

## Report

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# Towards a more competitive environment for transnational education in Viet Nam



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# Acknowledgements

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# Towards a more competitive environment for transnational education in Viet Nam

IMPROVING NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION  
COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH TRANSNATIONAL  
EDUCATION FOR IMPACT AND QUALITY



# Contents

<b>Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Foreword by Assoc. Prof. Dr Pham Quang Hung, Director General of the International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Education and Training</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Foreword by Iain Frew, His Majesty’s Ambassador to Viet Nam</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Foreword by Donna McGowan, Director of the British Council in Viet Nam</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>1. Background</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>2. Aims, objectives and methodology</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Research aim.....	11
Research objectives.....	11
Methodology.....	11
Desk research.....	11
Case study development.....	12
<b>3. Overview of higher education provision in Viet Nam</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>4. International mobility of education institutions – international branch campuses</b> .....	<b>15</b>
4.1 International branch campus models.....	15
4.2 Mergers and acquisitions in Viet Nam’s university sector.....	19
4.3 Risk sharing in the development of collaborative IBCs.....	19
<b>5. International school programmes</b> .....	<b>20</b>
5.1 Overview of the international secondary school market.....	20
5.2 Use of international school curriculum in national education systems.....	21
5.2.1 A single national curriculum is enforced in all public schools and private schools.....	21
5.2.2 A single national curriculum is enforced in public schools but not in private schools.....	21
5.2.3 There is state-organised use of an international curriculum in certain stages of the national education system.....	22
5.2.4 Alongside a national curriculum, public schools and private schools are given flexibility to use elements of international curriculum, and some schools choose to do so.....	23
5.3 Policy considerations.....	24
<b>6. Overview of TNE programmes in Viet Nam</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>7. The environment for TNE in Viet Nam and international comparisons</b> .....	<b>29</b>
7.1 Benchmarking criteria and comparisons.....	30
7.2 International branch campuses.....	31



7.3 TNE programmes.....	32
7.4 Quality assurance of TNE .....	33
7.5 Recognition of TNE degrees and qualifications.....	34
7.6 Navigating cultural dimensions in Viet Nam’s TNE: a focus on individualism and long-term orientation .....	35
7.7 Easy step guide to setting up a TNE programme in Viet Nam .....	36
<b>8. The Value of TNE to higher education in Viet Nam.....</b>	<b>39</b>
8.1 Increasing the supply of higher education.....	39
8.2 Widened local access to higher education .....	40
8.3 Reductions in brain drain.....	41
8.4 Capacity building and institutional development.....	42
8.5 Economic development.....	42
<b>9. Developing successful TNE partnerships - selected case studies.....</b>	<b>43</b>
Case Study 1: La Trobe-HANU joint programme as a case study of successful TNE in Viet Nam .....	44
Case Study 2: Capacity building through PhD training of university lecturers – partnership between the University of Lincoln, the National Economics University in Hanoi and the University of Economics in Ho Chi Minh City .....	45
Case Study 3: British University Viet Nam – a flagship of the UK-VN higher education partnership.....	46
Case Study 4: Cardiff Metropolitan University Collaboration with National Economics University, Hanoi Viet Nam.....	48
Case Study 5: University of Nottingham partnership with International University – Viet Nam National University .....	49
Case Study 6: RMIT University – Viet Nam’s leading international university .....	51
Historical overview of significant milestones: Our engagement in Viet Nam.....	51
<b>10. Summary of findings and considerations for policy .....</b>	<b>53</b>
10.1 Summary of findings.....	53
10.2 Considerations for the creation of a more competitive environment for TNE.....	54
10.2.1 Considerations for Viet Nam’s attractiveness as a hotspot for international branch campuses .....	54
10.2.2 Enhancing Viet Nam’s attractiveness for TNE programmes .....	55
10.3 To contribute to the commitment of the British Council and the British Embassy .....	56
<b>Annex A: Case study – University of London .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Annex B: Timeline of policy changes impacting the provision of TNE in Viet Nam .....</b>	<b>58</b>

# Abbreviations

1	AHK	Arab/German Chamber of Industry and Commerce
2	C-BERT	The Cross-Border Education Research Team
3	CAGR	Compound annual growth rate
4	COIL	Collaborative Online International Learning
5	DAAD	German Academic Exchange Service
6	FBISE	Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education
7	HE	higher education
8	HMWK	Hessen State Minister of Higher Education, Research and the Arts
9	HND	Higher National Diploma
10	IB	International Baccalaureate
11	IBC	International branch campus
12	ICD	International Cooperation Department
13	JVs	Joint ventures
14	MoC	Memorandum of Collaboration
15	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
16	MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
17	XJTLU	Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University

# Foreword by Assoc. Prof. Dr Pham Quang Hung, Director General of the International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Education and Training



We are pleased to introduce the research report, “Towards a More Competitive Transnational Education (TNE) Environment in Viet Nam.” This collaborative work between the Ministry of Education and Training of Viet Nam, the British Embassy Hanoi, and the British Council, signifies our joint efforts and commitments to the internationalisation of education.

