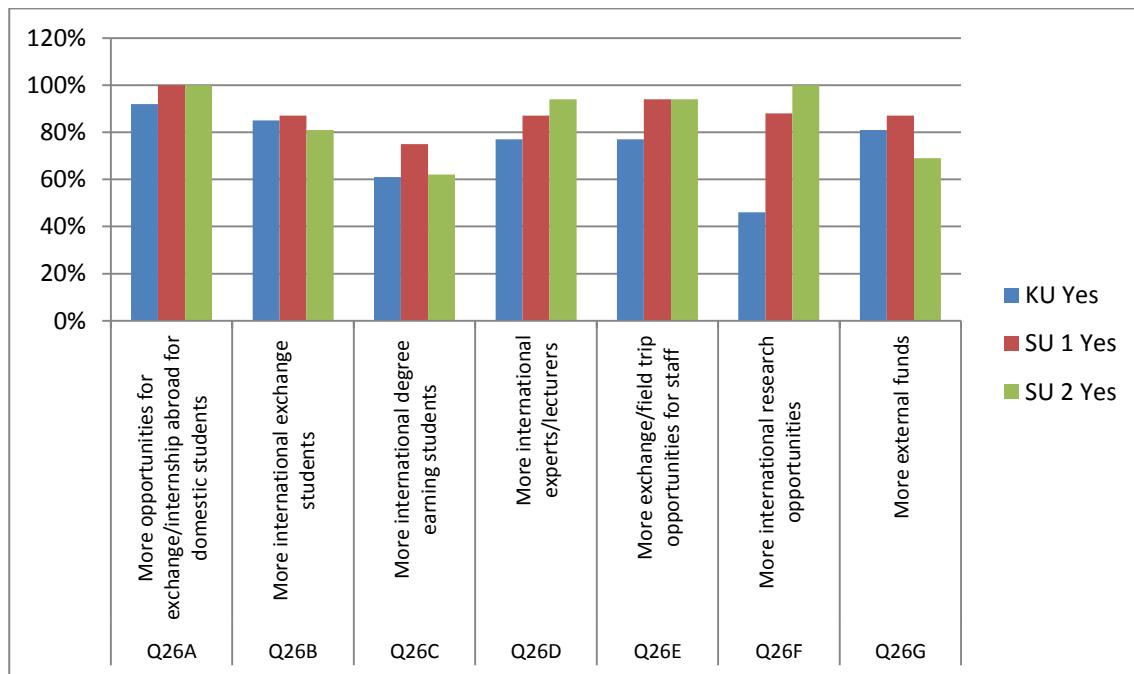


Figure 6.13: Responses on the contribution of international cooperation to the improvement of internationalisation practices at three universities (Q26)

As shown in Figure 6.13, *increasing in opportunities for exchange/internship programs abroad for domestic students* was reported to be the most improved practice (92% at KU, 100% at SU1, and 100% at SU2). However, compared to 88% at SU1 and 100% at

SU2, only 46% of KU respondents noted an *increase in international research opportunities* due to international cooperation. This finding raises a question about whether the different disciplines provided by each university might have influenced the extent of the expansion in their international cooperation. However, financial constraints may also be a factor here. As indicated above, the key university had the least financial funding for internationalisation among the three universities. This might, therefore, result in the least frequent of international cooperation practices at the key university.

### **Promotion and marketing to students**

The responses regarding the question on the promotion and marketing to students (Q27) showed different strategies in this aspect among the three universities. At the key university, a little over half of respondents (58%) reported that a plan for promoting and marketing education programs was *available for domestic students only*. This number was much higher than that at SU1 (21%), but relatively lower than that at SU2 (75%). This finding suggests that KU and SU2 tended to pay more attention to their domestic students. In contrast, SU1 tended to be more concerned about promotion and marketing to international students since 79% of SU1 respondents believed that this practice was available *for international students only*. This number was much larger than just 38% at KU and 25% at SU2. However, the low percentages at KU and SU2 appear to be inconsistent with the availability of their programs for international students. This finding raises a question on how they recruited international students if they did not do much promotion and marketing. Generally, however, these findings indicate that a plan for promoting and marketing institutional programs for either domestic or international students was available - to some extent - at the three universities.

### **6.4. Relevance of evaluation criteria to study internationalisation at the key university**

After piloting the initial set of evaluation criteria through the questionnaire, focus groups were organised in Phase Three, with the policy implementers at the key university, to discuss the relevance of the evaluation criteria to studying their internationalisation. The first focus group (F1) was conducted with 5 administrators; the second focus group (F2) involved 5 academics and the third focus group (F3) included a mix of 4 administrators and 4 academics.

At the start of each of the focus group discussions, a summary of the questionnaire results collected at the key university was presented by the researcher. The discussions did not go through every criterion, but focused on those for which the questionnaire responses raised questions about their relevance, as well as those directly questioned by the policy implementers in the focus groups. The discussions within the focus groups focused on the considerations that the policy implementers had in making decisions about the relevance of evaluation criteria. These discussions indicate that there were four factors on which the policy implementers based their decisions regarding the relevance of evaluation criteria for their internationalisation efforts.

Firstly, contemporary priorities in implementing internationalisation were the factor most emphasised by the policy implementers. The next factor considered by the policy implementers was their purpose for using the evaluation as both a review and a planning tools. For example, the policy implementers in F1 suggested retaining some evaluation criteria because “*these can be good for [future] planning*” although they were not widely relevant to contemporary internationalisation. For the F3 policy implementers, it was thought that having a comprehensive evaluation could help “*raise the awareness of the university leaders for better support and planning in internationalisation*.” The third factor was the academic discipline of the key university. The final factor was identified to be cultural relevance of the evaluation criteria. The findings on how these factors were taken into account with regard to the relevance of individual evaluation criteria, as discussed in the focus groups, are presented below for each dimension. The final set of evaluation criteria, and the changes that were made as a result of these focus groups, are shown in Table 6.1 at the end of this section.

#### **6.4.1. Education programs**

As a result of the questionnaire, there were five criteria related to Education programs, for which questions were raised about the influence of the single academic discipline on their relevance in evaluating internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university. The findings on how policy implementers discussed the relevance of each of these criteria to study internationalisation at the key university are presented in the following sections.

##### ***Academic levels and contexts of internationalisation***

It was pointed out by the academics in F1 and F2 that the criterion evaluating the internationalisation in ***Education programs*** in terms of academic levels and contexts

was beyond the current effort at the key university. For example, according to the administrators in F1, the internationalisation of domestic degree programs was currently just implemented “*for some but not all programs*”; therefore, whether it is the *institution-wide* or *faculty* context might not be relevant for evaluating the current level of internationalisation in this dimension.

It was suggested by the academics in both F1 and F2 that “*focusing the evaluation at program level*” was relevant to their internationalisation effort in domestic education programs. According to F2 academics, the examination of “*the number of program(s)*” would help the university “*see more clearly the achievements in some recently internationalised programs, and to plan for other programs.*” These comments are relevant to the results found from the questionnaire in this phase. The questionnaire findings indicate that the *program* context was reported by the most responses in internationalising domestic degree programs. In comparison, none opted for *division* and only a few opted for *faculty* or *institution-wide*. Moreover, the comment above, from F2 academics, also implies that, in the near future, internationalisation of domestic education programs might continue to focus on the program context. These academics, however, appeared to balance their concerns for both present and future internationalisation at their university. This criterion was, therefore, adjusted to provide different options within the *program* context to suit the focus in internationalising domestic degree programs at the key university.

### ***Improving international perspectives of domestic degree programs***

Under the criterion examining the improvement of international perspectives of domestic degree programs, the practice for the *development of online sections/courses in addition to traditional contact hours* was reported to be not fully implemented at the key university. The term *online* was suggested to have confused the policy implementers in responding to the questionnaire, because “*there has not been any course taught online completely at the university*” (F2 and F3) and “*many staff have not been fully aware of the concept*” (F1). According to a participating administrator in the institutional IT system, what had been done at the university was just “*posting some courses on the e-learning system or the Learning Management System (LMS)*” (F1).

The policy implementers suggested adjustment of this criterion for both the purposes of reviewing and planning their internationalisation. According to F1 administrators,

evaluating “*the utilization of e-learning system in teaching and learning*” was more relevant for the contemporary context of the key university. In addition, the academics in F2 suggested that the researcher should separate the *sections* and *courses* in the practice of *the development of online sections/courses* to represent different levels of online perspectives they expected with future education programs. The F2 academics considered these levels as representation of a progression that was “*relevant for planning future internationalisation*” (F2) at the key university. This comment is consistent with the suggestion by the academics in Phase Two that the evaluation could work as a planning tool for institutional internationalisation. Therefore, the practice of *utilizing e-learning system in teaching and learning* was added, and the *sections* and *courses* in the practice *development of online sections/courses in addition to traditional contact hours* were put as two separate indicators.

Cultural relevance was also considered regarding the improvement of international perspectives of domestic education programs. It was agreed by the academics and administrators in F3 that “*the use of foreign books in developing teaching materials for a program*” should be considered as a practice for improving the international perspectives of domestic degree programs. It was explained that how foreign books were used for domestic degree programs, “*as text books or as reference sources*”, was important in becoming internationalised. According to some academics in F3, this practice might represent “*different levels in internationalising domestic degree programs*” in that international perspectives of foreign books were employed in a way when “*it is relevant or linked to Vietnamese culture*” (F3). This comment is consistent with the concern raised by SL3 during the interview regarding the need to use foreign books with consideration of their cultural aspects. This suggestion also indicates that the key university tended to be concerned about this issue during their internationalisation effort. Their suggestion was, therefore, added to the final set of evaluation criteria.

### ***International perspectives in the content of domestic degree programs***

Regarding the criterion examining international perspectives in the content of domestic degree programs, the practice of *including international dimension/comparison of a subject* was mentioned regarding its relevance to the academic discipline of the key university. The academics in F2 explained that the academic discipline of their university (foreign language education) was already *international*; therefore, asking about the *international dimension* of this discipline would not be relevant. Instead, they

suggested replacing *international* with *intercultural* in this practice. As this comment was specifically about the professional knowledge related to the academic discipline of the key university, the adjustment was noted.

#### ***Credits transfer/recognition with international universities***

Regarding the credit transfer/recognition with international universities, a two-way recognition was suggested in considering the near future internationalisation effort. As acknowledged by F1 academics, the university did not yet have officially announced procedures for recognizing credits earned abroad “*due to small number of exchange students, both domestic and international ones.*” However, the questionnaire results indicated that the key university had been flexible in this practice. In talking about this practice, both academics and administrators in F1 and F3 agreed that it was closer to a one-way process when “*credits from our university were not recognised by many partners.*” According to a participating administrator in F3, the university was also concerned about “*having domestic credits recognised by other international universities*” and was working to “*get credits recognized by more partner universities.*” This comment reflects the viewpoint by SL3 of “*being recognised*” in interpreting their internationalisation effort. For the purpose of emphasizing two-way recognition of credits, as suggested in the focus groups, a criterion examining how domestic credits can be recognized by/transferred to international universities was added to the final set of evaluation criteria.

#### ***Use of foreign language in teaching and learning***

The use of foreign language in teaching and learning was specifically discussed in the three focus groups with regard to its relevance to the academic discipline of the key university. As suggested in F2 and F3, the use of foreign languages in domestic degree programs should be specifically evaluated for different types of courses, such as “*general training courses*” or “*major courses*”, rather than a wider evaluation of foreign language use. It was argued that “*the academic discipline of the university is already foreign languages*” so most of the major courses are in foreign languages (F2 and F3). According to policy implementers, this evaluation criterion only made sense “*in evaluating general training courses*” (F2 and F3). It was, however, acknowledged by the F2 policy implementers that “*there is not any general course taught in English or any foreign language yet*”. On the other hand, the F3 policy implementers considered

this criterion as “*a future target*” rather than “*an evaluation criterion*” at this time. These comments indicate that the use of foreign language for domestic degree programs at the key university was different from international joint programs, which were taught in the foreign languages and used curricula of the international partners. For its specific relevance to the key university, the criterion on the use of foreign language in teaching and learning was modified to examine domestic degree and international joint education programs separately.

The necessity for mono-disciplinary relevance of the criterion examining the use of foreign language in teaching and learning was also supported by additional comments from some of SU1 and SU2 respondents to the questionnaire. There were some concerns about how to define the use of foreign languages in teaching and learning raised by these respondents. Questions were raised about such practices as “*using foreign language textbooks/reference books*” or “*lecture notes in foreign languages but lecturing in Vietnamese*” in evaluating the use of foreign languages. These comments indicate that the difference in academic disciplines among the universities might affect the relevance of this criterion.

#### **6.4.2. Staff development**

With regard to *staff development*, the relevance to the contemporary context of internationalisation was mentioned in discussing the criterion evaluating the improvement of international competence for academic and administrative staff at the key university. In addition, the relevance of the criterion regarding consideration for international qualification/experience in staff promotion and tenure decisions was also discussed.

##### ***Academic staff development***

In evaluating the improvement of international competence for academic staff, the practice of *working abroad as a visiting lecturer for a period of time* was mentioned in regards to its relevance in the contemporary context of the key university. Accordingly, in the three focus groups, it was suggested that the term *visiting lecturer* be replaced by *visiting scholar*. A participating administrator in human resources explained that “*the university has a policy for the academic staff to work abroad as visiting scholars for less than a year, but not as lecturers*” (F1). It was also shared by the academics in F2 that “*academic staff can apply to do research as a visiting scholar abroad but not yet as*

*a lecturer.*" Although the policy implementers in F3 shared a similar viewpoint to those in F1 and F2, they suggested including two separate questions for this practice so it could become "*a specific inquiry to the university leaders for supporting academic staff to take up offers of working as a lecturer overseas for short periods of time.*" The policy implementers in F3 believed that it would become an important indicator for internationalisation in the coming years.

In addition, the academics in F2 also suggested further defining the "*period of time*" for working abroad with regard to this practice. They suggested identifying the specific time period as one month or six months, noting that "*the length of each scholarship can change the answer from 'Yes' to 'No' and vice versa*" (F2) in evaluating this practice, as well as being "*a monitoring indicator*" for their internationalisation efforts. As the findings from previous phases indicate that the academics did not have many opportunities for working abroad, these comments are likely to indicate the relevance of this criterion for the ongoing development period [2015-2020] and future planning. These findings appear to be consistent with the expectation of the academics and the administrators regarding the use of this evaluation as both a review and a planning tool at the same time. The practice of ***working abroad as visiting scholar*** was, therefore, added as a result of these suggestions. In addition, the "*period of time*" for this practice was also specified to include four different short periods of time.

### ***Administrative staff development***

Under the criterion of evaluating practices for improving the international competence of the administrative staff, four practices were mentioned in terms of their relevance to the context of internationalisation at the key university.

Two practices, which related to working experience, were suggested to be not applicable for evaluating the contemporary internationalisation in the administrative staff. These included: ***working abroad as visiting officer for a period of time*** and ***recruiting staff with international qualifications and experience***. In explaining further, the administrator in charge of human resources in F1 acknowledged that "*these practices are not yet the focus of institutional policy in developing professional performance for administrative staff.*" The administrators in F1 also mentioned that none of their administrative staff had been working abroad as an officer, indicating that this practice was not applicable in their context. Meanwhile, the F3 policy implementers

reflected on the actual situation of the key university, to explain the inapplicability of these practices for the administrative staff, as “*even for the academic staff, who are the internationalisation focus, there has not been any preferred policy for international qualifications and experience in recruitment.*” These comments are consistent to the contemporary situation at the key university where the administrative staff was not considered as a key target of internationalisation.

Two further practices for administrative staff, related to students, were considered to be currently inapplicable with regard to improving international competence of the administrative staff at the key university. These practices were: ***developing programs/courses for international students*** and ***delivering programs/courses for international students***. The administrators in F1 stated that the involvement of the administrative staff in these practices was “*rare, and limited to just a few staff, if any.*” As indicated in the previous phases of the research, the ***development of programs/courses for international students*** had not been a focus of the internationalisation effort at the key university. It was, therefore, understandable that the policy implementers in F3 had doubts about the opportunities for the administrative staff to participate in these two practices. It was also mentioned in F3 that the evaluation of practices for improving the international competence of the administrative staff should focus on “*practices related to their administrative professional performance, such as updated knowledge in higher education administration.*” This comment is consistent with the comments during focus groups in Phase Two regarding the emphasis on the professional competence of the administrative staff in institutional internationalisation.

As a result of the focus group discussions, these four practices were removed from the list of practices evaluating the improvement of international competence for the administrative staff. Instead, a new practice of ***attending training courses on international standards of administration in higher education*** was added, as recommended in F3. However, the policy implementers did not indicate that any future planning for internationalisation would be likely considered for the administrative staff dimension. It seems that the internationalisation at the key university might be planned for other dimensions rather than this one.

### ***International qualifications/experience in staff promotion and tenure decisions***

The consideration for international qualifications/experience in staff promotion and tenure decisions was mentioned to be both relevant and irrelevant in the context of the key university.

It was acknowledged in the three focus groups that international qualifications/experience was considered in staff promotion, while also noting that it was “*unofficially considered for the heads of some faculties.*” It was explained by the academics and administrators in F2 and F3 that “*those returning from abroad have been selected to be the head of key departments and faculties.*” The F3 policy implementers suggested retaining this part in evaluating their institutional internationalisation as “*an important indicator for their future international profile,*” although the key university did not have an official policy for staff promotion with international qualifications/experience. This insight was then referred to, in F2 and F3, as a Vietnamese cultural aspect of an ‘unwritten principle’ in recruitment. On the other hand, tenure decisions such as *special salary or benefits* were not viewed as something that “*a public university could decide by itself but has to follow government regulations*” (F1). This comment was also agreed by the policy implementers in F2 and F3, noting that official tenure decisions were affected “*by the government policies of remuneration in public organisations*”. Therefore, the criterion related to *tenure decisions* was excluded from the evaluation of internationalisation in academic staff dimension at the key university.

#### **6.4.3. Students**

As indicated in the results of the questionnaire, difficulties were raised regarding the criterion evaluating *types of education programs provided for international students*. The contemporary priorities in the institutional internationalisation, as well as the planning purpose, were taken as the key factors in considering the relevance of this criterion. Two specific types of programs were mentioned regarding the relevance for the contemporary context of the key university: *domestic degree programs* and *joint/double degree programs with foreign partner universities*.

Regarding the *domestic degree programs for international students*, it was suggested that the types of programs should be more specific. In explaining this suggestion, the policy implementers in both F1 and F3 asserted that “*international students coming to*

*our university just join the same degree programs as domestic students in Vietnamese language*" and that "*there has been a small number of international students studying in one or two domestic degree programs.*" However, the policy implementers in F3 mentioned a future plan of "*developing courses taught in English for international students*", noting that it might be an option for international students in the future. Therefore, these policy implementers agreed to include two types of programs: *domestic degree programs taught in Vietnamese* or *domestic degree programs taught in English* instead of just using the general term of *domestic degree programs*.