MOET acknowledges the significance of internationalisation in the evolving educational landscape. As our country progresses, our educational sector must adapt accordingly. This report is a testimonial of MOET’s dedication and

commitment towards a favourable environment for international education, attracting high-quality international education providers, and ensuring the highest educational standards for the benefits of the learners.

We would like to extend our appreciation to the British Embassy and the British Council in Viet Nam for their invaluable support in conducting this research. We believe this report will serve as a cornerstone, offering insights and recommendations for all relevant stakeholders, as we collectively work to enhance the international education ecosystem in Viet Nam.

# Foreword by Iain Frew, His Majesty's Ambassador to Viet Nam

I am delighted to co-present the market research report “Towards a More Competitive Transnational Education (TNE) Environment in Viet Nam.” This collaborative effort between the Ministry of Education and Training of Viet Nam, the British Embassy Hanoi, and the British Council signifies an important milestone in our shared commitment to fostering educational excellence and international cooperation on the 50th year anniversary of UK-Viet Nam diplomatic relations.

Education is the cornerstone of progress and prosperity, and in an increasingly interconnected world, international partnerships in education are vital. Viet Nam has long been recognized for its dedication to education and has a clear commitment to opening doors to international educational opportunities. The United Kingdom, with its deep tradition of academic excellence, stands ready to deepen a mutually beneficial educational partnership with Viet Nam.

This comprehensive market research report analyses the current landscape of transnational

education in Viet Nam. It delves into the openness of the Vietnamese education system to international collaboration and outlines the untapped potential for further partnership between the UK and Viet Nam. As we navigate the complex challenges and opportunities in the global education sector, the findings and insights within this report will serve as a guiding light for our endeavours.

I would like to thank the Ministry of Education and Training for the continued support and partnership and recognise the contribution from our researchers and partners who have joined hands to realise this report.

British Embassy Hanoi together with the Ministry of Education and Training of Viet Nam and the British Council are dedicated to fostering educational collaboration that transcends borders. We believe that the recommendations and observations presented in this report will pave the way for innovative educational initiatives that benefit students, institutions, and both nations at large. Together, we can unlock the huge potential of our young learners and future generations.



# Foreword by Donna McGowan, Director of the British Council in Viet Nam



It is with great pleasure that I introduce our research report 'Towards a more competitive environment for transnational education in Viet Nam'.

This research is a testament to the collaborative efforts on technical assistance provided by the British Council and the British Embassy Hanoi to the Ministry of Education and Training of Viet Nam in conducting a comparative study on Viet Nam's TNE market openness. Our collective commitment to enhance educational opportunities and foster partnerships is showcased in this report, and it reflects our shared dedication to the development of Viet Nam's education landscape.

The British Council has a long-standing relationship with Viet Nam spanning 30 years. We have witnessed the remarkable transformation of Viet Nam's education sector during this time, and we are proud to have played a role in supporting its growth and development. Today, Viet Nam stands as one of the most dynamic and promising education markets in Southeast Asia, with a strong appetite for international education.

In this research, we investigate the landscape of TNE in Viet Nam, benchmarking with selected countries, analysing the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Transnational education has emerged as a key driver of educational reform and internationalisation in Viet Nam. As the country's economic and social landscape continues to evolve, so does the demand for high-quality international education. The report highlights the potential for increased openness in the TNE sector and the valuable contributions that the UK can make through strategic partnerships.

Our partnership with the Ministry of Education and Training of Viet Nam underscores our commitment to fostering a conducive environment for TNE in the country. We recognise the importance of aligning our efforts with the government's educational

policies and priorities to ensure that students in Viet Nam have access to world-class education options at home. This collaboration has allowed us to share best practices, facilitate policy dialogues, and support capacity-building initiatives that benefit both the education sector and the broader community.