The criterion of *joint/double degree programs with foreign partner universities for international students* was said not to be a priority in internationalisation at the key university. It was mentioned by the team of administrators in F3 that the key university had started "*developing an agreement with a foreign university to set up a joint degree program for students from both universities*". However, it was added that "*it is expected to bring benefit for the domestic students instead of having foreign students from that foreign university*" (F3). This comment was relevant to SL2's statement, during the earlier interview, about "*international students not being a focus*" in the contemporary internationalisation effort.

As a result of the focus group discussions, the specific types of *domestic degree programs* were revised and added; and *joint/double degree programs with foreign partner universities for international students* was excluded in the final set of evaluation criteria.

## **6.5. Chapter summary**

The findings from the piloted questionnaire show that almost all criteria which were developed for evaluating internationalisation across the different dimensions were relevant to some extent at the three universities.

However, the questionnaire findings also indicate that the responses to some criteria included under ***Education programs***, ***Staff development***, and ***Students*** varied among the three universities despite their similarity in approach and focus on internationalisation. This variation suggests that the mono-disciplinary structure, on which each of three universities was operating, might have affected the relevance of some evaluation criteria. On these issues, further clarification was required. Through examining the questionnaire results, concerns were also identified about the relevance

of certain evaluation criteria to a particular Vietnamese public university. These concerns were discussed in the following focus groups of Phase Three with the policy implementers at the key university.

Through the findings of the Phase Three focus groups, the factors related to institutional priorities for internationalisation and institutional purposes for the evaluation, identified in Phase Two, continued to show an influence on the relevance of specific evaluation criteria. In addition, two further factors were identified as impacting on the relevance of the evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at the key university. These include: the mono-disciplinary structure of the university and identifying cultural relevance.

Taking these factors into account, the policy implementers in the final phase focus groups commented on adjustments that needed to be made to evaluation criteria. Table 6.1 below summarises the evaluation criteria for which the contextual relevance to a Vietnamese public university was questioned as a result of the questionnaire, and subsequently adjusted after the focus groups at the key university. As shown in this table, nine evaluation criteria were adjusted to make them relevant to the context of the key university, after considering different factors mentioned above.

In addition, the findings also indicate that the factor of cultural relevance identified in the focus groups might also provide additional information for an outside evaluator. Any consideration of cultural relevance might involve the understanding of ‘unwritten principles’, not be officially documented. This cultural aspect should be taken into account by any outside researcher who becomes involved in the process of developing evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation in the Vietnamese context.

The final phase of the study completed the process of developing a set of contextualised evaluation criteria, which is relevant for studying internationalisation at the key university in the Vietnamese higher education context.

More in-depth discussion of the findings from all three phases of the research process is presented in the next chapter.

Table 6.1: Contextual changes in evaluation criteria for internationalisation at the key university after Phase Three

Dimension	N o	Initial criteria piloted in the questionnaire	Changed criteria for contextual relevance in focus groups																																				
<b>EDUCATION PROGRAM</b>	1	<b><i>The academic level(s) and scope(s) of internationalisation</i></b>	(revised)																																				
		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Level/Scope</th> <th>Institution</th> <th>Faculty</th> <th>Division</th> <th>Program</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Undergraduate</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Master</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Doctor</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Level/Scope	Institution	Faculty	Division	Program	Undergraduate					Master					Doctor					<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Level/Scope</th> <th>No program</th> <th>Some programs*</th> <th>All programs</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Undergraduate</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Master</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Doctor</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Level/Scope	No program	Some programs*	All programs	Undergraduate				Master				Doctor			
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Level/Scope	No program	Some programs*	All programs																																				
Undergraduate																																							
Master																																							
Doctor																																							
			* Please note down the number of programs out of the total																																				
	2	<b><i>Improving international perspectives of education programs</i></b>																																					
		Development of online sectors/courses in addition to traditional contact hours	(revised) Utilization of e-learning system in teaching and learning Development of online sections in addition to traditional contact hours Development of online course(s) in an education program																																				
			(added) Use foreign books as course books in developing teaching materials																																				
			(added) Use foreign books as references in developing teaching materials																																				
	3	<b><i>International perspectives in program content</i></b>																																					
		International dimension/comparison of a subject	(revised) Intercultural dimension/comparison of a subject																																				
	4	<b><i>Recognition/transfer of international credits at the university</i></b>	(added) Recognition/transfer of domestic credits at foreign universities																																				
	5	<b><i>Usage of foreign language in teaching and learning in an education program</i></b>	(revised) <b><i>Usage of foreign language in teaching and learning in a domestic education program</i></b> (general courses and major courses)																																				
			(revised) <b><i>Usage of foreign language in teaching and learning in an international joint program</i></b>																																				

Table 6.1: Contextual changes in evaluation criteria for internationalisation at the key university after Phase Three (cont.)

Dimension	N o	Initial criteria piloted in the questionnaire	Changed criteria for contextual relevance in focus groups
STAFF DEVELOPMENT	6	<b><i>Academic staff development</i></b>	<b>(revised)</b>
		Working abroad as visiting lecturer/officer for a period of time	Working abroad as visiting scholar for less than 3 months
			Working abroad as visiting scholar for 3-6 months
			Working abroad as visiting scholar for 6-12 months
			Working abroad as visiting scholar for more than 12 months
	7	<b><i>Administrative staff development</i></b>	<b>(revised)</b>
		Working abroad as visiting lecturer/officer for a period of time	Attending training courses in higher education administration
		Recruiting staff with international qualifications and experience	
		Developing programs/courses for international students	
	8	<b><i>International qualification/experience in staff promotion and tenure decisions</i></b>	<b>(revised)</b> International qualification/experience in staff promotion
STUDENTS	9	<b><i>Types of education programs provided for international students</i></b>	<b>(revised)</b>
		Degree programs	Degree programs taught in Vietnamese
		Joint/double degree programs with foreign partner universities	Degree programs taught in English
		Exchange program	Exchange program
		Internship program	Internship program
		Vietnamese language and culture program	Vietnamese language and culture program



## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

## **DISCUSSION**

### **7.1. Introduction**

This final chapter discusses the development of a set of evaluation criteria which was contextualised for studying internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university in light of relevant literature. The discussion draws on key findings from the three phases of the study to answer the three research questions:

1. What is the current context of internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university?
2. How does this context differ from those in other countries?
3. What are the contextual factors that should be taken into account in developing a set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university?

The chapter begins by responding to the first two research questions. It opens with a discussion of the distinctive context of internationalisation at the key university in light of the literature on internationalisation. In particular, the key features of the evolution and implementation of internationalisation which has a domestic focus are discussed in this section. The following sections respond to the third research question. It opens by discussing the preliminary factors taken into account in developing an evaluation framework for internationalisation at the key university. The chapter will then continue by discussing further factors considered by the key university regarding the relevance of the evaluation criteria used to study their internationalisation, thereby completing the discussion on answers to the third research question. The model that was developed from the three-phase process of developing a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at Vietnamese public universities is then presented. In the final section, the summary provides some reflections on the significance insights and new knowledge generated from this study.

### **7.2. The domestic-focused nature of internationalisation at the key university**

This section addresses the central position of domestic factors in the evolution of the internationalisation as well as the implementation of internationalisation practices at the

key university. These findings are discussed in light of the literature on internationalisation of different countries.

### **7.2.1. The evolution of internationalisation as a reform of domestic factors**

The findings from Phase One indicate that *international standards* was the dominant concept informing internationalisation at the key university. This notion was seen as the focus for internationalisation in terms of “the knowledge levels of domestic students” and “professional performance of domestic staff” as mentioned by a senior leader in Phase One. This suggests that internationalisation at the key university was likely to involve a reform of domestic factors in order to conform to standards and practices that are typical in higher education around the world.

Reform of domestic higher education, which also involves internationalisation, appears to be common topic occurring in neighbouring countries, such as Japan and China (Lincicome, 1993; Ohkura & Shibata, 2009; Welch & Cai, 2011). The reforms in their domestic higher education, between 1980s and 2000s in Japan and from the 1990s in China, had a significant focus on improving international factors, such as international students, international joint programs, foreign language education, international research (Huang, 2006; Ohkura & Shibata, 2009; Ryan, 2011). These reforms had a different focus from the trend in internationalisation at the key university in the current study. In that setting, the focus was found to be on improving domestic factors rather than promoting international factors, such as international expertise and students.

The difference identified in this study suggests that the key university might be at an earlier stage of internationalisation compared to that in China and Japan. The findings imply that a different approach to internationalisation was also adopted by the key university in Vietnam. The evolution of the ‘domestic-focused reforming’ internationalisation approach at the key university was found to be influenced by national contextual factors. However, the implementation of such internationalisation effort was constrained by a lack of guiding policies and financial support at the national level, and limited organisational support at the institutional level.

#### ***National context as the driver for the ‘reforming’ internationalisation***

At the key university, it was found that the focus on reforming domestic factors in their internationalisation effort was driven by the national policy of economic development. This policy was defined as ‘national industrialisation, modernisation, and global

economic integration' in the 2005 Higher Education Reform Agenda (Vietnamese Government, 2005). This national economic rationale was not only identified in the university mission statement but also repeatedly mentioned by the senior leaders during the interviews in Phase One. The economic rationale of *nation building* was mentioned by Knight (2008) as a factor of emerging importance for internationalisation in higher education. The internationalisation of Chinese universities also involved an economic rationale, with a focus on the four “modernisations” of industry, agriculture, defence, and science and technology since the late 1970s (Yang, 2014). Although the modern internationalisation of Japanese universities was not directly defined to aim at supporting nation building, the national industry-wide demand for human resources was an important reason for their internationalisation process between the 1980s and the 1990s (Yonezawa et al., 2009). The focus on national economic development as the rationale for internationalisation implemented at the key university, therefore, appeared to be similar to the earlier phases of internationalisation in China and Japan.

In addition to the national economic rationale, the tension between retaining a distinctive cultural identity and becoming internationalised was also mentioned in considering the target of achieving *international standards* at the key university. That tension was exemplified by the comments about working with Japanese people made by a senior leader in Phase One, which indicated a concern about maintaining the uniqueness of Vietnamese cultural identity. Similar concerns were also expressed by the policy implementers in a Phase Three focus group regarding the relevance of foreign textbooks to Vietnamese culture. These concerns reflects the requirements of the Vietnamese Law on Education (Vietnam National Assembly, 2005). This law states that the revision of educational contents should take the *nation's cultural identity* into account while “adopting global advanced knowledge” (p.1).

Similar concerns about cultural identity as the key university in Vietnam are also indicated in the literature. Strengthening socio-historical elements has been identified as a counterbalance to the internationalisation of higher education in Japan (Kudo & Hashimoto, 2011; Lincicome, 1993; Sato, 2004). Internationalisation is also seen in China as a way to promote their cultural influence (Yang, 2012, 2014). However, the popular motto of '*think globally, act locally*' quoted by a senior leader in Phase One, and the policy implementers' concerns about the cultural relevance of foreign textbooks suggested an alternative view. The key university appeared to be concerned more about

preserving cultural identity and making sure that the imported knowledge was culturally relevant. In the light of past colonisation influences of the Chinese and French, and Russian and American during the American war, it is understandable that there has always been an awareness about the tension between retaining national cultural identity at the same time as responding to the call to move toward *international standards*.

The evolution of the internationalisation concept at the key university was found to be driven by two national contextual factors: economic development and preserving national cultural identity. The influence of these factors in that the internationalisation effort at the key university was shaped is similar to that in other countries, such as Japan, China, or the United States, as indicated in studies by Hutcheson (2011), Yang (2014), and Yonezawa et al. (2009). However, at the key university, the ‘domestic-focused reforming’ approach to internationalisation did not receive any official guidance and support in terms of either policies or finance from the national government, as occurred in other countries.

### ***Lack of guiding policies for institutional internationalisation***

Despite being driven by national factors, nation-wide guidance and support in terms of national policies for internationalisation at the key university were not identified. In the current study, linking internationalisation with the domestic focus at the key university was informed by local institutional practices rather than by a nation-wide trend of institutional internationalisation. The different interpretations of internationalisation by the senior leaders in the Phase One interviews, and the disclosure by the policy implementers in a Phase Two focus group that they simply did “what we are told and call it internationalisation”, provide strong evidence for the lack of an official policy for internationalisation. The situation of not having an official shared definition of institutional internationalisation at the national level for Vietnamese universities is affirmed by L. T. Tran and Marginson (2018). According to these researchers, the Vietnamese government’s policies on internationalisation have been focused more on international cooperation activities and outbound mobility rather than on internationalisation ‘at home’ for the wide population of domestic students at Vietnamese universities.

The lack of national policies for internationalisation at the key university differs from the existence of national/regional policies for internationalisation of higher education in

other countries. For example, the comprehensive internationalisation approach taken by American universities was called for and supported by professional organisations (e.g., ACE, NAFSA), through which the government programs, policies and support were delivered (Smithee, 2012). In Europe, the policy of creating a higher education region, widely known as Europeanisation, helped to stimulate universities to plan their internationalisation in consideration of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) features (Hunter, 2013; Scott, 2012). The clear Europeanisation target might be the reason why ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) and credit mobility, distinguishing features of the EHEA, were included by Beerkens et al. (2010) in the IMPI tool for evaluating the internationalisation among European universities. In Japan and China, governments have also proactively taken the leading role by initiating policies and projects on internationalisation in their universities (Hayhoe & Qiang, 2004; Yoder, 2011; Yonezawa, 2011; Yonezawa et al., 2009).

The lack of government guidance and support for institutional internationalisation in the national policies suggests that the conceptualisation of internationalisation at the key university might be a response to the influences of national contextual factors rather than being a proactive strategy. Furthermore, the lack of national guiding policies seems likely to have contributed to the fact that the internationalisation effort at the key university was inhibited by financial constraints and unsystematic organisational support.

### ***Limited financial and organisational support for internationalisation***

The financial constraints in supporting internationalisation at the key university were mainly attributed to a lack of “government allocated budget for internationalisation”, as mentioned by a senior leader in Phase One. This issue was also acknowledged by the policy implementers in responding to the Phase One questionnaire, as well as in the Phase Two focus group discussions. In a highly centralised planning system, Vietnamese public universities, such as the key university, still largely depend on government funding for their operation (M. Hayden & Lam, 2010). Moreover, the key university is a member of a national university which was established under a government project established in 1993 to bring some selected universities to international standard. Accordingly, this national university has been provided with more generous government funds than other public universities (Vietnamese Government, 1993). It is somewhat paradoxical that the lack of government funding

was reported as the main obstacle for implementing internationalisation at the key university. That also explains why the policy implementers in the Phase Two focus groups saw the issue of limited financial support for internationalisation as a “mission without a feasible solution”.

In contrast to the situation at the key university, the internationalisation of universities in other countries has been financially supported by their governments at differing levels, for many years. In the United States, the internationalisation of American universities has received financial support from federal and state governments (Helms et al., 2017). In Japan too, the project of 100,000 Overseas Students, the Global 30 project, and the recent Top Global University project have received government funding and have played important roles in promoting the internationalisation of Japanese universities (Burgess et al., 2010; Mock et al., 2016; Yonezawa, 2011). Similarly, the Chinese government has heavily funded and directed the internationalisation of Chinese universities in terms of education programs, teaching, research, administrative staff, and salary structures of hundreds of universities (Yoder, 2011). This financial support was provided through large projects, such as Project 211 and Project 985, which were specifically formed to promote China’s top universities to be among the world’s best (Liu & Metcalfe, 2016).

It is somewhat ironic that internationalisation at the key university was neither guided by a national policy nor supported financially, even though it is a member of a national university which was established with the goal of becoming an international standard university. The lack of both government guidance and financial support for institutional internationalisation might explain why the organisational support for implementing internationalisation at the key university did not appear to be systematically planned.

The findings from Phase One indicate that the organisational support for internationalisation at the key university was still limited. In particular, it was acknowledged by a senior leader in Phase One that internationalisation practices were just integrated into functions of some related units by the end of 2015, the final year of the 2010-2015 development period. Two senior leaders in Phase One and the academics in Phase Two focus groups admitted that the international cooperation department, which was supposed to be active in internationalisation, only focused on their paperwork. In contrast, having a systematic organisational support for implementing internationalisation is important when considering the level of internationalisation at a

university in other countries. For example, the evaluation of internationalisation in Japanese universities considered particular decision-making structures and processes for internationalisation as well as the organisational structure for internationalisation implementation (Furushiro, 2006). A recently released report by the American Council on Education also indicated that internationalisation at many American universities was “an increasingly administrative-intensive endeavour coordinated by a single office” (Helms et al., 2017, p. 10).

The evolution of internationalisation as a reform of domestic factors at the key university was influenced by national contextual factors, as well as the lack of guiding policies and financial support at the national level, and limited organisational support at the institutional level. These circumstances shaped the way the key university implemented its internationalisation with an emphasis on domestic factors.

### **7.2.2. Implementation of internationalisation with an emphasis on domestic factors**

The implementation of internationalisation practices with a particular focus on domestic factors associated with education programs, academic staff and research dimensions at the key university appeared to be distinctive in comparison to other countries.

#### *Focus on domestic factors in internationalising education programs*

Although it was stated by the senior leaders in Phase One interviews that they had focused on improving international perspectives in order to internationalise their education programs, they appeared to be disinterested in other internationalisation factors, such as international academic expertise and recruitment of international students which are generally part of that process.

The inclusion of international perspectives for academic improvement of domestic degree programs at the key university had the effect of simply making their programs look superficially like international ones. A number of practices were observed in this limited internationalisation process, such as: adding new courses with international perspectives, using foreign materials, adopting an internationally accepted program structure, and provision of international joint programs. However, it was mentioned by a senior leader in Phase One and the academics in the Phase Two focus groups that the extent of changes was only “superficial”. According to these participants, the changes were only made in terms of program structure, such as the number of courses, and course titles, rather than the course content, teaching methods, and the evaluation of the

program outcomes. This superficial internationalisation in domestic degree programs might result from the absence of international expertise, which is particularly important for the academic discipline of foreign language education provided by the key university.

The findings indicate that the role of international teachers/experts as a part of the internationalisation of domestic education programs was not apparent at the key university. A senior leader in the Phase One interview was not even sure about “*what contribution that the international teachers/experts made.*” This indifferent perspective regarding the involvement of international expertise in internationalising domestic degree programs is in contrast to the significant efforts of Japanese and Chinese universities in recruiting international experts for the purpose of improving international academic perspectives in their education programs (Hashimoto, 2009; Stanley, 2011). In Japan, a large number of adjunct foreign English language teachers and other foreign teachers have been employed by Japanese universities to play an important role in promoting the process of bringing international aspects into domestic education programs (Whitsed & Wright, 2013). Similarly, in China, many thousands of foreign English teachers have been employed by Chinese universities to teach oral English in line with the learn-English movement initiated by the government (Stanley, 2011). Whether this policy was for curriculum development purposes, or merely for teaching communicative language, it was evident that Japanese and Chinese universities welcomed international expertise in English language education as an important part of their internationalisation process.

For the key university, while the financial constraints might be a key obstacle, the determination to protect cultural identity contributed to the reluctance to internationalise in the same way as other countries. The fact that Vietnam has had a lengthy experience of colonisation and wars with foreigners to protect their land, understandably has contributed to the reluctance to seek international academic expertise, particularly during the initial stages of internationalisation.

In addition, as the key university had more focus on domestic students and little interest in attracting international students, the internationalisation of their domestic degree programs became more inward-focused. This perspective is different from the outward focus in internationalising education programs in China and Japan. These two neighbouring countries have invested considerable effort and resources into recruiting

international students in order to exert influence and enhance understanding of their national culture.

In order to attract international students, the development of English-instructed programs was encouraged in both Japanese and Chinese universities (Huang, 2011; Kudo & Hashimoto, 2011; Sun et al., 2017; Whitsed & Volet, 2011). Attracting international students was also supported by the development of international joint programs and establishment of foreign universities' branches on the campuses of Chinese universities (S. Y. Pan, 2013). Furthermore, exporting domestic programs to other neighbour countries was a further means for Japanese and Chinese universities to increase their numbers of international students (Huang, 2011; Yang, 2012).

The efforts made to attract international students by Japanese and Chinese universities in their internationalisation of education programs stand in sharp contrast to the inward focus on only domestic students at the key university. As indicated by the findings in Phase One, there were some international students studying on campus. However, it was admitted by the policy implementers in Phase Two and Phase Three that there were not "education programs designed for international students" and "international students had to enrol in education programs instructed in Vietnamese [if any]." This lack of interest in international students might result from the priority of the key university, which was "more on domestic education programs and academic staff" at this stage in their internationalisation, as mentioned by a senior leader in Phase One. However, for a university specialising foreign language education as the key university, the development of courses taught in English for international students might not be a difficult undertaking. Given that the use of English is strongly promoted in Japanese and Chinese universities, the delay in doing this at the key university might reflect reticence by the Vietnamese government in promoting the use of English in Vietnamese universities.

### ***Limiting internationalisation to domestic academic staff***

As mentioned by the academics in the Phase Two focus groups, increasing international awareness and experience among domestic academic staff was important to the success of the internationalisation in education programs. However, this acknowledgement did not include increasing international qualifications and experience of domestic academic

staff or involving international teachers/experts as a part of the institutional academic system.

*Higher qualifications for domestic academic staff rather than international qualifications/experience*

As indicated by the findings at the key university, gaining higher qualifications was considered to be the key indicator for attaining an *international standard* in this dimension. As mentioned by a senior leader in the Phase One interview, the key university focused on improving higher qualifications among their academic staff, but placed “no preference for an international qualification over a domestic one”. This perspective shows that the internationalisation approach at the key university differed from the way internationalisation of domestic academic staff has been implemented in other countries.

In contrast to the key university, the notion of improving higher qualifications among the domestic academic staff, for internationalisation purposes at Japanese and Chinese universities, has specifically involved a preference for international qualifications. According to both Liu and Metcalfe (2016) and (Yoder, 2011), Chinese academic staff with foreign doctoral degrees are preferred because they can bring practices of Western higher education into teaching, research and managerial work, as well as demonstrating one indicator of academic quality in Chinese universities. In Japan, an increase was also reported in the number of Japanese academic staff with overseas doctoral degrees compared to a decrease of those with doctoral degrees from Japanese universities (Huang, 2009). Both Japanese and Chinese universities showed their interest in having more domestic academic staff with international qualifications as part of their internationalisation effort.

In contrast to China and Japan, the analysis of Annual Reports from the key university indicated that the number of domestic academic staff enrolled in higher education programs abroad was not higher than those enrolling in Vietnamese higher education programs. It appears that the policy of no preference for international qualifications may have discouraged the domestic academic staff at the key university from going overseas for further study.

In addition to a reluctance to promote the attainment of international qualifications, the findings also reveal that international experience for academic staff was not supported at

the key university. This finding is different from trends identified in other countries. Chinese universities have reported an increase since 2000 in the number of Chinese academic staff sent abroad for teaching and research (Yoder, 2011). In Japanese universities, international exchanges have also been noted as a frequent professional activity of academic staff (Huang, 2009). This kind of activity has also been considered as a necessary factor in evaluating internationalisation in American universities (CIGE, 2012). In contrast, the findings at the key university indicate that international experience was seen only as a serendipitous opportunity rather than a consistent activity for the academic staff. Moreover, those opportunities did not seem to be systematically taken up at the key university. The domestic academic staff may have been demotivated to join short-term training, teaching, or research activities abroad due to the lack of “specific guidelines of human resource policies [for this area]”, as noted by a senior leader in Phase One.

It appears that the key university did not have appropriate policies to encourage their domestic academic staff to gain international qualifications and international experience in their internationalisation effort. Instead, they were more focused on improving the number of higher qualifications among the academic staff in order to obtain the “*standard licence*” for sustaining their teaching position at the university, as mentioned by a senior leader in Phase One. This situation reveals that the approach in internationalising the domestic academic staff at the key university seemed to be more a response to a structural requirement for a Vietnamese public university rather than for promoting an international orientation among academics, as is the case in other countries. This policy regarding academic staff might, however, be partly attributed to financial constraints.

As discussed earlier (see Section 7.2.1), financial constraints were found to be a key obstacle to achieving the internationalisation goals of the key university. A senior leader in Phase One mentioned that the university only supported clerical paperwork rather than providing a financial package for domestic academic staff who studied overseas. In addition, another senior leader in Phase One said that short-term exchanges, teaching, or research activities were sponsored mainly by foreign partners. This situation is different from the situation of academic staff in a Chinese university who they were paid for re-training in foreign countries (Liu & Metcalfe, 2016). In addition, as Helms et al. (2017) noted, American universities increased funding for staff professional development

abroad to enable them to gain more international experience. They also considered international work and experience as a factor in staff promotion and tenure decisions. These practices did not occur at the key university.

The current study finds that academic staff at the key university depended on government scholarship programs, and foreign scholarship to gain international qualifications and short-term exchange experience. Since the year 2000, the Vietnamese government has been operating two big projects (including Project 322 and Project 911) to send Vietnamese people, particularly university lecturers, to study for higher qualifications in foreign countries. However, the selection procedures and quota have been decided by the central government represented by the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) rather than through consultation with the individual universities. There have also been various sources of scholarship aid from foreign countries for Vietnamese government officers, including university lecturers, to study overseas. However, the findings from the Annual Reports of the key university indicate that only a small number of domestic academic staff had obtained those scholarships to study overseas. It, therefore, becomes evident that the key university was unable to implement its own policy for improving the international qualifications of their academic staff.

#### *Lack of involvement by international teachers/experts*

The fact that international teachers/experts did not have an official academic role also demonstrates that internationalisation at the key university differs from other countries. Having foreigners work on campus is an important part of the university internationalisation process in other countries. For instance, it has been reported that having foreign professors to teach for either short-term or long-term is one of frequent internationalisation activities at Chinese universities (Yoder, 2011). A significant increase in the number of full-time foreign academic staff in Japanese universities has also been identified over the period of 1992 to 2007 (Huang, 2009). In American universities, the recruitment and ratio of international academic staff has been considered to be essential for improving the institutional internationalisation (CIGE, 2012). In the current study, it is suggested that financial constraints and concern about protecting cultural identity might be fundamental reasons why the key university has been reluctant to have more international teachers/experts working on campus. Therefore, the sole focus on improving higher qualifications of the domestic academic

staff in general fits with the overall inward-focus of the internationalisation effort at the key university.

### ***Focus on domestic research competence in internationalising research***

Regarding research, efforts to improve the research competence of domestic academic staff, rather than building the key university's international research profile, contrasts sharply with universities in other countries. Evidences in support of the difference are discussed below.

Engaging in international research is considered to be an inevitable and desirable part of university internationalisation in different countries. Japanese universities, for example, have been particularly keen to increase the number of international publications written by their domestic academic staff in order to increase the internationalisation level of research (Huang, 2009). In a more recent study by Eades (2016), however, concern was also expressed about Japanese academic staff struggling to publish in international journals because of difficulties with foreign language competence. Similarly, Chinese universities have also been concerned about having their academic staff publish in international journals in order to raise their national and international visibility (Liu & Metcalfe, 2016; L. Pan, 2011). In American universities, conducting research with colleagues abroad, undertaking travel for research, or engaging with international research topics is considered to be an integral part of academic staff members' performance (Ferren & Merrill, 2013).

However, engaging in international research appears to be rare among the academic staff at the key university. As indicated by the findings from Phase One, the key university failed to encourage their academic staff to participate in international research or have international publications/presentations. Although it provided financial and administrative support for international publications/presentations prepared by domestic academic staff, it was admitted by two senior leaders in Phase One that their university had not been successful in promoting international research as planned. As the academic discipline of the key university is foreign language education, the issue of foreign language competence might not have been such a challenge for the academic staff to publish internationally, as is the case in Japanese universities. However, the lack of research competence of academic staff at the key university emerged as the main reason for their failure to engage in international research activities. This situation

resulted in the focus on improving the domestic research competence in the internationalisation effort at the key university.

The focus of the key university, on domestic research competence in internationalising the research dimension, is seen as a response to the traditional definition of a university's function in the Vietnamese higher education system. In this system, teaching is regarded as the role of universities, whereas research is considered to be the role of government research institutes. The key university in the current study, like other universities in Vietnam, considered teaching as their main function. At the time of the study, it appeared that this particular university had been operating as a "*training college*" of foreign languages rather than a university, as mentioned by a senior leader in Phase One. This viewpoint was supported by the administrators in Phase Two focus groups, who said that the academic staff still did not consider doing research as a part of their academic performance requirements. This finding is consistent with the concerns raised in studies by Harman and Le (2010) and Adams et al. (2008) about the unique structure of Vietnamese higher education, in which research is largely conducted in research institutes instead of universities. This single focus on teaching, which is a legacy of the Soviet-style model, hinders the comprehensive development of both teaching and research at Vietnamese universities. As Adams et al. (2008) and Harman and Le (2010) have observed, this unique feature has left Vietnamese public universities with little motivation, skills, or resources for engaging in research.

Chinese universities were also influenced by the Soviet model in terms of the single focus on teaching (Yoder, 2011). However, the internationalisation effort at Chinese universities has included an emphasis on improving their research capacity and international rankings (Liu & Metcalfe, 2016; Yang, 2005; Yoder, 2011). The two big government projects, Project 211 and Project 985, have provided large funds for universities to promote the formation of world-class universities in terms of research in different disciplines (Liu & Metcalfe, 2016). The emphasis on improving research at Chinese universities was also reflected in the development of the Peking tool for evaluating internationalisation at Chinese universities (Chen et al., 2009). The development of this 2009 tool was based on the context of Chinese research universities, although it was used to study internationalisation at average Chinese universities. The development of such tool suggests that Chinese universities might achieve a balance between teaching and research. The single focus on teaching, arising

from the Soviet model, therefore, has largely been discarded in China, with research forming an integral part of university activity.

In contrast, the findings indicate that the Soviet model's single focus on teaching at the key university is still evident at the time of the current study. In this regard, Vallely and Wilkinson (2008) commented that Vietnam was very far behind China in terms of publications in peer reviewed journals, an important indicator of the recognized research quality of a university in league tables. The Chinese experience, however, provides an example of a country that has diminished the effects of the Soviet model and moved on from a single focus on teaching. Such an approach could be adopted by Vietnamese universities with leadership and support from the government.

As indicated by the policy implementers in the Phase Two focus groups, organisational issues at the key university were the main reason for lagging behind in research internationalisation. The administrators attributed this delay to the lack of active participation by academic staff, whereas the academics blamed it on differing factors: "lack of research competence"; "lack of updated information on international research trends"; "large number of teaching hours"; and "inappropriate compensation". These findings are affirmed by Harman and Le (2010) and M. Hayden and Lam (2010), who have pointed out that heavy teaching loads and lack of incentives have resulted in little engagement by academic staff in research in Vietnamese universities.

With regard to teaching, public university's regulations govern the compulsory number of teaching hours. At the key university, academic staff each has to cover 270 in-class teaching hours in an academic year (9 months). There are different kinds of education programs, such as full-time degree programs, part-time degree programs, distant degree programs (located in other provinces), joint degree programs (between member universities), and international joint programs. However, except for the full-time degree programs, the teaching hours in the other programs are not credited in the 270 hours. Consequently, teaching across all of these programs creates a very large teaching load for individual academic staff members of the university.

With regard to research, except for modest financial grants, there have not been incentives for academic staff to engage in research at the key university. The findings in Phase One showed that an academic staff member could receive a financial grant of 9.000.000 VND (equivalent to \$600NZD approximately) if he/she had an article

published in an international journal. However, it was admitted by a senior leader in Phase One that this financial incentive did not result in any improvement in international research outputs. Other than that, the key university did not have any other incentives to encourage their academic staff to engage in research. Being a public university, the key university could not make its own decision regarding salary level or promotion. These procedures are subject to the Civil Service code rather than based on academic merit (in research) which could be decided by the university. This might be the main reason why the key university failed to have their academic staff engage in research, particularly international research.

These findings suggest that a disjunction might exist between the institutional ambition of promoting international research, and the provision of organisational support for academic staff to do research at the key university. Therefore, the focus on improving domestic research competence to internationalise the research dimension of the key university could be seen as an appropriate interim response to this structural issue.

The discussion in Section 7.2 provided answers to the first two questions of the current study in contrasting the domestic-focused trend of internationalisation at the key university with the trends of internationalisation in other countries. The priority placed on domestic factors in internationalisation at the key university, in terms of both its conceptual evolution and practical implementation, were influenced by not only the national contextual factors but also by the institutional factor of the single focus on teaching. These priorities are important to acknowledge when developing a framework for evaluating internationalisation at the key university.

### **7.3. Contextual factors in developing the framework for evaluating internationalisation at the key university**

As indicated in the Phase Two findings, the policy implementers at the key university took into account both institutional priorities for internationalisation and the institutional purposes for this evaluation when discussing a framework of dimensions for evaluating their internationalisation effort. The complexity of contextual factors influencing the establishment of potential framework for evaluating internationalisation appears to differ from the more straightforward development of evaluation tools for internationalisation in other countries. This section presents discussion on this

complexity in light of the literature on the development of evaluation tools for internationalisation.

### **7.3.1. Institutional priorities for domestic-focused internationalisation**

As discussed in section 7.2 above, the priorities for domestic-focused internationalisation at the key university were informed by both the national contextual factors and the institutional factor of the single focus on teaching. The consideration of both national contextual and institutional factors in developing the initial framework of dimensions for evaluating internationalisation at the key university differs from similar processes in other countries.

The development of evaluation tools for internationalisation in other countries was mainly informed by national contextual factors. In the United States, the prioritised dimensions selected in the ACE Review for evaluating internationalisation aimed at increasing global orientation and international connections of American universities. This comprehensive internationalisation trend was informed by the nation-wide call for increasing global competitiveness of American universities as well as enhancing understanding and collaboration with other countries (Hudzik, 2011; Peterson & Helms, 2013). In Japan, the development of the Osaka tool in 2006, for evaluating internationalisation at Japanese universities, was shaped around national-level priorities, including international students and academic staff, international partnership, and international research capacities (Ninomiya et al., 2009; Rivers, 2010; Yonezawa et al., 2009). These priorities were informed by the context of Japanese higher education when the Japanese government sought to increase Japan's global competitiveness and expand their national human resources (Ninomiya et al., 2009; Rivers, 2010; Yonezawa et al., 2009).

However, at the key university, the priorities for domestic-focused internationalisation were not only informed by the national contextual (economic and political) factors but also by the institutional factor of the single focus on teaching. As discussed in Section 7.2.2, the focus on improving domestic research competence in internationalising research at the key university resulted from the institutional structure of single focus on teaching, which is a legacy of the Soviet model. The influence of institutional factors, such as institutional status and goals, on the priorities for internationalisation by each university was recognised by Gao (2015a). However, these factors were not reflected in

her development of an international set of evaluation criteria. In the current study, the influence of institutional structural status on the formation of priorities for internationalisation at the key university was taken into consideration. The priorities for internationalisation at the key university are, therefore, specifically put forward as institutional priorities, in order to distinguish them from nation-wide priorities included in other evaluation tools.

### **7.3.2. Institutional purposes in evaluating internationalisation**

In addition to priorities for domestic-focused internationalisation, the findings from the Phase Two focus groups indicate that institutional purposes for evaluation were taken into consideration in developing a framework of dimensions for evaluating internationalisation at the key university. This consideration did not appear to be taken into account in the development of internationalisation evaluation tools in other countries.

The findings from the Phase Two focus groups indicate that the policy implementers gave priorities to other dimensions rather than to the domestic-focused dimensions in considering an evaluation of their internationalisation effort. The priorities, which were raised by the policy implementers in the Phase Two focus groups, include: *administrative staff, management, and financial and infrastructure support*. These dimensions are significantly different from those defined as institutional priorities for internationalisation (*education, academic staff, and research*) at the key university. These prioritised dimensions are informed by the intentions of the policy implementers who shared their views about evaluating internationalisation in this context. This finding suggests that the priorities which informed an evaluation of internationalisation at the key university might not necessarily be the same as those established in implementing the internationalisation effort.

The inclusion of *administrative staff, management, and financial and infrastructure support* in the initial evaluation framework at the key university results from the emergence of two different evaluation purposes. During the Phase Two focus groups, the policy implementers at the key university expected to use the evaluation for both reviewing and planning their internationalisation. For the purpose of reviewing internationalisation, priorities for domestic-focused internationalisation were the key consideration in developing the framework of evaluation dimensions. However, for the

purpose of future planning, there were other dimensions included in this initial framework. This decision confirms that the evaluation of internationalisation at the key university was expected to serve the purpose of not only reviewing the internationalisation activity, but also planning the future internationalisation strategy. In that way, both the present and future visions for internationalisation at the key university could be captured.

The dual purposes of both reviewing and planning in conducting an evaluation of internationalisation were supported by de Wit and Knight (1999). In working with a university in Kenya to pilot the evaluation criteria of IQRP, it was recognised that the university expected to use the evaluation tool for both of these purposes because it was the first time that the university examined their internationalisation effort (de Wit & Knight, 1999). The Kenyan university context is similar to the key university in that internationalisation was being considered for the first time. Therefore, using the evaluation as a planning tool at the same time as reviewing the current state of internationalisation was expected to help the key university to consolidate the internationalisation activities into the operational activity of the institution. In addition, in line with what was found by de Wit and Knight (1999), the dual purposes of using the evaluation as both review and planning tools were also identified in working with the policy implementers, rather than being driven by the researcher.

In contrast to the findings in the current study, the institutional purposes for the evaluation were not identified in the development of evaluation tools for internationalisation in other countries. The ACE Review in the United States was developed for the wider national purpose of classifying which universities were 'highly active' or 'less active' in internationalisation (Helms et al., 2017). Although the Osaka tool in Japan was designed for Japanese universities to choose items to suit their needs, it was stated that the ultimate purpose of the evaluation was for institutional self-review purposes, in order to ensure an improvement in their quest for internationalisation (Ashizawa, 2006). It seems that none of these evaluation tools were explicitly designed to suit both reviewing and planning purposes for internationalisation at the institutional level. The approaches adopted in developing evaluation tools for studying institutional internationalisation in both USA and Japan likely resulted from the fact that the evaluation purposes were decided by outside experts, rather than taking into account the views of institutional stakeholders who would be the end-users of the evaluation tools.