In the coming years, the British Council remains committed to promoting TNE partnerships that enhance the quality and accessibility of education in Viet Nam. Our goal is to continue facilitating collaboration between Vietnamese and UK universities, encouraging joint programmes, research initiatives, and knowledge exchange. Through these partnerships, we aim to empower Viet Nam's future leaders with the skills and knowledge needed to drive innovation and economic development.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the Ministry of Education and Training for welcoming us as a partner in the support of Viet Nam TNE development. My thanks also go to all the contributors, researchers, and partners who have made this report possible. I believe that the insights presented in this document will serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, educators, and institutions seeking to shape the future of transnational education in Viet Nam in general, and UK-Viet Nam partnerships in particular.

As the British Council continues its journey of supporting cultural relations and education opportunities between Viet Nam and the United Kingdom, we look forward to collaborating with all stakeholders to transform the TNE landscape and unlock the full potential of international education for the benefit of Viet Nam's society and economy.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the advancement of education in Viet Nam.



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# 1. Background

The British Council Viet Nam and the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) signed a Memorandum of Collaboration (MoC) on education on 31 October 2021. The MoC sets out priority areas of collaboration, which aim to strengthen bilateral cooperation between Viet Nam and the UK in education development. In April 2023, the British Council and the International Cooperation Department of MOET developed a 2023 - 2024 Work Plan on supporting the internationalisation of higher education (HE) in Viet Nam. This includes strengthening and developing TNE.

The collaboration also falls under the Government Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UK and Viet Nam on education cooperation signed in October 2019. The MoU sets the foundation for partnerships in education between two countries. Sectors covered are higher education, international schools, early years education, English language training and education technology. The UK and Viet Nam also signed a separate MoU on Vocational Education and Training cooperation in April 2022.

This research is an outcome of the Work Plan agreed between the British Council and MOET as well as part of the UK - VN Government MoU on education cooperation.

With the British Embassy's endorsement and co-funding, this research report looks at comparative assessments between Viet Nam and other countries in the region, identifying areas for greater improvement and competitiveness. The report's findings were officially disseminated at the UK-Viet Nam Higher Education Collaboration Forum: "ThinkTNE – leveraging UK-Viet Nam transnational education partnerships" on 19 October 2023 in Hanoi.

This research was conducted in commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UK – Viet Nam diplomatic relations and 30 years of the British Council's presence in Viet Nam. This has showcased the growing momentum of the education collaboration between two nations. It underlines the pivotal role that education continues to play as a core pillar within the strategic partnerships between the two countries.

## 2. Aims, objectives and methodology

### Research aim

This research is part of the technical support offered by the British Council in Viet Nam and the British Embassy Hanoi, to support the International Cooperation Department, MOET in Viet Nam to conduct a comprehensive comparative study on Viet Nam's TNE market openness.

### Research objectives

The research objectives of the TNE study are to:

- Explore and map the current TNE landscape (legal, regulatory, and operational) in Viet Nam.
- Showcase the contemporary contexts of TNE development, including basic education (K-12 schools) and higher education sectors. Achieving this objective draws on evidence from other countries.
- Use case studies to enhance the understanding of the TNE policy and regulatory landscape over the past two decades (2000 to 2022).
- Identify opportunities and limitations for Viet Nam in its efforts to attract foreign education institutions in general and the UK in particular. This includes developing an analytical framework that assesses issues related to recognition of TNE, market access, information asymmetry and student demand. This analysis draws on the regulatory frameworks from a peer group of countries.
- Provide recommendations to create an enabling environment for TNE, improve Viet Nam's national competitiveness in attracting TNE activities, and enhance the overall impact and quality of TNE delivery in Viet Nam.
- Inform the continued commitment of the British Council and British Embassy to:
  - support more engagement for UK higher education institutions (HEIs) with Viet Nam's higher education system and qualifications
  - increase the transnational education exchange and collaboration between HEIs in the UK and Viet Nam
  - enable and enhance two-way student mobility.

### Methodology

The overall research aims to produce a comparative review of the current TNE policy and regulatory framework in Viet Nam, with a view to evaluating its attractiveness and improving governance effectiveness through mapping and benchmarking with key international education markets. The benchmark group of countries included China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore.

This research uses case studies to showcase the success and challenges to TNE in Viet Nam.

The research team draws on researchers from the UK and Viet Nam, including MOET, who provided data and valuable insights into the TNE policy system, the local higher education context.

### Desk research

- The study commenced with desk research that details the following:
  - regulatory framework for TNE
  - main regulatory bodies and their responsibilities
  - programme and provider accreditation requirements
  - quality assurance practices and requirements.
- The research team had regular engagement with the International Cooperation Department, MOET. This supported access to relevant data and the evaluation of the TNE regulatory environment in Viet Nam. This research draws on the previous research study carried out for the International Cooperation Department, MOET.
- Policy analysis was carried out of the wider international higher education landscape, which includes:
  - policy commitment to internationalisation
  - how the immigration system supports and facilitates the mobility of students, academics and researchers
  - the investment laws in the country, in particular the extent to which these deter foreign investment, foreign ownership and governance



(and thus impact the attractiveness of the country to international campuses)

- labour legislation and the extent to which this may discriminate against the employment of foreign professionals – in this instance, academics, researchers and other professionals.

## Case study development

To best address the research task, a historical perspective was adopted, which showed how TNE partnerships evolved over time; the influences and critical incidents, and their impact on the partnerships; a detailed account of the challenges and opportunities, and enablers, where applicable, that ensured the partnerships thrived.



### 3. Overview of higher education provision in Viet Nam

MOET is responsible for both basic education and higher education provision in Viet Nam. In terms of higher education, this includes public and private HEIs. As a regulatory and oversight body, MOET manages functions in the areas of curriculum framework, enrolment quotas, student admissions and enrolment, quality assurance and accreditation. The governance system, however, is complex, involving various ministries and agencies at both central and provincial levels. As a result, public and private HEIs have varying levels of governance. Within the public sector, in practice, only one-third of the public HEIs are under the direct control of MOET, while the majority are managed and supervised by other ministries and over 60 state departments and provincial governments. Private sector HEIs, although not managed by ministries, are academically accountable to and administratively supervised by MOET and local governments<sup>1</sup>. The complexities of governance have impacted on Viet Nam's competitive position in attracting TNE providers compared to its peer group countries (discussed more fully in section 7).

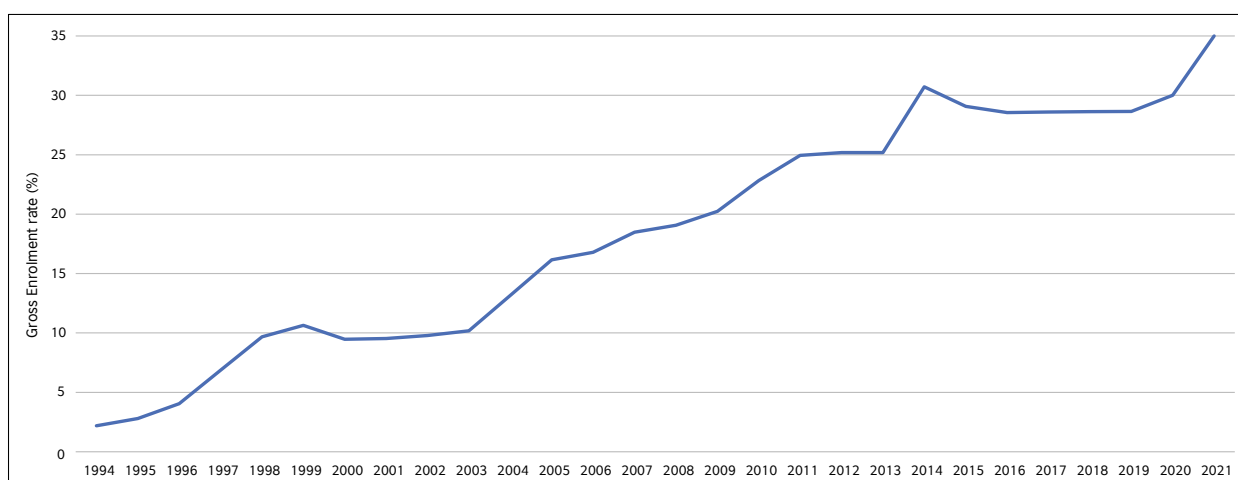
Tertiary enrolments in the country increased rapidly from 10 per cent in 2000 to 31 per cent in 2014. This is mainly attributed to the expansion of private education provision, which played an important role

in growing the domestic capacity of the Vietnamese tertiary system<sup>2</sup>. Eight universities with foreign investments were set up over the past 20 years.