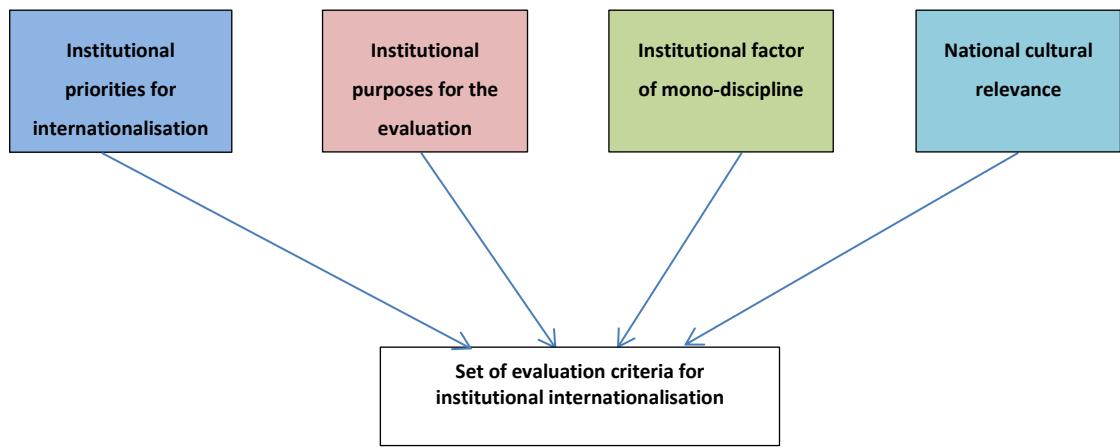
The considerations linked to the institutional purpose of the evaluation at the key university represent a different level of contextualisation in evaluating internationalisation. The evaluation tools in the international literature were contextualised for evaluating internationalisation at universities nation-wide. However, the current study aims at contextualising the evaluation at the institutional level, in consideration of the unique context of internationalisation at the key university in Vietnam.

What becomes evident from the findings of the current study is that, in order for the institutional purpose for the evaluation to be considered in studying internationalisation at the key university, collaborative partnerships with the institutional stakeholders was required, as detailed in Chapter 3. The involvement of institutional stakeholders in developing evaluation criteria in the current study helps identify the extent to which the set of evaluation criteria were developed to be relevant for evaluating internationalisation in the context of the key university in Vietnam. The following section will discuss further contextual factors affecting this relevance at the key university.

#### **7.4. Institutional and (national) cultural relevance of criteria for evaluating internationalisation at the key university**

The complexity of contextual factors taken into account in developing an evaluation of internationalisation at the key university is further expanded when it comes to identifying specific evaluation criteria. As indicated by the findings in the Phase Three focus groups, the institutional priority for domestic-focused internationalisation, as well as the purposes for the evaluation continued to inform the decisions by the policy implementers regarding the relevance of specific evaluation criteria. In addition, the findings from Phase Three of the study (questionnaires and focus groups together) reveal two other factors that the key university had regarding the relevance of evaluation criteria. These factors include: the institutional factor of a mono-disciplinary structure and the (national) cultural relevance in the Vietnamese context. Therefore, expanding on the results in Phase Two, Figure 7.1 illustrates the complex contextual factors which had to be taken into account in developing an evaluation of internationalisation at the key university, as a result of Phase Three. These factors include: (1) institutional priorities for internationalisation; (2) institutional purposes for

the evaluation; (3) institutional factor of mono-discipline; and (4) national cultural relevance.



*Figure 7.1: The complexity of contextual factors in developing an evaluation of internationalisation at the key university*

In the following sections of 7.4.1 and 7.4.2, the discussions are presented on how the institutional factor of mono-discipline and the national cultural relevance informed the relevance of specific evaluation criteria for internationalisation at the key university. These are followed by the discussion on the complexity of contextual (national and institutional) factors in determining the trajectories of internationalisation at the key university.

#### **7.4.1. Relevance to the institutional mono-disciplinary structure**

The findings from Phase Three of the study indicate that the evaluation criteria required adjustments in order to be more relevant for the academic discipline of the key university. The pilot of the initial set of evaluation criteria at the key university and two supplementary universities in Phase Three indicates that a number of evaluation criteria were limited in their relevance for studying internationalisation at three universities to some extent. In the follow-up focus group discussions in Phase Three with the policy implementers at the key university, the mono-disciplinary structure of the key university was identified as a factor highlighting that limitation.

In particular, the mono-discipline focus at each university affects the way the evaluation criteria were interpreted. Regarding the criterion evaluating the use of foreign languages in teaching and learning, in the light of the number of relevant courses at the key university, the policy implementers in the Phase Three focus groups suggested specifying the evaluation for general training courses and major courses. As explained

by the policy implementers, the academic discipline of foreign language education meant that foreign languages were typically used for delivering major courses. Therefore, it was suggested by these policy implementers that the evaluation criteria “only make sense in evaluating general training courses.” The influence of the specific academic discipline on the validity of this criterion is also confirmed in the additional comments from the other two supplementary universities in their questionnaire responses. For example, concerns were raised about the various forms of foreign language usage in teaching and learning rather than the number of courses that were delivered in foreign languages. These concerns suggest that the two supplementary universities might also have a different interpretation of this criterion if further investigation was conducted at these two universities.

The need for tailoring evaluation criteria to the specific academic discipline of each mono-disciplinary university appears to be unique in the Vietnamese context. Although Chinese universities have experienced the mono-disciplinary structure inherited by the Soviet model, studies on the internationalisation of Chinese universities have been undertaken more in comprehensive universities rather than in mono-disciplinary ones (Yang, 2005; Yang & Welch, 2001; Yoder, 2011). According to Welch and Cai (2011), the Chinese higher education reform encouraged a switch to the American model of comprehensive universities as soon as its open door policy started in 1970s. A recent study by Liu and Metcalfe (2016) mentioned the internationalisation practice of a single disciplinary structure; however, the focus of that study was on a school within a comprehensive Chinese university. In contrast, the findings from the current study indicate that the influence of the mono-disciplinary structure was still evident in evaluating internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university. This suggests that the implementation of internationalisation practices at a Vietnamese public university will continue to be influenced by their mono-disciplinary structure until such time as the government in Vietnam encourages the development of comprehensive universities.

Although the key university and two supplementary universities are members of a national comprehensive university federation, they still operate on the principles of an independent university, as do other Vietnamese public universities. In recent years, there have been some double degree programs developed between the key university and other member universities. However, developing the consistency of education programs under the comprehensive national university structure, such as number of

credits for each program, has not been accomplished. The institutional mono-disciplinary factor, therefore, looks likely to continue influence the internationalisation of Vietnamese public universities unless or until a more comprehensive university model is well established.

#### **7.4.2. Relevance to the national culture**

The findings from the Phase Three focus groups also reveal that consideration of the cultural relevance of evaluation criteria was required in studying internationalisation at the key university. This issue was raised by the policy implementers at the key university with regard to the criterion evaluating the use of foreign textbooks in internationalising domestic degree programs. In particular, the academics in one Phase Three focus group mentioned that the use of foreign books should be “*relevant or linked to Vietnamese culture.*” As the key university specialises in foreign language education, this concern might derive from the nature of their academic discipline. Hence, this finding suggests that cultural relevance might be more important for the supplementary university specialising in social sciences, given the culturally embedded nature of this discipline, as argued by de Wit and Callan (1995).

Culture has been identified as an important dimension influencing institutional internationalisation strategies (Gao, 2015a). The cultural dimension in Gao’s study appear to be concerned with the integration of students and staff from diverse backgrounds (2015a). However, the cultural concern of the key university in the current study relates to the cultural relevance of knowledge imported through foreign teaching materials. Further study of internationalisation, in a wider context than the key university in Vietnam, might help to confirm how cultural relevance would inform the internationalisation strategies in Vietnamese universities.

#### **7.4.3. The influence of national and institutional factors in determining trajectories of internationalisation at the key university**

The discussion so far indicates that the examination of internationalisation at the key university was influenced by a complexity of contextual factors at both the national and institutional level. These factors have previously been mentioned in the *glonacal heuristic theory* (see Section 2.3 in Chapter 2). This theory was first proposed by Marginson and Rhoades (2002) and further supported in another study on higher education in the Asia-Pacific region by Marginson et al. (2011). In this theory, these

researchers suggested that university operations should be viewed through the interweaving of *global*, *national*, and *local* factors. Similar issues in interweaving these three factors were mentioned in recent studies on internationalisation of universities in Japan and China. In Japan, there was reference to the tensions between nationalism (the *national* factor) and cosmopolitanism (the *global* factor) in the internationalisation of Japanese universities (Kudo & Hashimoto, 2011). In contrast, concerns were expressed about the cultural and institutional establishment as the *local* factors that needed to be attended to as part of the internationalisation process of Chinese universities (Liu & Metcalfe, 2016).

The findings at the key university indicate that the examination of internationalisation efforts at a Vietnamese public university needs to consider the *national* and *institutional* factors more than the *global* and *local* factors. In particular, the influence of *global* factors on the Vietnamese higher education system has been observed in the operation of international organisations in Vietnam, which have been working to promote the integration of Vietnam's higher education system along international lines (A. Q. Dang, 2009). However, in contrast to the tensions between the *national* and the *global* factors identified in Japanese universities by Kudo and Hashimoto (2011), the current study did not identify any significant influence of *global* factors on the internationalisation of the key university. Instead, the findings indicate the influence of *national* and *institutional* factors were prominent in this process at the key university. The domestic-focused internationalisation approach at the key university was particularly shaped by *national economic* and *political* factors and the outstanding *institutional* factor related to the single focus on teaching. In addition, the (national) *cultural relevance* factor and the *institutional* mono-disciplinary structure exerted additional influences on the implementation of internationalisation practices at the key university.

Among the three interlocking factors in the *glonacal heuristic theory* (*global*, *national*, and *local*) presented by Marginson and Rhoades (2002) and Marginson et al. (2011), institutional factors were included as a part of the *local* factor. In considering the *local* factor, Marginson et al. (2011) have suggested such aspects as “the day-to-day life of institutions, localities, communities and employers of graduates” (p.14). Being in a centralised Vietnamese planning system, and being located in one of the largest national cities of Vietnam, the influence of localities, communities and employers, as suggested

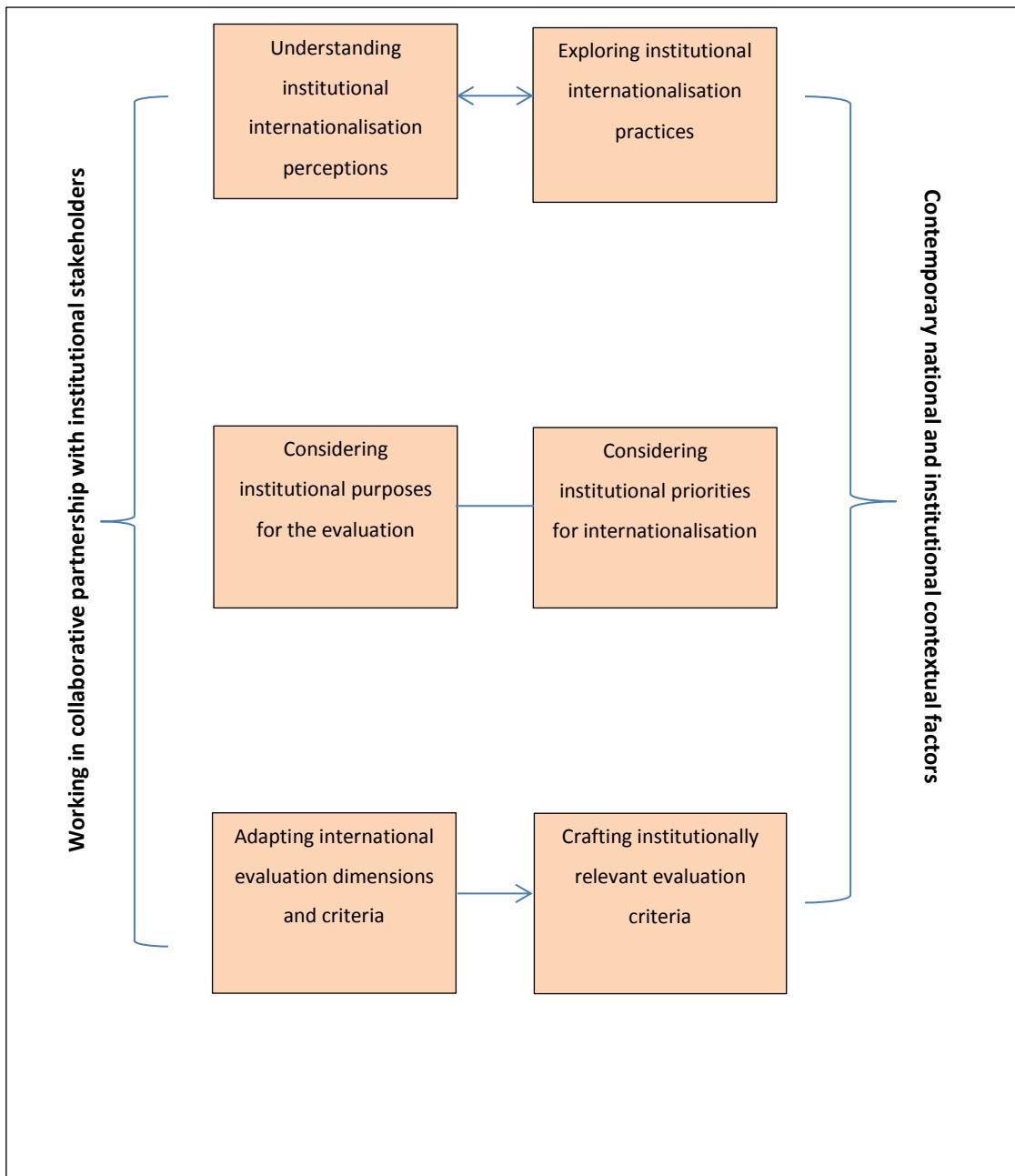
by Marginsion et al. (2011), might not be as visible in the internationalisation of the key university. Nonetheless, such influences may still exist.

However, there are two *institutional* factors, which were important in driving the internationalisation effort at the key university, including: the single focus on teaching and mono-disciplinary structure. The single focus on teaching contributes to the establishment of the domestic-focused internationalisation not only for the key university but also for the two supplementary universities. With regard to the mono-disciplinary structure, further discussions at the key university indicate that this factor influenced the implementation of internationalisation practices.

Moreover, the existence of the (national) *cultural relevance* factor in considering internationalisation practices also appears to be characterised by the particular academic discipline provided by the key university. Therefore, it is suggested that *institutional* factors may need to be considered as a fourth interlocking factor in *the glonacal heuristic theory* when considering the internationalisation of a Vietnamese public university.

### **7.5. Reflecting on the development process of a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at Vietnamese public universities**

The outcomes of the present study not only involve the development of a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at the key university, but also a general model of the development process for the evaluation criteria. This model might be applicable for Vietnamese public universities in general (see Figure 7.2). The implications related to the model developed in this study are discussed further in the next chapter.



*Figure 7.2: The model for developing a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at Vietnamese public universities*

As shown in Figure 7.2, the process of developing a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university constitutes three successive stages. The overall process of developing this set of evaluation criteria needs to take into account both the national and institutional contextual factors. This process also specifically involves the institutional stakeholders.

The first stage in this process involves identifying institutional perceptions of internationalisation and implementation of internationalisation practices. As indicated by the findings of the current study, these two aspects have a mutual influence on each

other. This insight suggests that it is important to ensure that there is a match between the conceptual understanding of internationalisation and its practical implementation in order to develop an appropriate understanding of institutional priorities for internationalisation. In considering such priorities for internationalisation at Vietnamese public universities, it is important to note that the national contextual factors as well as the institutional factors might change over time.

A thorough understanding of institutional considerations is the second step that is found to be important in developing the dimensional framework for an evaluation of institutional internationalisation. At this stage, institutional purposes for the evaluation are identified. What becomes evident from the findings is that institutional purposes for the evaluation partially informed the university's priorities for dimensions in developing the internationalisation evaluation framework. As institutional purposes for evaluation might vary between contemporary and future periods, the dimensions adopted in developing the evaluation framework might differ as the evaluation proceeds.

The final stage of contextualising evaluation criteria deemed to be relevant for studying institutional internationalisation involves adapting and crafting the set of evaluation criteria to ensure institutional relevance. The findings of the current study indicate that the crafting task at this stage took into account a complex range of factors, including institutional and (national) cultural factors, which could influence the relevance of specific evaluation criteria. In particular, the current study highlights that the academic discipline of each university also needed to be closely considered in this stage, in order to ensure the relevance of each criterion.

The modelled process provides a theoretical framework for Vietnamese public universities that wish to develop their own sets of evaluation criteria, particularly with regard to studying their internationalisation efforts and progress in different institutional development periods. In evaluating internationalisation, understanding the interconnections among evaluation criteria is important for a university to make decision over the ones which should be pertinent to their desired objective, as recommended by (Knight, 2008). In the current study, the identification of the institutional priorities for internationalisation and evaluation enabled the policy implementers at the key university to decide which criteria were relevant to evaluating their contemporary internationalisation or planning their future internationalisation. This modelled process, therefore, enables institutional stakeholders, as users of evaluation, to

understand how the interconnections within the set of evaluation criteria are established at any given internationalisation period. This insight will support them in selecting the most relevant criteria for evaluating a specific internationalisation effort.

In addition, this study also indicates that the researcher had a strategic role to play in facilitating the expression of viewpoints by institutional stakeholders during the whole process of developing the contextualised set of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at the key university in Vietnam (See more in Chapter 3). The collaborative partnership adopted in this study involved the researcher in the real context of institutional internationalisation, which was figured out by the institutional stakeholders rather than by outside experts. Therefore, this process was significantly different from practices of developing evaluation criteria for internationalisation in other countries. The application of a participatory approach in this study also highlights a potentially paradoxical fact in that the institutional stakeholders participated democratically although they were in a highly centralised planning system.

## **7.6. Chapter summary**

This chapter discussed the findings in light of the existing literature on internationalisation and its evaluation in higher education. The discussion was guided by the three research questions, through which the contextualised set of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university was developed. Finally, the development process was modelled for wider application in Vietnamese public universities.