- RMIT University Vietnam, in 2000
- The Vietnamese-German University (VGU), in 2008
- British University Viet Nam (BUV), in 2009
- University of Science and Technology of Hanoi (USTH), also known as Viet Nam – France University, in 2009
- Viet Nam – Japan University (VJU), in 2014.
- Tokyo Human Health Sciences University Viet Nam (THUV), in 2015
- The American University in Viet Nam (AUV), in 2015
- Fulbright University Viet Nam (FUV), in 2016

As Figure 1 shows, Tertiary-level enrolments stalled between 2015 and 2020, before they peaked again in 2021 to reach 35 per cent.

**Figure 1: Gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education in Viet Nam**



**Source:** World Bank <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.TER.ENRR?view=chart&locations=VN> (please note missing data point in 2004).

1 Minh Thi Ngoc Quach <https://researchrepository.rmit.edu.au/esploro/outputs/doctoral/Policy-and-regulatory-framework-for-transnational/9922168213001341#file-0>  
 2 World Bank (2020), Improving the performance of higher education in Viet Nam. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/347431588175259657/pdf/Improving-the-Performance-of-Higher-Education-in-Viet-Nam-Strategic-Priorities-and-Policy-Options.pdf>.

In 2007, private HEIs were estimated to account for 29.33 per cent of all higher education institutions. Their expansion appears to have stalled over the past decade, and the most recent data shows they accounted for 27.43 per cent of all HEIs in the country in 2020. Table 1 illustrates this.

A large majority of both undergraduate and postgraduate students are studying at public

institutions, with only 18 per cent of undergraduates and 6 per cent of postgraduates at private HEIs.

There were 237 universities, including 172 public institutions and 65 private HEIs, in 2020. The private sector institutions include five foreign-invested HEIs and one international branch campus<sup>3</sup>.

**Table 1: Student enrolments in private HEIs in Viet Nam**

Year	Total student enrolment	Total student enrolment in private HEIs	% private student	Total number of HEIs	Total number of private HEIs	% private HEIs
1987	–	0	0%	63	0	0%
1997	–	–	–	62	15	24.19%
2007	–	–	–	150	44	29.33%
2015	1,753,174	232,367	13.25%	219	60	27.4%
2020	1,672,881	313,479	18.74%	237	65	27.43%

Source: synthesised from MOET (2009), Pham Hung Hiep and Penfold (2022).

MOET's Higher Education Department has set out an ambitious Higher Education Development Strategy<sup>4</sup> with the vision that higher education will become the country's core competitive strength, a key driving force for national development and that, by 2045, Viet Nam will be ranked among the countries with advanced higher education systems in the world.

Goals for 2021-2030 include:

- By 2025: 230 students per 10,000 people, of which 32% are STEM; the network of teacher training establishments meets the requirements of training and professional development.
- By 2030: 260 undergraduate students and 20 postgraduates per 10,000 people, 35% STEM; Viet Nam is among top 4 countries with the best higher education system in Southeast Asia and among the top 10 countries with the best higher education system in Asia
- Total national expenditure on higher education increases on average annually by 2 times the GDP growth, reaching 1.5% of GDP
- Lecturers with doctoral degrees increase by an average of 1% per year, reaching 40%

- World ranking in the number of international publications and the H-index increase by 10 places
- The employment rate of students who have jobs aligned with their professional qualifications during the 12 months after graduation averages is over 80%

Priorities for international cooperation are set out, including:

- Open campuses of prestigious foreign HEIs in Viet Nam
- Scientific cooperation, technology transfer, innovation, experience sharing and expertise in building national key HEIs and world-class research-oriented HEIs
- Development of lecturers and managers, managerial staff
- Development of quality assurance and education accreditation activities
- Digital transformation in online training

3 British Council (2021), Evaluating transnational education trends and opportunities in Thailand and Viet Nam.

4 [https://www.britishcouncil.vn/sites/default/files/think\\_tne\\_2023-24\\_higher\\_education\\_development\\_strategy\\_and\\_cooperation\\_priorities.pdf](https://www.britishcouncil.vn/sites/default/files/think_tne_2023-24_higher_education_development_strategy_and_cooperation_priorities.pdf)



## 4. International mobility of education institutions – international branch campuses

This section draws on the international mobility of education institutions (schools and universities) and the international mobility of education programmes. It reflects on the experiences of other countries and studies the implications for Viet Nam.