The discussion in this chapter shows that the contemporary internationalisation at the key university appears to be different from that in other countries. It means that the most frequently cited definition of internationalisation as “a process of integrating international, intercultural, or global dimensions into the purpose, functions, or delivery of higher education” by Knight (2012, p.29) is not necessarily applicable for the Vietnamese situation. The aim of achieving *international standards* at the key university, in internationalising their academic staff and research, appeared to have nothing to do with “relationships between and among nations” as defined for the “international dimensions” in Knight’s definition (2012). Nonetheless, there is an inevitable influence from the *national* and the *institutional* factors in shaping the concept and implementation of internationalisation at the key university. This suggests

that internationalisation in the Vietnamese higher education context could be defined as a process of integrating not only international, intercultural, or global factors but also *national* and *institutional* factors.

The discussion in this chapter also reveals that the *national* and *institutional* factors not only shaped the context of internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university, but also informed the development of the set of evaluation criteria for studying their internationalisation efforts. As a result of the influence of institutional factors, the set of evaluation criteria developed in the present study might not be completely applicable for all Vietnamese public universities. However, there remains a shared vision for internationalisation among Vietnamese public universities which is driven by their national contextual factors. In addition, the process for developing a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation, which is modelled at the conclusion of this study, could be applicable for each individual university. In the current context of Vietnamese higher education, where internationalisation at the institutional level has not yet been fully developed, a self-evaluation conducted by each university could help them to understand the current status of their internationalisation as well as to form an appropriate plan for ongoing internationalisation activities.

This study is based on the evaluation theories drawn from the utilization-focused approach and practical participatory approach for the process of contextualising evaluation criteria (see Chapter 3). Forming a collaborative partnership with institutional stakeholders is supported by these evaluation theories. Such partnerships play an important role in identifying institutional considerations and the factors which influence the evaluation framework development, as well as enhancing the relevance of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at a particular Vietnamese public university.

The final chapter that follows will summarise key findings, and present conclusions. In addition, the implications for theory and practice in evaluating institutional internationalisation will also be discussed. Recommendations for future research are also presented.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

*A theory must be tempered with reality*

(Jawaharlal Nehru, 1889 – 1964, Prime Minister of India)

#### **8.1. Introduction**

This study has involved the development of a set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation which was adapted to the context of a public university in Vietnam. In this chapter I will firstly summarise the study and its key findings. Then, the implications of the study are considered from the perspectives of theory, methodology, and practice and policy. Next, there is a discussion of the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research. The chapter concludes with some final thoughts from the researcher.

#### **8.2. The study revisited**

This study was designed to develop a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university. In doing so, it also aimed to model the development process that could be used for wider application in evaluating internationalisation at Vietnamese universities. This research process was supported by two strategic conceptual frameworks: practical participatory evaluation (Chouinard & Cousins, 2012, 2014) and utilization-focused evaluation (Patton, 1997, 2008, 2012). The study employed a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research methods, with different data collection tools employed in the three phases of developing evaluation criteria. The key university was involved in all three phases of the data collection process, while two supplementary universities were added in Phase Three in order to pilot the wider applicability of the initial set of evaluation criteria.

Phase One of the study involved the initial analysis of university documents, interviews with the senior leaders and questionnaires to the policy implementers at the key university. These data informed the description of the context of internationalisation at the key university. The major focus of internationalisation in this context was on

domestic factors, which is contrary to the official focus on international cooperation and outbound mobility in internationalising the higher education system, as supported by the Vietnamese government (L. T. Tran & Marginson, 2018). The domestic-focused nature of internationalisation at the key university was not only influenced by national (economic and political) factors but also by the single focus on teaching, which reflected the historical institutional structure of higher education in Vietnam.

In Phase Two, the focus was on identifying institutional considerations in developing a framework of dimensions for evaluating internationalisation at the key university. Focus groups were conducted with the policy implementers at the key university. Based on findings from the review of international evaluation tools for institutional internationalisation, the focus groups discussed the relevance of this as an initial framework of dimensions for studying internationalisation at the key university. The dimensions, in which domestic factors were identified as the internationalisation focus in Phase One, formed the most important part of the evaluation framework for internationalisation at the key university. In addition, other dimensions emerged as another part of this framework since the dual purposes of using the evaluation as both reviewing and planning tools for the internationalisation were raised at the key university. The institutional priorities for domestic-focused internationalisation and the dual institutional purposes for the evaluation informed an initial framework of dimensions for developing a set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at the key university.

In Phase Three, a questionnaire was first used to pilot the initial set of evaluation criteria at the key university as well as at two supplementary universities, in order to understand the extent to which it was relevant for Vietnamese public universities, not just the key university. The questionnaire was followed by a final round of focus groups with the policy implementers at the key university. Together, the findings from Phase Three highlighted two key influences: the mono-discipline institutional factor and (national) cultural relevance factor. These findings provided further insights into the complexity of contextual factors taken into account in developing a set of evaluation criteria for studying internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university. Although the two supplementary universities had a similar level and focus of internationalisation to the key university, the set of evaluation criteria was deemed not to be applicable for all three contexts without adaptation for their unique institutional context. These findings

became the inspiration for modelling the process for creating a contextualised set of criteria that could be used in the broader context of evaluating internationalisation at Vietnamese universities (see Figure 7.2).

In summary, in examining the internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university, the complexity of national contextual and institutional factors needs to be taken into account. This complexity has to be considered over and above the international or global factors which have been frequently considered in defining internationalisation in the international literature.

I will now consider the implications for theory, methodology, and practice and policy, with regard to evaluating the internationalisation of higher education in Vietnam.

### **8.3. Implications for theory**

Key theoretical implications of this study include: (i) there is an initial stage of domestic-focus in the development of internationalisation in higher education; (ii) the *glonacal* theory can be extended to include the significance of institutional factors in studying internationalisation; (iii) the institutional relevance is important in evaluating institutional internationalisation; and (iv) the cultural relevance of criteria is significant in evaluating institutional internationalisation. Each of these theoretical implications is now discussed in more detail.

#### **8.3.1. An initial stage of domestic-focused internationalisation in higher education**

The findings of the current study add to the literature by identifying the trend of internationalisation in the Vietnamese higher education context involving a domestic focus. The domestic focus represented the initial stage of internationalisation in a Vietnamese public university. Vietnam has been in transition from a more ‘closed in’ economy and society to a more ‘opening up’ with concomitant effects on the higher education system. The internationalisation of Vietnamese universities, therefore, can be seen as an important part of the ‘opening up’ process required for greater participation in the international higher education system. This process is characterised by the term *international integration*, which was used by a senior leader during the Phase One interview, to describe the key university’s internationalisation effort. The goal for internationalisation at the key university is, therefore, to be a part of the international higher education system. The identification of the domestic focus as the initial stage in

internationalisation indicates that the internationalisation of Vietnamese higher education distinctive in comparison to published reports for other countries.

The identification of the domestic-focused approach to internationalisation, as an initial stage in the process of internationalising universities, may also be valuable for other higher education contexts, particularly those with similar geo-political and historical features. However, the influence of the single focus on teaching, and the implications for the internationalisation of research, may characterize the pathway to internationalisation of universities in Vietnam. Although that influence might possibly lessen with the progressive improvement in institutional research capacity, it appears to be an important factor in driving the current trend of domestic-focused internationalisation at the Vietnamese public universities that took part in the current study. The recognition of an institutional internationalisation trend, which was embedded with a domestic focus, adds an important perspective in defining internationalisation with consideration of contextual factors.

### **8.3.2. Extending *glonacal* theory by adding institutional factors in evaluating institutional internationalisation**

The findings of the current study provide an extension to the *glonacal* agency heuristic theory of Marginson and Rhoades (2002), particularly with regard to examining institutional internationalisation. In discussing operation of universities in the Asia-Pacific region, Marginson et al. (2011) emphasised the interweaving of the three agencies (the *global*, the *national*, and the *local*) in examining the operation of a university. Vietnam is a country within this Asia-Pacific region. However, the findings from the current study provide evidence that *institutional* factors had such a significant influence in shaping the internationalisation effort at a Vietnamese public university that these factors can be considered as an additional agency. *Institutional* factors appear to be of equal importance to the *national* factors, while also being more influential than either the *global* or the *local* factors in the current internationalisation of a Vietnamese public university. The influence of institutional factors on the internationalisation efforts of the key university in this study might gradually fade when the university is able to improve its research capacity and evolves into a comprehensive university structure. The same progression may apply in other similar institutional settings.

### **8.3.3. The importance of institutional relevance in evaluating institutional internationalisation**

The findings of this study highlight that, if a set of evaluation criteria is developed for evaluating internationalisation at the institutional level, it needs to take into account the institutional relevance of individual evaluation criteria. In this study, the institutional relevance of evaluation criteria is related to unique structural factors, such as the single focus on teaching and the mono-disciplinary structure of the Vietnamese public university. The influence of these institutional factors is likely to be endemic to the Vietnamese higher education context. In particular, the nature of the institutional influence may vary among Vietnamese universities with different academic disciplines, such as those in social sciences and those in natural sciences.

In addition, the institutional relevance of evaluation criteria involves institutional purposes for the evaluation, including using it as both a reviewing and planning tools. These institutional purposes influenced the way the key university decided on priorities, as well as the criteria included, in developing an evaluation of their internationalisation effort. This finding highlights an important contextual reality that needs to be taken into account when contextualising evaluation criteria for studying institutional internationalisation.

The literature on evaluating institutional internationalisation mentions institutional priorities (Gao, 2015a). However, the inclusion of specific institutional priorities and factors in such an evaluation practice has not previously been reported. Therefore, a key contribution to existing theory of this study is in showing how a set of evaluation criteria can be made institutionally relevant.

### **8.3.4. Cultural relevance in evaluating institutional internationalisation**

A further theoretical implication of this study is the need to extend the current literature on evaluation of institutional internationalisation to include the cultural relevance of evaluation criteria within a particular context.

Cultural concern in evaluating institutional internationalisation has been identified by Gao (2015a) as an important dimension. She attempted to develop an internationally applicable set of evaluation criteria. In Gao's approach, the cultural dimension was specifically related to the integration of students and staff from diverse cultural backgrounds. The findings of the current study, however, approached the evaluation of

internationalisation for the purposes of having an institutionally applicable set of evaluation criteria. In this process, a specific cultural concern was raised about the (national) cultural relevance of imported knowledge in evaluating the internationalisation of education programs. This concern appears to be essential for a university in the Vietnamese higher education context. It was not only because this nation has experienced significant and varied foreign influences in its history, but also because of the increasing impact of globalisation on its current development. Therefore, cultural relevance in evaluating institutional internationalisation will be valuable to consider in higher education contexts similar to Vietnam, where dealing with the tensions between becoming internationalised and while at the same time preserving local culture.

#### **8.4. Implications for methodology**

In this study, the combination of practical participatory evaluation and utilization-focused evaluation approaches allowed the researcher to contextualise the set of internationalisation evaluation criteria for a particular institutional context. In turn, these approaches provided the researcher with a comprehensive understanding of not only the current context of internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university but also the complexity of contextual factors influencing the evaluation of institutional internationalisation in the Vietnamese higher education context. In particular, the concept of the utilization-focused evaluation approach, which highlights the “intended use by intended users” (Patton, 2012, p. 4), proved to be an effective guideline for the whole process of collecting data for the study in collaboration with the institutional stakeholders (senior leaders and policy implementers). Therefore, the key methodological implication of this study is that, through the employment of these two evaluation approaches, the final set of evaluation criteria can be better able to be contextualised for studying internationalisation at the institutional level. However, the employment of the two evaluation approaches centred on stakeholders was at the same time a challenge.

#### **8.5. Implications for practice and policy**

In this section, implications for the policy implementers (academics and administrators), the senior leaders, other universities and the policy makers are discussed. Practical recommendations are also provided for each of these groups.

### **8.5.1. Implications and recommendations for the policy implementers**

During the study, the policy implementers at the key university, including both academics and administrators, shared their different concerns about the perception and implementation of internationalisation during the 2010-2015 period. The findings from the study revealed that the academics tended to be less confident about their internationalisation achievement than the administrators. This finding might be explained by the fact that the academics' international experience, as well as their level of involvement in internationalisation practices, provided them with more opportunities for relevant reflection. These two groups of policy implementers also showed different concerns regarding the evaluation of their internationalisation effort. However, these differences appeared to be resolved in the final stage of the study. In Phase Three, the academics and administrators discussed openly together, in order to achieve the most relevant set of evaluation criteria to study their internationalisation. This process highlights the importance of having democratic discussions to develop a shared understanding about internationalisation among policy implementers, despite their different levels of involvement in the previous/current implementation of internationalisation and their differing levels of international experience.

In the first face-to-face interaction with the policy implementers, in the Phase Two focus groups, it was admitted by the academics that they just did what they were told to do with regard to internationalisation. However, given this admission, their increasingly enthusiastic participation from Phase Two to Phase Three was a surprise. It is likely, however, that the absence of a senior leader in a high-power position, as described by Patton (2008), allowed the policy implementers to freely express their viewpoints about the achievements and failures in implementing internationalisation at their university. They also expressed their interest in having an effective evaluation of their internationalisation effort. The democratic discussion that ensued appeared to promote an organisational learning among the academics and administrators with regard to internationalisation. It also allowed these policy implementers to identify the lack of clarity in the current internationalisation strategy at the key university.

Throughout the study, the policy implementers at the key university showed that they were responsible representatives of the whole institution. This view reflected the statement by a senior leader that the policy implementers were trusted to provide their best advice in assisting with the development of a relevant set of evaluation criteria for

their internationalisation. That level of trust meant that the senior leaders also encouraged their policy implementers to actively contribute to developing the institutional internationalisation plan. This approach stands in contrast to the previous view expressed by the policy implementers that they were just passively implementing what they were told to do.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that the policy implementers:

1. ensure that democratic discussion among both academics and administrators is maintained to achieve a shared understanding of the institutional internationalisation progress;
2. be aware of their potential influence on institutional policy and strategic planning; and,
3. advocate for improving policy and practice with regard to providing international experience for both academics and administrators.

### **8.5.2. Implications and recommendations for the senior leaders**

The findings from this study also have important implications for the senior leaders with regard to the institutional internationalisation effort. In this study, the organisational structure demonstrated the specific influence of the policy implementers on institutional planning activities. In participating in focus groups during the study, they raised their concerns about the clarity of the institutional perceptions and implementation of internationalisation practices. This insight, in turn, impacted on how they considered such practices at the unit level within the university. Being the key decision makers at the institutional level, the senior leaders need to make clear to the policy implementers the institutional policies and strategies regarding internationalisation clear, so as to avoid misunderstandings caused by a lack of information.

In addition, it was shown in this study that the democratic discussion among the policy implementers strengthened their commitment to the institutional internationalisation effort, despite having different views and voicing complaints about the existing process. They provided useful suggestions for developing a relevant set of evaluation criteria for studying the institutional internationalisation efforts. Engaging in democratic discussion, therefore, could be a useful tool for the senior leaders to enhance the accountability of the policy implementers with regard to the effective implementation of institutional internationalisation. Furthermore, the involvement of the policy

implementers in making decisions related to the evaluation of internationalisation also needs to be supported in order to ensure effective application of the resulting evaluation practices.

Although Vietnam's central planning system means that the senior leaders in the study were not the decision makers for the overall institutional policy, they were still able to ask higher management to provide more support for institutional internationalisation. Other studies have found that the government policy on internationalisation of Vietnamese higher education has focused more on international cooperation and outbound mobility (L. T. Tran & Marginson, 2018), rather than the domestic-focused internationalisation 'on campus' which was identified in the current study. The findings of the study, therefore, can serve as a basis for the senior leaders to call for political and financial support from the government to improve the institutional internationalisation process.

In light of the findings from the study, it is recommended that senior leaders:

1. communicate frequently with the policy implementers about institutional internationalisation planning and implementation;
2. involve the policy implementers in democratic discussion about implementing and evaluating institutional internationalisation; and,
3. highlight the current focus on domestic factors in institutional internationalisation with the higher management level.

### **8.5.3. Implications and recommendations for universities**

This study demonstrates how a set of evaluation criteria was developed and contextualised in order to study internationalisation at a particular university. This process was modelled in Figure 7.2 with the aim of providing a user-friendly tool for other universities which are interested in examining their internationalisation effort, in a particular period, for both review and planning purposes.

By referring to stages recommended in the model, a university is free to make decisions about the use of evaluation criteria for studying their internationalisation effort. In reviewing evaluation tools in different contexts in the initial phase of this study, a key concern was raised about how interconnections could be established among evaluation criteria within an evaluation tool. Understanding the interconnections, therefore, is meaningful for assisting a university to decide how a set of evaluation criteria may be

used for effectively evaluating its internationalisation in line with its own needs. With the modelled process in this study, universities can individualise their criteria for evaluating their internationalisation efforts at different periods of time.

In addition, it is useful to point out that the final model comprises three consecutive phases, each of which is dependent on its previous phase for its effectiveness. This incremental process enables a university to identify any necessary changes at each step, in order to achieve the most relevant set of evaluation criteria for their specific stage of internationalisation.

Furthermore, the model also highlights two important considerations which have an ongoing influence on the development of a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for institutional internationalisation: the collaborative partnership with institutional stakeholders, and the contemporary national and institutional contextual factors. Any set of evaluation criteria, developed for institutional use, should evolve with the recognition and understanding of the institutional stakeholders, while at the same time considering the national and institutional contextual factors influencing the trend of internationalisation at that particular university.

In line with these comments, it is recommended that Vietnamese universities, particularly the two supplementary universities which had similar contexts of internationalisation to the key university:

1. adopt the current set of evaluation criteria developed in the study, especially if they appear to have similar results to the key university with regard to the first and second stages of the modelled process; or,
2. follow the modelled process to contextualise their own set of evaluation criteria.

#### **8.5.4. Implications and recommendations for policymakers**

The findings in this study indicate that the contemporary internationalisation at the key Vietnamese public university was more focused on improving domestic factors. This focus is significantly different from the current focus on international cooperation and outbound mobility stated in government policies on the internationalisation of higher education. Although international cooperation and outbound mobility are important factors in promoting the internationalisation process of the higher education system, the internationalisation ‘on campus’ appears to be an urgent matter in realising the purpose of nation building and preserving national cultural identity. Recently, de Wit and Hunter

(2015) called for more attention to internationalisation on campus, with a focus on curriculum and learning outcomes to ensure internationalisation for all, rather than for a few who might participate in outbound mobility. This call appears to be largely relevant to the current internationalisation of Vietnamese higher education, which is expected to generate high quality human resources for the country's development needs. In addition, the current study found that universities are likely to have only limited success in implementing their international practices if they do not receive relevant policy and financial support from the government. Therefore, a change in government policy and financial support should be executed as soon as possible to support Vietnamese public universities to progress with their internationalisation developments.

### **8.6. Limitations of the study**

As with all research, this study had its limitations. The particular limitations in this study are due to: (i) its major focus on one particular university; (ii) the small sample size in piloting the set of evaluation criteria.

This study was specifically focused on a key university for the overall process of developing the set of evaluation criteria. This means that any generalisations based on the study results are likely to be limited. Nonetheless, the domestic-focused internationalisation trend at the key university was largely similar to the other two supplementary universities that participated in piloting the set of evaluation criteria. However, as presented by the General Statistics Office of Vietnam, up to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017, there were 235 diverse universities in Vietnam, ranging from traditional mono-disciplinary public universities, to more recently established comprehensive universities, as well as universities upgraded from training colleges in both the public and private sectors. The trend for domestic-focused internationalisation identified in the current study, therefore, might not be applicable to the wider range of Vietnamese universities. However, as the purpose of the study was to contextualise a set of evaluation criteria at the institutional level, the major focus on one university provided rich insights into an institutional context and its concern for enhancing internationalisation. This process also resulted in the development of an evaluation model that could be sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of differing universities.

The pilot of the set of evaluation criteria, in Phase Three of the study, was limited to two supplementary universities in addition to the key university. The findings from

these quantitative data supported the contextualisation process in the study by highlighting the importance of institutional relevance in developing evaluation criteria to study internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university. However, the extent of similarity, in terms of the domestic-focused internationalisation policy and practices identified among the three participating universities, might not be sufficient to draw conclusions about the internationalisation trends for other Vietnamese public universities.

Limitations noted above can provide the impetus for future research considerations, as outlined in the next section.

### **8.7. Suggestions for future research**

The results of this study suggest that further research would be helpful in providing a more holistic understanding of internationalisation in Vietnamese universities.

The identification of the domestic-focused internationalisation trend indicates a need for further investigation with regard to the internationalisation at different *types* of Vietnamese universities. This wider scope will be important for informing an appropriate national policy on institutional internationalisation. Kudo and Hashimoto (2011) mentioned a strong stratification among Japanese universities which resulted from Japanese government's policies on internationalisation of Japanese higher education and their funding policies. This insight might be a good experience for Vietnam in that internationalisation policies can be considered with a focus on different types of Vietnamese universities. The adverse effect of stratification among universities in terms of internationalisation might, therefore, be overcome if the higher ranking universities are not used as a benchmark for other groups of universities in achieving the internationalisation target, as has occurred with Japanese universities (Stigger, 2018).

The literature highlights the importance of approaching institutional internationalisation from the basis of the *glonacal* agency heuristic theory (Kudo & Hashimoto, 2011; Liu & Metcalfe, 2016). Although the findings from the current study added institutional factors as a further important dimension, the other local factors suggested by Marginson and Rhoades (2002) were not considered in this study. As there are 235 Vietnamese universities spread all over the country in different regions and local communities, further study on the influence of *local* factors on shaping the internationalisation

strategies among universities located in different regions would be helpful for developing appropriate policies for enhancing internationalisation in Vietnamese higher education.

The findings from the focus group discussions at the key university indicated that different viewpoints among institutional stakeholders (including academic and administrative policy implementers) could be considered as a contextual factor at the institutional level. For the purpose of the current study, these differences were not of central importance; rather, the emphasis was on institutional contextual factors that transcended the internal different points of view. However, this finding can provide a good base for further research on the evolution of stakeholders' perceptions regarding institutional contextual factors related to internationalisation. This kind of study might provide a useful contribution to promoting the inclusion of institutional stakeholders' viewpoints in conceptualising internationalisation, as advocated by de Wit (2013).

In addition, the findings regarding the importance of (national) cultural relevance in considering the value of imported higher education knowledge suggested that further research is warranted on the diverse influences of such knowledge in internationalisation efforts. The findings from such a study could be useful not only for Vietnam but also for other countries with similar concerns. More than that, the findings may also be seen as the foundation for research on the composition of factors that contribute to national identity in terms of the internationalisation of Vietnamese higher education.

The set of evaluation criteria developed in this study can also serve as a foundation for further development of a comprehensive evaluation tool for wider examination of internationalisation at Vietnamese universities. For wider application, measureable indicators will potentially provide an overall picture of the internationalisation at Vietnamese universities taking into account their different priorities, challenges, and potentialities. In addition, because of the mono-disciplinary structure of Vietnamese public universities evaluation criteria will need to take into account the extent to which each discipline is amenable to internationalisation. As a result, better planning could be developed for the internationalisation of Vietnamese higher education.

By the time the current study was completed near the end of 2018, the UNESCO project on developing internationalisation indicators for the ASEAN+6 countries promulgated a

set of indicators for both national and institutional levels with six and five domains in each of these levels. The identified domains focus on mobility of students, staff, and research within the Asia and Pacific region. As the country-level data were collected from Australia, India, and Japan, this set of indicators might not be relevant to the current context of internationalisation at Vietnamese universities. However, undertaking research on how internationalisation of Vietnamese universities fits with the wider regional trend could be useful for developing internationalisation strategies at both national and institutional levels.

Finally, the model developed in this study (see Section 7.5) serves as an initial framework to provide Vietnamese universities with an overview of the steps needed in developing a contextually relevant set of evaluation criteria for studying their institutional internationalisation. However, the actual application of this model in conducting an evaluation at a university would require further consultation with experts regarding the description of each criterion in the light of their institutional contextual factors. The application would also require a mutually agreed data collection protocol for the effective development of evaluation criteria relevant for each university setting. It will, therefore, be useful to conduct future research on the potential for generalising the process modelled in the current study across the wider Vietnamese higher education context.

## **8.8. Concluding remarks**

There has been a growing concern about internationalisation of Vietnamese higher education in general, and Vietnamese universities, in particular. Accordingly, it will be necessary for Vietnamese universities to define their current internationalisation status as well as articulate their future internationalisation strategy. The findings from this study provide a foundational tool for Vietnamese universities to reflect on their current and future internationalisation.

The current study has emphasised the role of institutional stakeholders in the process of contextualising evaluation criteria for studying institutional internationalisation. Their perceptions of and priorities for internationalisation, as well as their purposes in conducting an evaluation, were especially important in developing an appropriately contextualised set of evaluation criteria. A paradoxical finding from the study was that encouraging further democratic involvement of institutional stakeholders, in making

decisions about their institutional planning, could be particularly useful for advancing internationalisation in the currently centralised higher education system in Vietnam.

Reflecting on why I decided to embark on this study, and the questions which became the inspiration for this study, I have realised that the evaluation of internationalisation involves a complexity of contextual factors, which have not always been transparent in the existing literature. In considering internationalisation evaluation in practice, the nature of that complexity has become more transparent to me. It was without a doubt a journey with challenges and struggles, especially when I chose a direction that was different from the other researchers in approaching the evaluation of internationalisation. However, it has also been a worthwhile effort, because the collaborative partnership with my university stakeholders, who are my colleagues, was not only helpful for the study but also for promoting organisational learning about internationalisation at my university. Being able to share my knowledge in the process of that learning has definitely been a valuable experience.

The application of two evaluation approaches in this study has also been a challenging experience for me. The first challenge was to maintain the balance between the role of both outsider and insider during the process of the study. In particular, the line between these two roles became blurred during the focus group discussions. Being considered as an insider by the participants, I was frequently distracted by their discussion of problems at their faculties and departments as well as by their pulling discussions away from my research focus. It was important for me, as the researcher, to be alert enough to assert the role of an outsider so that I could lead the participants back to the key points of the discussions.

Another challenge in applying the utilization-focused approach is how to handle with flexibility of the various personal and situational factors arising from a particular context. Both of these factors were closely related to stakeholders, and were unexpected. This led to some unforeseen results and some changes during the study. For example, after completing interviews with the senior leaders, I found that internationalisation was an ambiguous concept to them. I, therefore, had to replace this term with a more familiar term, ‘increasing international perspectives’, in the questionnaires to the policy implementers later. In another example, in analysing Phase Two focus group data, it took considerable time to draw a line between two categories of institutional priorities: ones given to the implementation of internationalisation

versus ones given to the evaluation of internationalisation. This was different from what I had imagined because I anticipated a reasonably consistent number of priorities regarding internationalisation at the key university.

Last but not least, language interpretation was also a challenge in conducting this study. Supported by the two evaluation approaches, free-wheeling discussions gave the stakeholders opportunities to use colloquial Vietnamese expressions. This tended to occur when the stakeholders talked about the limits of their internationalisation practices or about unwritten norms in public government's administrative systems. Getting such expressions interpreted appropriately into English was difficult. However, despite those challenges, I was pleased to navigate to the end of the road I chose, a different one from the others so far.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: The research timeline for three phases of the study

	Procedure	Time frame& location
Phase 1: Identifying current internationalisation context	Key university documents	January - February 2016 New Zealand
	Interviews (senior leaders) at key university	March 2016 Vietnam
	Questionnaire (policy implementers) at key university	March 2016 Vietnam
	Back to New Zealand for data	April 2016 New Zealand
Phase 2: Developing evaluation framework	International evaluation tools	2015 New Zealand
	Focus group discussions (policy implementers) at key university	May 2016 Vietnam
	Back to New Zealand for data	June - July 2016 New Zealand
Phase 3: Developing & Trialling evaluation criteria	Administering questionnaire at	August 2016 Vietnam
	Focus group discussions at key	September 2016 Vietnam

## **Appendix B: Information sheet to the key university leader**

Dear Professor .....,

My name is Nguyen Thi Hong Nhung. I am a PhD student at Institute of Education, Massey University, New Zealand. I am conducting the research entitled *The development of a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university.*

I would like to invite your university participants including management board and heads of faculties and departments to participate as the stakeholders in the whole process of my research.

### **Project Description**

The study aims at developing a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university. The study will review the existing evaluation tools and draw on three evaluation models in order to find an appropriate set of evaluation criteria for Vietnamese universities. For such purpose, the study is conducted in three phases including: 1) identifying the context of internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university; 2) developing a set of evaluation criteria; 3) revising the set of evaluation criteria.

### **Participant Identification and Recruitment**

At your university, stakeholders are representatives of highest management level, addressed as senior leaders, and representatives of academic faculties and administrative departments, addressed as policy implementers.

No real names of participants or the university will be used in the study.

It is expected that 28 participants, who involve in teaching and research activities in the university, will be able participate in the study as representatives for senior leaders and policy implementers.

### **Project Procedures**

The research includes three phases.

Phase 1 (3/2016) involves document analysis and 3 interviews (a maximum of 1 hour/each) with senior leaders and 1 questionnaire (a maximum of 30 minutes/each) to 25 policy implementers.

Phase 2 (6/2016) involves 3 focus group discussions (a maximum of 1 hour/each) with senior leaders and policy implementers separately.

Phase 3 (8/2016 – 9/2016) involves a final questionnaire (a maximum of 30 minutes/each) and 2 focus group discussions (a maximum of 1 hour/each) between senior leaders and academic policy implementers and administrative policy implementers.

Invitation will be sent to participants two weeks before each interview and focus group discussion. The questionnaire sheet will be directly given to each participant.

### **Data Management**

Data related to the study, including university documents accessed for the purpose of the study, will be stored securely throughout the research process. The data will be stored in password protected computer of the researcher while the hard copies of data will be stored in the researcher's locked cabinet at the office of Institute of Education, Manawatu campus, Massey university, New Zealand. The data will be disposed of five years after completion of the doctoral study.

The consent forms will be stored separately in a locked cabinet at my home in Viet Nam.  
A summary of the findings will be sent to your university after the conclusion of the study.

### **Participant's Rights**

Participation in the study is voluntary. The stakeholders, who agree to participate, have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study (up to two weeks after the conclusion of the final phase of the study);
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that personal name will not be used unless permission is given to the researcher;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.
- complete and return the questionnaire to whatever extent it can be completed;
- decline to participate in a focus group discussion
- be given access to a summary of the research findings when it is concluded.

If you agree to allow the research to take place at your university, I will send each individual stakeholder an Information sheet and a consent form, describing my research and inviting them to participate.

If you have any enquiry or if you need further information about my study, please feel free to contact me or my supervisors.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

**Researcher:**

**Nguyen Thi Hong Nhung**

Telephone number: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Supervisors:**

**Associate Professor Penny Haworth**

Email: [P.A.Haworth@massey.ac.nz](mailto:P.A.Haworth@massey.ac.nz)

**Professor James Chapman**

Email: [J.Chapman@massey.ac.nz](mailto:J.Chapman@massey.ac.nz)

### **LOW RISK NOTIFICATIONS**

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Dr Brian Finch, Director, Research Ethics, telephone 06 356 9099 x 86015, email [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz)".

## **Appendix C: Information sheet to the key university participants**

### **To: Participant at the key university**

My name is Nguyen Thi Hong Nhung. I am a PhD student at Institute of Education, Massey University, New Zealand. I am conducting the research entitled *The development of a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university.*

I would like to invite you to participate as the stakeholder in the whole process of the research.

### **Project Description and Invitation**

The study aims at developing a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university. The study will review the existing evaluation tools and draw on three evaluation models in order to find an appropriate set of evaluation criteria for Vietnamese universities. For such purpose, the study is conducted in three phases including: 1) identifying the context of internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university; 2) developing a set of evaluation criteria; 3) revising the set of evaluation criteria.

### **Participant Identification and Recruitment**

At your university, you are representative for those who are responsible for implementing internationalisation policies and practices at your faculties/departments; therefore, you are able to provide information on the actual internationalisation practices that you think are taking place.

No real names of participants will be used in the study.

It is expected that 25 deans of academic faculties and managers of administrative departments will participate in the study.

### **Project Procedures**

The research includes three phases.

Phase 1 (3/2016) involves your participation in completing one questionnaire (a maximum of 30 minutes).

Phase 2 (6/2016) involves your participation in a focus group discussion, which will take you no longer than one hour.

Phase 3 (8/2016 – 9/2016) involves your participation in completing the final questionnaire (a maximum of 30 minutes) and another focus group discussion (a maximum of 1 hour) with representative of policy implementers.

### **Data Management**

Data related to the study will be stored securely throughout the research process. The data will be stored in password protected computer of the researcher while the hard copies of data will be stored in the researcher's locked cabinet at the office of Institute of Education, Manawatu campus, Massey university, New Zealand. The data will be disposed of five years after completion of the doctoral study.

The consent forms will be stored in a locked cabinet at my home in Viet Nam.

A summary of the findings will be sent to your university after the conclusion of the study.

### **Participant's Rights**

Your participation in the study is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study (up to two weeks after the conclusion of the final phase of the study);
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- complete and return the questionnaire to whatever extent you agree to answer
- decline to participate in a focus group discussion
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.

If you agree to participate in my research, I invite you to keep the Information sheet and sign the Participant consent form that follows.

If you have any enquiry or if you need further information about my study, please feel free to contact me or my supervisors.

I am looking forward to welcoming your participation.

Yours sincerely,

***Researcher:***

***Nguyen Thi Hong Nhung***

*Telephone number:* [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
*Email:* [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

***Supervisors:***

***Associate Professor Penny Haworth***

*Email:* [P.A.Haworth@massey.ac.nz](mailto:P.A.Haworth@massey.ac.nz)  
***Professor James Chapman***  
*Email:* [J.Chapman@massey.ac.nz](mailto:J.Chapman@massey.ac.nz)

**LOW RISK NOTIFICATIONS**

“This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University’s Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Dr Brian Finch, Director, Research Ethics, telephone 06 356 9099 x 86015, email [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz)”.

## **Appendix D: Information sheet to the supplementary universities**

Dear .....,

My name is Nguyen Thi Hong Nhung. I am a PhD student at Institute of Education, Massey University, New Zealand. I am conducting the research entitled *The development of a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university.*

The study aims at developing a contextualised set of evaluation criteria for internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university. The set of evaluation criteria will be piloted in 2 Vietnamese universities before the final version can be completed.

I would like to invite your university to participate in piloting the set of evaluation criteria developed in this study by completing the questionnaire attached.

### **Participant Identification and Recruitment**

Your university representatives, including heads of academic faculties and non-academic departments, are invited to participate in the study because your university has been actively involved in internationalisation activities.

No real names of participants and the institution will be used in the study.

### **Project Procedures**

Your university is being invited to pilot the set of evaluation criteria which has been developed as a questionnaire in this study. This questionnaire is used to position the effort of internationalisation in term of policies and practices at your university.

The time required for completion of the questionnaire will not be longer than half an hour. This questionnaire will be administered between August and September in 2016.

### **Data Management**

Data related to the study will be stored securely throughout the research process. The data will be stored in password protected computer of the researcher while the hard copies of data will be stored in the researcher's locked cabinet at the office of Institute of Education, Manawatu campus, Massey university, New Zealand. The data will be disposed of five years after completion of the doctoral study.

The consent forms will be stored in my locked cabinet at my home in Viet Nam.

A summary of the findings will be sent to your university after the conclusion of the study.

### **Participant's Rights**

The participation of your university and staff is voluntary. Those who participate will have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study (up to two weeks after the conclusion of the final phase of the study);
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- complete and return the questionnaire to whatever extent it can be completed;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.

If you agree to allow the research to take place at your university, I will send each individual participant an Information sheet and a Consent form, describing my research and inviting them to participate.

If you have any enquiry or if you need further information about my study, please feel free to contact me or my supervisors.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

**Researcher:**

**Nguyen Thi Hong Nhung**

Telephone number: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Supervisors:**

**Associate Professor Penny Haworth**

Email: [P.A.Haworth@massey.ac.nz](mailto:P.A.Haworth@massey.ac.nz)

**Professor James Chapman**

Email: [J.Chapman@massey.ac.nz](mailto:J.Chapman@massey.ac.nz)

**LOW RISK NOTIFICATIONS**

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Dr Brian Finch, Director, Research Ethics, telephone 06 356 9099 x 86015, email [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz)".

## **Appendix E: Participant consent form at the key university (Interview)**

### **PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM**

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

**I agree/do not agree** to the interview being sound recorded.

**I agree/do not agree** to the interview being image recorded.

**I wish/do not wish** to have my recordings returned to me.

**I wish/do not wish** to have data placed in an official archive.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**Full Name - printed**

**Appendix F: Participant consent form at the key university (Focus group)**

**FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM**

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree not to disclose anything discussed in the Focus Group.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**Full Name - printed**

**Appendix G: Transcript release authority (for interview at the key university)**

**AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPTS**

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview(s) conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used in reports and publications arising from the research.