The review of the literature reveals the following as the common factors of successful international branch campuses (IBCs):

1. alignment with overall institutional strategy
2. strong understanding of host country context
3. positive relationships with local stakeholders
4. balance between programme equivalence and localisation
5. focus on student experience and research activity
6. realistic financial planning
7. appropriate staffing models<sup>5</sup>.

### 4.1 International branch campus models

There are five main models for the development of IBCs:

1. self-funded
2. external funding from host countries
3. support from private companies or organisation
4. facilities leased from private sectors
5. academic collaboration with a local partner<sup>6</sup>.

There are, however, different combinations of the above.

Common areas of requirements for the establishment of IBCs include the following:

**Legal and regulatory compliance:** Ensure compliance with the host country's laws and regulations regarding foreign educational institutions, business entities, and immigration.

**Accreditation and recognition:** Verify that the parent institution and the IBC are recognised and accredited by relevant educational authorities or accreditation bodies in both the home and host countries.

**Feasibility study:** Conduct a comprehensive feasibility study to assess the demand for the programmes offered by the branch campus, the market potential, financial viability, and potential challenges.

**Partnerships and collaboration:** Establish collaborations with local universities, government bodies, or educational institutions to facilitate the setup and ensure support from the host country.

**Physical infrastructure:** Arrange for suitable facilities and infrastructure to accommodate students, faculty, administrative staff, and other necessary amenities.

**Academic programmes and curriculum:** Design academic programmes that are in line with the educational standards of both the parent institution and the host country, considering cultural differences and local needs.

**Faculty and staff:** Recruit qualified faculty and administrative staff, including local hires and expatriate personnel, as required by the local labour laws.

**Financial capacity:** Demonstrate the financial capability to support the establishment and operation of the branch campus, including startup costs, ongoing expenses, and potential risks.

**Visa and immigration requirements:** Comply with the visa and immigration requirements for both staff and students, facilitating their entry and stay in the host country.

<sup>5</sup> See <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2022.2037072>.

<sup>6</sup> Garrett, R., Kinser, K., Lane, J. E., & Merola, R. (2016). International Branch Campuses: Trends and Developments, 2016 (pp. 1–125). The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education & C-BERT.

Lane, J. E. (2013). Higher education system 3.0: Adding value to states and institutions. *Higher education system*, 3(0), 3-26.

Verbik, L. (2006). Global trends in transnational higher education: Exporting education as a model for international university cooperation.

**Insurance and risk management:** Arrange for appropriate insurance coverage and develop a risk management plan to address potential challenges that may arise.

**Marketing and recruitment:** Develop a marketing and student recruitment plan to attract local and international students to the branch campus.

**Local community engagement:** Engage with the local community and stakeholders to foster positive relationships and ensure integration with the host country's educational landscape.

Table 2 shows some definitions and types of IBCs.

**Table 2: International branch campuses – definitions and types over time.**

One institution can be classed under several types of IBC. For example, it can be an independent IBC in the sense that all degrees are awarded by the parent institution; however, it can also be a joint venture (JV) with a local company that has invested in the physical infrastructure (e.g. the University of Nottingham in Malaysia).

Types	Definitions	Main Investors	Examples
<b>Universities</b>			
Independent	<p>Cross-Border Education Research Team definition of IBC<sup>7</sup>:</p> <p>'The IBC is owned, at least in part, by a foreign higher education provider; operated in the name of the foreign education provider; and provides an entire academic program, substantially on site, leading to a degree awarded by the foreign education provider.'</p> <p>This is perhaps the oldest form of IBC.</p>	Foreign academic institutions	<p>RMIT in Viet Nam, established in 2000: <a href="https://www.rmit.edu.vn/">https://www.rmit.edu.vn/</a></p> <p>University of Reading Malaysia is an example of fully owned IBC. <a href="https://www.reading.edu.my/about-us">https://www.reading.edu.my/about-us</a></p> <p>See Annex A for University of London colleges over time – the first of which was set up in 1948.</p>
Foreign-invested	<p>A foreign-backed university is foreign-owned but locally established, not by a foreign academic institution but rather by (wealthy) individuals, governments or enterprises. They are academically affiliated with one or several universities in another country (Lanzendorf, 2008). <a href="https://ejournals.bc.edu/index.php/ihe/article/view/8015/7166">https://ejournals.bc.edu/index.php/ihe/article/view/8015/7166</a></p>	Foreign companies	<p>British University in Viet Nam (BUV), set up in 2009 – It has partnership programmes with Staffordshire and the University of London. The Taylor Group is the investor behind the BUV campus.</p>
Collaborative	<p>Wilkins and Rumbley:</p> <p>'If a foreign campus is really an international branch campus, it will be recognized as such on the websites of the home and branch. It omits certain key features that are vital to the essence of what a branch is, notably how the terms "branch" and "campus" are used in business and higher education.'</p> <p>A collaboration between two or more institutions – the respective entity awards degrees from the founding institutions.</p>	Foreign companies and academic institutions	<p>Lancaster and Deakin joint campus in Indonesia, supported by Navitas, was announced in 2022. The campus is awaiting approval.</p> <p>See <a href="https://www.deakin.edu.au/about-deakin/news-and-media-releases/articles/deakin-university-and-lancaster-university-united-kingdom-are-collaborating-on-the-development-of-an-innovative-joint-campus-in-bandung-west-java-to-support-the-educational-and-research-strategy-of-indonesia">https://www.deakin.edu.au/about-deakin/news-and-media-releases/articles/deakin-university-and-lancaster-university-united-kingdom-are-collaborating-on-the-development-of-an-innovative-joint-campus-in-bandung-west-java-to-support-the-educational-and-research-strategy-of-indonesia</a>.</p>