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**Full Name - printed**

**Appendix H: Interview guiding questions with senior leaders at the key university (Phase One)**

No	Area	Question (focusing on leaders' viewpoints and expectations)
1	<b>Strategies, policies</b>	
	Related to institutional overall strategy	<p>1. How would you describe international goals in the institutional overall vision?</p> <p>+ How have they been incorporated in the institutional vision and mission?</p> <p>+ How important have they been in the institutional overall vision?</p> <p>+ How important will they be in the coming years?</p>
	Specific strategies, policies	<p>1. What strategies and policies have been implemented by the university so far to achieve these international goals?</p> <p>2. How has the university communicated these goals and strategies to faculty and staff?</p> <p>3. How have these strategies and policies been coordinated within faculties and departments in the university?</p>
2	<b>Management structure</b>	<p>1. In the role of management unit for international activities, what has the Dept of International Cooperation and Development done to promote international activities within the university?</p> <p>2. Is there any additional requirement for a Management unit in developing and managing international activities in the university? If yes, what is it?</p> <p>3. Do you think the Management unit needs any strategy (ies) in order to support the achievement of the university's international goals? If yes, what is it/are they?</p>
3	<b>Administrative support</b>	<p>1. How have the administrative departments been coordinated within the university to support international activities?</p> <p>+ Specific roles of relevant departments?</p> <p>+ Any designated staff?</p> <p>+ Sufficient support so far?</p> <p>2. Are there any improvements needed in administrative support system in order to successfully undertake international activities? If yes, what are they?</p>
4	<b>Finance</b>	<p>1. What have been priorities in allocating university budget for international activities in recent years?</p> <p>2. How effectively has the university's budget allocation contributed to the achievement of international goals?</p> <p>3. How have external funds contributed to the development of internationality and achievement of international goals?</p>

		4. Which will be the trend in financing international activities in coming years? Institutional budget increase or external funding?
5	<b>Facilities &amp; Services</b>	<p>In recent years, the university has been upgrading its infrastructure and facilities (upgrading study building, installing new lab, improving information resources).</p> <p>1. How has the recent improvement of facilities (library resources, IT system) supported the implementation of international activities?</p> <p>2. What would you say about the services for foreign/visiting lecturers and international students in your university?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ What has been done (facilities, administrative procedures)</li> <li>+ Is there anything more that needs to be done in coming years? If yes, what is it?</li> </ul>
6	<b>Research</b>	<p>1. How has international research been positioned in your university's research agenda in particular and in the development of international activities in general?</p> <p>2. Have measures for promoting international research among academic staff been put into action so far? If so, what would you recommend?</p> <p>3. Is there any further action the university would like to take in the coming years to increase research productivity at international level?</p>
7	<b>Education programs</b>	<p>1. What would you say about the recent revision in education programs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ The objectives of revision</li> <li>+ The focuses of revision</li> <li>+ The internationality in revision process?</li> </ul> <p>2. How has internationalisation been encompassed in this program revision process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In program content?</li> <li>- In the use of textbook?</li> <li>- In program delivery (teaching methods, course delivery)?</li> <li>- In policies for earning credits abroad?</li> </ul> <p>3. What is the relationship between international joint programs and the internationalisation in the university?</p>
8	<b>Faculty</b>	<p><b>Domestic faculty</b></p> <p>1. What would you say about internationalisation of academic staff in recent years?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ International qualification policy?</li> <li>+ Strategies for improving International experience improvement</li> <li>+ Strategies for improving international activities?</li> </ul> <p>2. Are there any measures would be implemented to improve</p>

		<p>internationalisation of the academic staff in the coming years?</p> <p><b>International/visiting lecturer/faculty</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What role have international lecturers or visiting experts contributed in the university internationalisation process so far?</li> <li>What has the university done to attract international lecturers or visiting experts? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Strategies/policies?</li> <li>+ Effectiveness?</li> <li>+ Any change in coming years?</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><b>Concluding question:</b></p> <p>What has been the key focus of the university in internationalising the academic faculty? (both domestic and international faculty)</p>
9	<b>Students</b>	<p><b>Domestic students</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How would you describe international activities for domestic students in the university in recent years?</li> <li>What has the university done to support international exchange activities of domestic students so far? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+Administrative support</li> <li>+ Academic support</li> </ul> </li> <li>Does the university have any further plan to improve international activities for domestic students? If so, how?</li> </ol> <p><b>International students</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What can you say about international students in your university in recent years? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ the number of international students</li> <li>+ university activities or policies for international students during their stay</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><b>General question:</b></p> <p>What has been and will be the focus of the university in internationalising students? (both domestic and international students)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ The focus over the past years?</li> <li>+ Any change in current/coming years?</li> </ul>
10	<b>Educational and research Services</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How have educational and research service activities contributed to the internationalisation process in the university so far? (for both academic and administrative process)</li> </ol>

## **Appendix I: Questionnaire to the academics at the key university (Phase One)**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ACADEMIC STAFF**

#### **Internationalisation policies and practices at the university**

**PERSONAL INFORMATION:** Please put a tick for the option which suits you most

1. Your total years of service at the university:

- Less than 1 year
- 2 – 5 years
- 6 – 10 years
- More than 10 years

2. Your highest qualification so far is:

- Bachelor
- Master
- Doctor

3. Have you ever studied overseas?

- Yes
- No

### **SECTION 1**

This section aims to understand your views on internationalisation policies and practices at your university over the last five years. Please check one column for each policy/practice to indicate the extent to which you think it has been taking place **AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL**.

	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
1. Inclusion of international goals in the vision and mission of the university					
2. Priority given to international goals in the university's official strategic documents					
3. Planning for putting international goals into practice at the university level					
4. Definition of functions and responsibilities of departments/faculties/centres related to internationalisation process in official documents					
5. Coordination among university units in implementing internationalisation activities					
6. Planning for improving staff performance in implementing internationalisation					
7. Priority given to internationalisation activities in university annual spending					
8. Planning for attracting external funding					

	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
sources for internationalisation activities					
9. Support of improvements in infrastructure and facilities to internationalisation goals					
10. Improvement in services for international lecturers					
11. Improvement in services for international students					
12. Priority given to international research in the university's research agenda					
13. Inclusion of international goals in the revision of education programs					
14. Policy on the contribution of international joint programs to international goals					
15. Policy change in term of international qualification of academic staff					
16. Policy change in term of international experience of academic staff					
17. Policy improvement in term of attracting international lecturers					
18. Policy improvement in term of the contribution of international lecturers in the internationalisation process					
19. Policy improvement in term of organising international activities for domestic students					
20. Improvement in administrative support for domestic students participating in international activities					
21. Policy improvement in term of attracting international students					
22. Support of international linkages to the realisation of international goals					

## SECTION 2

This section aims to find out your views on the implementation of international policies and practices at your unit in the last 5 years. Please check one column for each policy/practice to indicate the extent to which it has been implemented **AT YOUR UNIT LEVEL**.

	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
1. Emphasis given to international goals in my unit annual plans					
2. Development of internationalisation strategies in my unit annual plans in realising international goals					
3. Planning for implementing unit internationalisation strategies					
4. Planning for implementing functions and responsibilities related to internationalisation process					
5. Coordination among unit members in implementing internationalisation activities					
6. Participation of unit members in activities for improving staff performance in internationalisation					
7. Increase in university budget allocation for my unit's internationalisation activities					
8. Increase in external funding sources for my unit's internationalisation activities					
9. Support of improvements in infrastructure and facilities to the internationalisation of teaching activities					
10. Support of improvements in infrastructure and facilities to the internationalisation of research activities					
11. Increase in the number of international lecturers in line with services improvement					
12. Increase in the number of international students in line with services improvement					
13. Increase in international research among my academic staff due to policy change					
14. Inclusion of internationalisation in revising education program content					
15. Reflection of internationalisation in textbooks used in the revised programs					
16. Application of ICT in					

	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
internationalising course delivery					
17. Implementation of academic policy for students who earn credits from their study abroad					
18. Development of programs for international students at my unit					
19. Contribution of international joint programs to the internationalisation of education programs					
20. Increase in international qualification among academic staff since policy change					
21. Increase in international experience among academic staff since policy change					
22. Increase in the number of international lecturers since policy change					
23. Increase in the contribution of international lecturers to the internationalisation of education programs					
24. Increase in the contribution of international lecturers to the internationalisation of research activities					
25. Increase in international activities organised for domestic students					
26. Increase in the number of domestic students participating in international activities since improvement in administrative support					
27. Increase in the number of international students since policy improvement					
28. Contribution of international linkages to the internationalisation process					

## **Appendix J: Questionnaire to the administrators at the key university (Phase One)**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR NON-ACADEMIC STAFF**

#### **Internationalisation policies and practices at the university**

**PERSONAL INFORMATION:** Please put a tick for the option which suits you most

1. Your total years of service at the university:

- Less than 1 year
- 2 – 5 years
- 6 – 10 years
- More than 10 years

2. Your highest qualification so far is:

- Bachelor
- Master
- Doctor

3. Have you ever studied overseas?

- Yes
- No

#### **SECTION 1**

This section aims to understand your views on internationalisation policies and practices at your university over the last five years. Please check one column for each policy/practice statement to indicate the extent to which you think it has been taking place **AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL.**

	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
1. Inclusion of international goals in the vision and mission of the university					
2. Priority given to international goals in the university's official strategic documents					
3. Planning for putting international goals into practice at the university level					
4. Definition of functions and responsibilities of departments/faculties/centres related to internationalisation process in official documents					
5. Coordination among university units in implementing internationalisation activities					
6. Planning for improving staff performance in internationalisation activities					
7. Priority given to internationalisation activities in university annual spending					

8. Planning for attracting external funding sources for internationalisation activities					
9. Support of improvements in infrastructure and facilities to internationalisation goals					
10. Improvement in services for international lecturers					
11. Improvement in services for international students					
12. Priority given to international research in the university's research agenda					
13. Inclusion of international goals in the revision of education programs					
14. Policy on the contribution of international joint programs to international goals					
15. Policy change in term of international qualification of academic staff					
16. Policy change in term of international experience of academic staff					
17. Policy improvement in term of attracting international lecturers					
18. Policy improvement in term of the contribution of international lecturers in the internationalisation process					
19. Policy improvement in term of organising international activities for domestic students					
20. Improvement in administrative support for domestic students participating in international activities					
21. Policy improvement in term of attracting international students					
22. Support of international linkages to the realisation of international goals					

## SECTION 2

This section aims to find out your views on the implementation of international policies and practices at your unit in the last 5 years. Please check one column for each policy/practice to indicate the extent to which it has been implemented **AT YOUR UNIT LEVEL**.

	Not at all	A little	Some	A lot	Don't know
1. Emphasis given to international goals in my unit annual plans					
2. Development of plans for supporting the realisation of international goals					
3. Planning for implementing functions					

	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
and responsibilities related to internationalisation process					
4. Designation of staff members in supporting internationalisation activities					
5. Participation of unit members in activities for improving staff performance in internationalisation					
6. Increase in university budget allocation for my unit in supporting internationalisation activities					
7. Increase in external funding sources for my unit in supporting internationalisation activities					
8. Support of improvements in infrastructure and facilities to the completion of supporting tasks to internationalisation activities					
9. Contribution of my unit to the improvement of services provided to international lecturers					
10. Contribution of my unit to the improvement of services provided to international students					
11. Contribution of my unit to the improvement of administrative procedures supporting international research					
12. Contribution of my unit to the improvement of administrative procedures supporting the organisation of international joint programs					
13. Contribution of my unit to the improvement of administrative procedures supporting academic staff in gaining international qualification					
14. Contribution of my unit to the improvement of administrative procedures supporting academic staff in gaining international experience					
15. Contribution of my unit to the improvement of administrative procedures for attracting international lecturers					
16. Contribution of my unit to the improvement of administrative procedures for attracting international					

	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
students					
17. Contribution of my unit to the improvement of administrative procedures supporting the organisation of international activities for domestic students					
18. Contribution of my unit to the improvement of administrative procedures supporting the participation of domestic students in international activities					
19. Contribution of my unit to the improvement of administrative procedures supporting international linkages					

If you are part of the management unit of international cooperation activities, please give your views on the implementation of the following policy or practice **AT YOUR MANAGEMENT UNIT** over the last 5 years.

	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>A little</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>A lot</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
20. Development of strategies for promoting international cooperation in the university					
21. Increase in activities of promoting international cooperation in the university					
22. Development of procedures for implementing international cooperation activities in the university					
23. Designation of staff for promoting international cooperation activities					
24. Planning for improving staff performance in promoting international cooperation activities					
25. Improvement in staff performance in term of promoting international cooperation activities					
26. Increase in university budget spending for promoting international cooperation activities					
27. Increase in external funding sources for promoting international cooperation activities					
28. Contribution of my unit in the improvement of international linkages					

## **Appendix K: Focus group guiding questions and agenda at the key university (Phase Two)**

<b>Session</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Say what/Ask what?</b>
		<p>1. Explain the purpose of the focus group discussion: building a set of criteria which can be used to self-evaluate the internationalisation at the university as well as assist the development of internationalisation strategies so that they can always be aware of the whole process.</p> <p>2. Putting participants in 2 groups of 3, giving them sheets to note down their discussion</p>
1	<b>How internationalisation has been recognized at the key university (10 minutes)</b>	<p><b>Ask what:</b></p> <p>1. What do you think was the main focus of internationalisation/‘reaching international standards’ at our university over the last 5 years?</p> <p>2. In considering ‘Reaching international standards’ as an internationalisation process, can you list down any specific objectives that you think have been announced over the last 5 years?</p> <p>3. Do you think there is any change in this internationalisation focus recently (since late 2015)?</p>
2	<b>Role played by departments in internationalisation process (20 minutes)</b>	<p><b>Ask what:</b></p> <p>1. Considering the internationalisation process as a journey, what do you think about the position of departments like yours and the role of academic faculty/centre in such journey?</p> <p>2. In order to participate successfully in such journey, did your department develop and plan for internationalisation?</p> <p>+ If yes, what have been achieved within that plan?</p> <p>+ If no, what significant actions were taken at your department?</p> <p>2. Did your department have any problem/difficulty in developing and implementing internationalisation activities over the last 5 years? If yes, what is it?</p> <p>3. What do you think will be prioritized actions that your department will take for implementing internationalisation in the coming years?</p>
3	<b>Internationalisation evaluation criteria (50 minutes)</b>	<p><b>Ask what:</b></p> <p>1. How can the success of this ‘internationalisation journey’ at a Vietnamese public university like yours be measured?</p>

		<p>2. Could you please list down the criteria that you think can be used for measuring such internationalisation?</p> <p>3. Assuming it is a pie, how many percentage do you give for each criterion you select?</p> <p>4. Do you think these criteria are connected to each other? If so, how?</p> <p>5. Which criteria can be useful particularly for evaluating and supporting the planning for the internationalisation of your university's administrative structure? Could you please put them in descending order?</p> <p><b>Say what:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The most popular definition of internationalisation used around the world (Knight's definition)</li> <li>2. Different countries have different internationalisation focus and evaluation criteria (review of internationalisation focus and evaluation in US, Japan, European countries, China)</li> <li>3. A summary of general evaluation criteria used in different evaluation tools (attached)</li> </ol> <p><b>Ask what:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do you think we can learn from the evaluation tools of these countries?</li> <li>2. Do you want to add anything to the list of criteria you already have?</li> </ol>
4	<b>Discussion of findings (10 minutes)</b>	Charts to depict the recognition of internationalisation at university and unit levels at your university. How this process has been facilitated at the university level and how your departments have contributed to this process with the supportive role.

## Appendix L: An initial analysis of a focus group (Phase Two)

tro, kết nối, các phòng ban ở trên sẽ giúp. Phòng Quốc tế thỉnh thoảng hỗ trợ, giao lưu. Phòng Tài chính.

Các khoa đều có kế hoạch riêng cho việc đạt chuẩn quốc tế về đào tạo hàng năm. Ví dụ bao nhiêu sinh viên đạt TOPIC cấp 6, bao nhiêu sinh viên đạt chuẩn đầu ra. Rồi kế hoạch tổng thể cho cả năm hoặc trong vài năm, bao gồm đào tạo, HTPT, nhân sự. Trong từng nội dung đều phải có từng chỉ tiêu cụ thể.

Những cái đạt được nỗi bất nhất trong kế hoạch 5 năm hướng tới chuẩn quốc tế: Thứ nhất là, đội ngũ giáo viên bắt đầu chuẩn hóa. Thứ hai, sinh viên ý thức về vấn đề chuẩn đầu ra (A. Tiên) (Chi My), trong mọi mặt, với những chỉ tiêu nhà trường đưa ra mình đều có gắng để đạt được, thứ 1 là chuẩn hóa đội ngũ giáo viên. Vừa rồi mình đã xây dựng kế hoạch cho tới năm 2018, ai đi theo lĩnh vực gì, ai sẽ đi TS vào năm nào. Thứ 2, về sinh viên, khi bắt đầu áp dụng chương trình đào tạo mới, sinh viên có ý thức hơn, chất lượng tăng lên, thấy được tầm quan trọng của việc đạt chuẩn đầu ra khi ra trường. Thứ 3, là số lượng sinh viên quốc tế trong những năm vừa qua, với sự hỗ trợ của nhà trường và của bên HTPT, sinh viên mình đi cũng dễ dàng hơn và sinh viên họ sang cũng dễ dàng hơn. Mặc dù đang ở mức rất sơ khai thôi, nhưng việc hỗ trợ đã dần hiệu quả hơn và bài bản hơn. Khi 1 sinh viên quốc tế sang đây thi các bước làm thủ tục bài bản hơn. Trước đây là chỉ nhận học bổng cho sinh viên đi thôi, nhưng mấy năm gần đây là có nhận sinh viên đến. Tuy nhiên, những hoạt động quảng bá, quảng cáo cho việc nhận sinh viên vào vẫn còn kém. (khoa Hán), nhưng chỉ là nhận cho có thôi, năm nay nhận 2 em, cách đây 3 năm cũng nhận 2 em, nhưng nói chung sang đây là các sinh viên này không học được gì, vì người Hàn Quốc lại sang đây học tiếng Hán, rồi lại gửi sang khoa khác học 1-2 môn. Sinh viên Nhật rất tiếc nǎng, nếu mình làm tốt thì có thể tăng hơn nữa. Đây là một việc cần rút kinh nghiệm. Thành thực mà nói, việc tiếp nhận cho đến thời điểm này cũng còn rất nhiều bất cập. (A.Tiến), vai trò tư vấn của đơn vị HTPT quốc tế chưa tốt, quá chậm, không tư vấn được gì cho các khoa, không chủ động. Các khoa tự mày mò làm và không biết là phải làm những gì. Nên bây giờ nếu các khoa tiếp nhận sinh viên quốc tế vào, thì phải tư vấn được cho các khoa là 'sinh viên vào thi được học những chương trình gì?', 'ngay cả tiếng Việt cũng phải tư vấn cho nó, tiếng Việt học cấp độ nào, bao nhiêu tiền, môn gì?' Nếu học bằng tiếng Anh thi thế nào? môn nào? Học bằng tiếng Việt thi thế nào? Phải hợp tác với nhau thì mới ra được. Đây thi nhận vào, rồi dui, bảo các ông chọn đi, họ có biết đâu mà chọn, mình không tư vấn được cho họ. Giáo viên không tư vấn được cho những sinh viên này. Cái này là phòng Đào tạo, HTPT phải nắm rất rõ những cái này. Vấn đề là các chương trình đào

## **Appendix M: Questionnaire at the three universities (Phase Three)**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR UNIVERSITY STAFF**

#### **The practice of internationalisation at a Vietnamese public university**

This questionnaire is a self-evaluation tool which aims at providing Vietnamese universities with a comprehensive view of their internationalisation policies and practices. This questionnaire is designed to identify the internationalisation efforts of a Vietnamese public university and better understand criteria and indicators that are relevant for the Vietnamese context.