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Government agreement	<p>Government-to-government newly set up a university, which often is a new local institution.</p> <p>Most prominent examples include universities set up by Germany – where the German government invests in the entity, typically alongside the national government of the host country, and then invites German universities to take responsibility for the academic curriculum.</p>	Local government and foreign government	<p>Viet Nam German University (VGU) was a newly established university, co-funded by Vietnamese and German governments, and has no parent university in Germany. It initiated in 2005 and set up in 2008 by the Hessen State Minister of Higher Education, Research and the Arts, Udo Corts, and The Minister of Education and Training, Nguyen Thien Nhan.</p> <p>See <a href="https://vgu.edu.vn/web/cms/home">https://vgu.edu.vn/web/cms/home</a>.</p> <p>The German University in Cairo is an Egyptian private university founded by the presidential decree 27/2002, according to the law number 101/1992 and its executive regulations number 355/1996.</p> <p>The German University in Cairo (Deutsche Universität in Kairo) was established in 2002 in cooperation with the State Universities of Ulm and Stuttgart, under the patronage of the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Science, Research and Arts, State of Baden-Württemberg, Germany, and supported by the German Academic Exchange Service, the German Embassy in Cairo, the Arab-German Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Germany, -he State University of Tübingen, the State University of Mannheim and the Academy of Fine arts, Leipzig.</p> <p>See <a href="https://www.guc.edu.eg/">https://www.guc.edu.eg/</a>.</p> <p>Viet Nam France University (University of Science and Technology of Hanoi – USTH): <a href="https://usth.edu.vn/en/">https://usth.edu.vn/en/</a>, and Viet Nam Japan University are other examples of a government-to-government initiatives: <a href="https://vju.ac.vn/en">https://vju.ac.vn/en</a>.</p>
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IBC			
Independent	<p>Wilkins and Rumbley's definition:</p> <p>'An international branch campus is an entity that is owned, at least in part, by a specific foreign higher education institution, which has some degree of responsibility for the overall strategy and quality assurance of the branch campus. The branch campus operates under the name of the foreign institution and offers programming and/or credentials that bear the name of the foreign institution. The branch has basic infrastructure, such as a library, an open access computer lab, and dining facilities, and, overall, students at the branch have a similar student experience to students at the home campus.'</p> <p>An example of independent IBC through a JV is the University of Nottingham in Malaysia – set up on an invitation from the Ministry of Education. It is established in partnership between Boustead Holdings Berhad, YTL Corporation Berhad and the University of Nottingham in 1998.</p>	Companies and mother institution forms a joint venture	<p>University of Nottingham in Malaysia, set up in 1998:</p> <p><a href="https://www.nottingham.edu.my/AboutUs/History/MalaysiaHistory.aspx">https://www.nottingham.edu.my/AboutUs/History/MalaysiaHistory.aspx</a>.</p>
Collaborative	<p>A collaborative form of IBC where two or more partners are creating a new entity. Such IBCs are typical for China, where an IBC can only be set up with a local degree-awarding university. An example of such a newly created institution is XJTLU.</p>	Local, foreign academic institutions and companies form a joint venture	<p>XJTLU in China</p> <p>The new XJTLU, set up in a JV in 2006 between the University of Liverpool and Xi'an Jiao Tong University:</p> <p><a href="https://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/about/overview">https://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/about/overview</a>.</p>
Collaborative Campus-in-campus	<p>A campus-in-campus model is when an international university joins efforts with a local university to open a campus within the host campus of the local partner. The model is perceived to ease the compliance rules, given the close collaboration with the local partner. It also relieves the investment required for the setting-up of a branch campus from scratch. The co-branded campus draws on the brand strengths of the partner HEIs and directly supports the learning environment of the host. Closer interactions between faculty support collaborations in the area of teaching and research.</p>	Local university, foreign university and other investments	<p>A notable example of this model is the Duke-National University of Singapore (NUS) Graduate Medical School, which was set up on 14 April 2005. Under the collaboration agreement, the Singapore government – initially through the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Trade and Industry – contributed significant investment for the first seven years to establish Duke-NUS as part of Singapore's strategy to become a leading centre for medical research and education.</p> <p>See <a href="https://www.duke-nus.edu.sg/">https://www.duke-nus.edu.sg/</a>.</p>