**Thank you for your time and effort in responding to this questionnaire.**

#### **BACKGROUND QUESTIONS**

##### **1. When do you think your university first called for an institution-wide effort toward internationalisation?**

- A More than 5 years ago
- B Between 3 – 5 years ago
- C 2 years ago
- D Only last year
- E Not sure

##### **2. How has the internationalisation initiative been officially communicated within your university? Select all that apply.**

- A No official communication
- B Through discussion in annual/periodical staff conferences at institutional level
- C Through discussion in regular faculty/department meetings
- D By including in official institutional documents
- E By including in unit-level annual performance review report
- F Other, please specify: .....

##### **3. In the recent internationalisation effort, has any improvement been made in the following areas at your university? Please select up to THREE areas with the most improvement.**

- A Education programs
- B Research activity
- C International links
- D Competence of academic staff
- E Competence of administrative support system
- F Other, please specify: .....
- G No improvement has been made

**4. Which of the following have been challenging internationalisation efforts at your university? Please SELECT AND RANK all that apply from the most to the least (1 = the most challenging).**

Challenging level
Financial support
Institutional management procedures
Institutional action plan
Competence of academic staff
Competence of administrative support system
Staff willingness/interest to change
Student willingness/interest to engage
Other, please specify: .....

**5. Has your university formally assessed the progress of its internationalisation efforts in the last 5 years?**

- A No
- B Yes, for internal evaluation purposes
- C Yes, for purposes other than internal evaluation (please specify): .....

**6. Please rate the importance of the following criteria in evaluating internationalisation at your university?**

No	Criteria	Importance				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Institutional policy and management					
2	Academic staff					
3	Administrative units					
4	Education programs					
5	Research activity					
6	Financial support					
7	Infrastructure and Facilities					
8	International links					
9	Students					

*(1 = not important at all and 5 = extremely important)*

**Additional comments:**

.....

## **INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND MANAGEMENT**

**1. Does your university refer to any of the following in its mission statement? Please select all that apply.**

- A International standard
- B International education
- C International recognition
- D Internationalisation of education
- E Other, please specify: .....

**2. What are the most compelling reasons for your university to focus on such internationalisation? Select up to THREE key reasons.**

- A Improving quality of education to regional/international standards
- B Improving institutional reputation in domestic higher education system
- C Improving domestic students preparedness for employment
- D Improving business cooperation with industries
- E Increasing institutional profile in regional higher education
- F Increasing international cooperation with education organisations
- G Promoting Vietnamese education and culture to the world
- H Being under pressure from the higher level
- I Being under pressure of globalisation
- J Other, please specify: .....
- K Not sure

**3. Which of the following have been the focus in internationalisation efforts at your university? Select all that apply.**

- A Education programs
- B Research
- C Competence of the academic staff
- D Competence of the administrative system
- E Other, please specify: .....
- F Not sure

**4. How has the planning for internationalisation at your university been organised?**

- A Having a separate plan specifically for promoting internationalisation
- B Integrating internationalisation as a part of the overall development plan
- C Having no particular plan for internationalisation
- D Other, please specify: .....
- E Not sure

**5. How has the implementation of internationalisation at your university been coordinated?**

- A A separate unit responsible for organising the implementation
- B No specific coordination roles have been assigned for internationalisation
- C The implementation is integrated within functions and responsibilities of related units
- D A person/team assigned by the board of management
- E Other, please specify: .....
- F Not sure

**6. Which sources have financially supported internationalisation efforts at your university?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Annual government allocated fund	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Government's development projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Earnings from services provided to organisations/corporations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domestic cooperation donors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International partnership donors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alumni	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**

**7.1. Has your university supported any of the following to improve international competence for ACADEMIC STAFF?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Getting further qualifications abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending professional training courses abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending a foreign language (English or other) training program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending training courses conducted by foreign partners on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Going on field trip/exchange abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending training courses in intercultural communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working abroad as a visiting lecturer/officer for a period of time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement in developing programs/courses for international students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement in delivering programs or courses for international students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Involvement in international funded projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gaining membership of an international academic or professional association	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement in organisation of international workshops/conferences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruiting staff with international qualifications and experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**7.2 Which of the following have been supported by your university to improve international competence for NON - ACADEMIC STAFF?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Getting further qualifications abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending professional training courses abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending a foreign language (English or other) training program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending training courses conducted by foreign partners on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Going on field trip/exchange abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending training courses in intercultural communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working abroad as a visiting officer for a period of time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement in developing programs/courses for international students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement in delivering programs/courses for international students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement in international funded projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement in organisation of international workshops/conferences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruiting staff with international qualifications and experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**7.3 Which of these staff activities have received FINANCIAL SUPPORT at your university?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Getting further qualifications abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending professional training courses abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending a foreign language (English or other) training program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending training courses conducted by foreign partners on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Going on field trip/exchange abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending training courses in intercultural communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working abroad as a visiting lecturer/officer for a period of time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement in developing programs/courses for international students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement in delivering programs or courses for international students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement in international funded projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gaining membership of an international academic or professional association	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement in organisation of international workshops/conferences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruiting staff with international qualifications and experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**7.4. Which of these staff activities have received ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT at your university?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Getting further qualifications abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending professional training courses abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending a foreign language (English or other) training program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending training courses conducted by foreign partners on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Going on field trip/exchange abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending training courses in intercultural communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working abroad as a visiting lecturer/officer for a period of time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involving in developing programs/courses for international students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involving in delivering programs or courses for international students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involving in international funded projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gaining membership of an international academic or professional association	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involving in organisation of international workshops/conferences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruiting staff with international qualifications and experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**8. Has your university taken international qualification or experience into a consideration in staff promotion and tenure decisions?**

- A No, not applicable
- B Yes, for some faculties and departments
- C Yes, for all faculties and departments
- D Not sure

**9. Has your university involved any INTERNATIONAL LECTURERS in institutional activities as part of its internationalisation?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Full-time international lecturers teaching on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Part-time international lecturers teaching on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visiting international lecturers teaching for one or two semesters on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International lecturers in teaching online courses/modules	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International lecturers in research activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**9.1 Has your university provided any FINANCIAL SUPPORT for involving international lecturers in any of the following ways?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Full-time international lecturers teach on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having part-time international lecturers teach on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having visiting international lecturers teach one/two semesters on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involving international lecturers in teaching online courses/modules	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involving international lecturers in research activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**9.2 Has your university provided any ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT for involving international lecturers in any of the following ways?**

	Yes	No	N/A
Full-time international lecturers teach on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having part-time international lecturers teach on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having visiting international lecturers teach one/two semesters on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involving international lecturers in teaching online courses/modules	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involving international lecturers in research activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND RESEARCH ACTIVITY**

**10. Please select the academic level(s) and scope in which internationalisation has taken place at your university**

	Institution-wide	Faculty	Division	Program	Not at all	Not sure
Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Master	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Doctor	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Other: .....						

**11. In improving international perspectives of education programs, which of the following tasks have been undertaken in academic faculties?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Revision of program content	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revision of program structure (e.g., number of credits, number of courses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of online sections/courses in addition to traditional contact hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revision of program evaluation methods (e.g., learner evaluation, course evaluation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improvement of quality assurance procedures for education programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Usage of foreign language in teaching and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement of international lecturers in teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application of foreign language requirements for incoming students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application of foreign language requirements for graduating students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application for regional/international accreditation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improvement of credit transferring/recognition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of international joint programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improvement of exchange/internship opportunities abroad for domestic students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of education/exchange programs for international students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**11.1 Has your university provided any FINANCIAL support for these tasks?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Revision of program content	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revision of program structure (e.g., number of credits, number of courses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of online sections/courses in addition to traditional contact hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revision of program evaluation methods (e.g., learner evaluation, course evaluation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improvement of quality assurance procedures for education programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Usage of foreign language in teaching and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement of international lecturers in teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application of foreign language requirements for incoming students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application of foreign language requirements for graduating students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application for regional/international accreditation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improvement of credit transferring/recognition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of international joint programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improvement of exchange/internship opportunities abroad for domestic students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of education/exchange programs for international students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**11.2 Has your university provided any ADMINISTRATIVE support for these tasks?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Revision of program content	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revision of program structure (e.g., number of credits, number of courses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of online sections/courses in addition to traditional contact hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revision of program evaluation methods (e.g., learner evaluation, course evaluation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improvement of quality assurance procedures for education programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Usage of foreign language in teaching and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement of international lecturers in teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application of foreign language requirements for incoming students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application of foreign language requirements for graduating students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application for regional/international accreditation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improvement of credit transferring/recognition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of international joint programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improvement of exchange/internship opportunities abroad for domestic students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of education/exchange programs for international students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**12. In revising the program content, which of the following areas have been taken into consideration in academic faculties?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
International trends and issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International/intercultural skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foreign literature and materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International dimension/comparison of a subject	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant topics of particular countries or world regions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**13. To what extent has international credit recognition/transfer been implemented at the following academic level(s) in your university?**

	<b>No program</b>	<b>Some programs</b>	<b>All programs</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Master	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doctor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: .....				

**14. How are international credits transferred/recognized at your university?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Recognizing any credits earned in similar courses from any foreign universities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognition by agreement with foreign partner universities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**15. Which international joint education programs have been developed at your university?**

	Yes	No	Not sure
Programs with dual degrees granted by both universities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs with degrees granted by partner university only	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs with degrees granted jointly by both universities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**16. How have international joint program supported the internationalisation of domestic education programs at your university?**

	Yes	No	Not sure
Improving teaching methods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving program content and materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving program structure (e.g., number of credits, number of courses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving program evaluation (e.g., learner evaluation, course evaluation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving program management (e.g., quality assurance, management)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**17. How has foreign language been used in teaching and learning in an education program at your university?**

	No course	Some courses	All courses	Not sure
Standard degree programs by your university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International standard degree programs by your university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International degree programs by partner university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International dual degree programs by your university and partner university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....				

**18. Has your university applied for any regional/international accreditation at the following academic level?**

	No program	Some programs	All programs	Not sure
Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Master	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doctor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**19. Has international research collaborations been prioritized in your university strategic plan?**

- A Yes
- B No
- C Not sure

**20. Has your university done any of the following to promote international research activities?**

	Yes	No	Not sure
Developing international research topics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting academic staff to work abroad as visiting scholars in a period of time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting academic staff to present at an international conference/workshop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting academic staff to participate in international research projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting academic staff to publish articles in international journals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organizing international conferences/workshops on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving international cooperation in research activities			
Increasing internationally funded research projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hosting international researchers to work on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participating in international networks and organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**20.1 Which of these activities have received FINANCIAL SUPPORT at your university?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Developing international research topics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting academic staff to work abroad as visiting scholars in a period of time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting academic staff to present at an international conference/workshop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting academic staff to participate in international research projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting academic staff to publish articles in international journals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organizing international conferences/workshops on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving international cooperation in research activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increasing internationally funded research projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hosting international researchers to work on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participating in international networks and organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**20.2 Which of these activities have received ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT at your university?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Developing international research topics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting academic staff to work abroad as visiting scholars in a period of time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting academic staff to present at an international conference/workshop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting academic staff to participate in international research projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting academic staff to publish articles in international journals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organizing international conferences/workshops on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving international cooperation in research activities			
Increasing internationally funded research projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hosting international researchers to work on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participating in international networks and organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**STUDENTS**

**21. Has your university done any of the following to improve the international experience for DOMESTIC students?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Providing opportunities for exchange programs with foreign universities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing opportunities for internship abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognizing credits gained during studying abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organizing international activities on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**21. 1. Has your university provided any FINANCIAL SUPPORT to any of these activities for DOMESTIC students?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Exchange programs with foreign universities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internship in foreign countries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognizing credits gained during studying abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International activities on campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**21. 2. Has your university provided any ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT to any of these activities for DOMESTIC students?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Exchange programs with foreign universities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internship in foreign countries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognizing credits gained during studying abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International activities on campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**22. Has your university offered any of the following programs for INTERNATIONAL students?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Degree programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Joint/double degree programs with foreign partner universities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exchange program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internship program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vietnamese language and culture program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**23. Has your university offered any of the following support services for INTERNATIONAL students?**

	Yes	No	Not sure
Academic support services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vietnamese language and culture orientation before entering a program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Orientation to the local community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistance in finding accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Host-family program for international students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International alumni services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other, please specify: .....

**24. 1 In order to attract more INTERNATIONAL students, have any of the following received FINANCIAL SUPPORT at your university?**

	Yes	No	Not sure
Developing promotion materials for international students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travelling for recruitment purposes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities for international students on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services for international students (e.g., information, language, housing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other, please specify: .....

**24.2 In order to attract more INTERNATIONAL students, have any of the following received ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT at your university?**

	Yes	No	Not sure
Developing promotion materials to international students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travelling for recruitment purposes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities for international students on the campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services for international students (e.g., information, language, housing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other, please specify: .....

## OTHER FACTORS

**25. Which of the following infrastructure and facilities have seen the most improvement in supporting internationalisation of education and research activities? Select up to THREE of the most improved areas.**

- A Classroom facilities (e.g., overhead projectors, screen, internet access)
- B Resources information (books and e-database) for education and research activities
- C Information technology system (platforms for online courses, video conference)
- D University website with different foreign language versions
- E Accommodation for international students
- F Accommodation for international lecturers
- G Other, please specify: .....

**26. Has your university seen improvement in the following areas because of international links?**

	Yes	No	Not sure
Increasing opportunities for exchange/internship programs abroad for domestic students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attracting more international exchange students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attracting more international degree earning students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attracting more international experts/lecturers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increasing exchange/field trip opportunities for staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increasing international research opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Receiving more external funds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify: .....			

**27. Has your university had a defined plan for promoting and marketing institutional programs to domestic and international students?**

- A No, not at all
- B Yes, only for domestic students
- C Yes, only for international students
- D Other, please specify: .....

## **Appendix N: Focus group discussion guiding questions and agenda at the key university (Phase Three)**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Identified issues</b>	<b>Say what/Ask what?</b>
<b>Institutional policy and management (15 mins)</b>	<b>1. Discussion of details:</b> 1.1. Mission and vision statement: No expression/phrase is identified or provided in some completed questionnaire 1.2. Different selections in the focus of internationalisation (which is not expected) 1.3. The organisation of internationalisation planning: different selection (A or B; B and additional information (every faculty has a section on international cooperation) 1.4. The implementation of internationalisation plan: different selection ( A; C; E)	1.1. Why do you think there is different selection? How do you think this indicator can be clarified or be able to identify the internationalisation in university mission statement? 1.2. Why do you think there is difference in selecting the focus of internationalisation at your university? 1.2. How can we approach to have a good indicator in saying about internationalisation focus? 1.3. What else should be asked in this question in order to identify properly the organization of this planning 1.4. How can you describe the coordination in implementing internationalisation?
	<b>2. Summary of 6 questions (criteria)</b>	2. What else should be particularly looked at in evaluating institutional policy and management toward internationalisation?
<b>Human resources development (20 min)</b>	<b>1. Discussion of details:</b> 1.1. Improving international competence for ACADEMIC/ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF: Some say YES or NO or NOT SURE for the same indicator 1.2. Financial support for improving international competence: Some say YES while some other say NO for the same indicator. 1.3. Administrative support for improving international	1.1. Why do you think there is different selection for the same indicator? Is it because the indicator is not familiar and needed to be clarified? 1.1. Which indicator is relevant and not relevant for ACADEMIC STAFF and ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF at this stage? Which should be added or removed to represent ULIS particular features? 1.2. What do you think about financial support indicators? Which is relevant/not relevant? Need clarification? What kinds of financial

	<p>competence: Some say YES for most options while some say NOT SURE for most options</p> <p>1.4. Different answers for Q8 (international experience/qualification in promotion, tenure): No/ Yes for some/ Yes for All</p> <p>1.5. International lecturers: Different understanding of full-time/part-time/visiting lecturers</p> <p>1.6. The difference between READY TO DO and DOING NOW in evaluating Administrative support?</p>	<p>support do you expect for each indicator/option?</p> <p>- Eg: <i>financial support for participating in professional/academic association/network VS. participating in international project</i></p> <p>1.3. What do you think about administrative support indicators? (to Non-academic staff: are you able to identify your area in these indicators? ) To all: in evaluating admin support, what else do you think can be good indicator for reflecting the actual practice in this area? (Paper work? Communication? Legal issue?)</p> <p>1.4. On what basis do you say YES or No for this question? What do you think should be added or removed for this indicator to reflect the real practice?</p> <p>1.5. Clarify how full-time/part-time and visiting lecturers are defined?</p> <p>1.6. What do you mean when you choose YES for administrative support? READY TO DO or DOING NOW?</p>
	<b>2. Summary of 8 criteria</b>	<b><i>2. Do you want to add or remove any criteria for evaluating human resources development?</i></b>
<b>Education and Research (20 mins)</b>	<p><b>1. Discussion of details:</b></p> <p>1.1. Improving international perspectives of education programs: Some say YES while other say NO for the same indicator</p> <p>1.2. Internationalisation of program content</p> <p>1.3. International credits/ joint programs: Some say YES for what actually does not exist at ULIS.</p>	<p>There is difference not only among faculties but also among departments in evaluating international perspectives in education programs. What do you think the reason is?</p> <p>1.1. How do you think indicators can be adjusted to be relevant (Any indicator needed clarifying, adjusting, adding, or removing to be relevant to ULIS context)? Eg: <i>The use of foreign language in teaching and learning?</i></p>

	<p>1.4. Use of foreign language in teaching and learning      1.5. Improving international research</p>	<p>1.1. Any clarification required on questioning financial/administrative support in this area?      1.2. What should be added/ removed to represent the specific feature of ULIS?      1.3. Emphasis on the <b>internationality</b> rather than <b>joint</b> in credit transfer recognition/ developing education programs      1.4. How to adjust this indicator to be relevant to ULIS context, a university specializing in foreign language education?      1.5. Relevance of indicators: Any indicator needed clarifying, adjusting, adding, or removing to be relevant to ULIS context?</p>
	<b>2. Summary of 15 criteria</b> (11 for education; 4 for research)	2. Do you want to add or remove any criteria for education? For research?
<b>Students (10 mins)</b>	<p><b>1. Discussion of details:</b></p> <p>1.1. Domestic students      1.2. International students</p>	<p>1.1. Relevance of indicators for evaluating internationalisation activities for students? Any indicators need clarifying, adjusting, adding, removing to be relevant to ULIS context?      1.2. Relevance of indicators for evaluating factors relating to international students? Any indicators need clarifying, adjusting, adding, removing to be relevant to ULIS context?</p>
	<p><b>2. Summary of criteria:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Domestic students: 3 criteria</b></li> <li>- <b>International students: 4 criteria</b></li> </ul>	2. Do you want to add or remove any criteria for evaluating student factor?
<b>Miscellaneous (10 mins)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Facilities and infrastructure</b></li> <li>- <b>International links</b></li> <li>- <b>PR and Marketing</b></li> </ul>	<p>1. Relevance of indicators? Any indicators need clarifying, adjusting, adding or removing to be relevant to ULIS context?      2. Any additional criteria is required for each of these areas?</p>