## 4.2 Mergers and acquisitions in Viet Nam's university sector

The Vietnamese higher education landscape is experiencing a shift towards mergers and acquisitions rather than the development of new higher education establishments. The process of setting up a new university requires significant capital investment, infrastructure and expertise. The current capital investment requirements demand investors to commit 1 trillion VND (equivalent to 43 million USD). This financial threshold has spurred merger and acquisition activities involving private educational institutions and corporations.

This trend was pioneered by the acquisition of Van Hien University by Hung Hau Group in 2012, amounting to 75 billion VND (equivalent to USD 3.26 million). Other universities followed suit, such as Hong Bang International University (2015), Ba Ria Vung Tau University (2016), Gia Dinh University (2018), Hoa Sen University (2018), Eastern University of Technology (2020), Phu Xuan University (2018) procured by EQuest Group, Thanh Tay University (now Phenikaa University) acquired by Phenikaa Group (2018), Binh Duong University of Economics and Technology taken over by Van Lang Education Group in 2021, Asian University of Art and Design (now CMC University) acquired by CMC Technology Group, and Yersin University Da Lat acquired by TTC Group in 2022.

Except for Hoa Sen University, which was obtained for 2 trillion VND (equivalent to USD 85.8 million), the transactions cost significantly less than the establishment of a new educational institution, which requires 1,000 billion VND.

## 4.3 Risk sharing in the development of collaborative IBCs

This section presents several examples of different models of collaborative branch campus models where two different HEIs are joining their strengths to leverage risk, build on each other's experiences and offer education that is in high demand locally. This model is distinct from the mergers and acquisitions discussed in the section above.

### Case Study: Collaboration between Deakin University and Lancaster University, Indonesia

In Indonesia's evolving education landscape, a rising number of foreign universities are establishing branches or forging partnerships with domestic institutions. Deakin University (Australia), in conjunction with Deakin College, operates one of its four campuses in Jakarta, Indonesia, an initiative initiated in 1999. Here, students engage in studies at the college, with a seamless pathway to pursue education at Deakin University.

Significant developments emerged in November 2022, during the B20 Summit held in Bali. Deakin University and the UK's Lancaster University jointly unveiled the plan to establish a collaborative campus in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. This strategic venture aspires to craft exceptional educational offerings for both Indonesian and international students, while fostering collaborations with local partner schools in Indonesia. This collaborative effort is poised to fortify the research and development priorities of Bandung, West Java. Facilitating the project's execution is the cross-border education service provider, Navitas. Notably, Navitas had previously collaborated with Lancaster University to inaugurate a branch in Leipzig, Germany, in April 2021.

### Case Study: Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University

Another example of a collaborative IBC model is the one advanced in China, where international education institutions can only set up physical presence in the country if they partner with an established local university. The example below draws on the joint venture by UK's Liverpool University and China's Xi'an Jiaotong University that led to the creation of an independent institution, - Xi'an Jiaotong Liverpool University (XJTLU).

Commencing its inaugural courses in 2006, XJTLU is the outcome of a strategic partnership between Liverpool University (in the UK) and Xi'an Jiaotong University (in China). The institution's core mission is to cultivate adept professionals and managers imbued with technical proficiency, managerial acumen, international outlook, and strong competitiveness. These attributes enable them to effectively address the evolving demands and requirements of global development encompassing economics, society, business, technology, and research – areas confronted by contemporary challenges. XJTLU not only serves as an innovative model of higher education but also seeks to influence modern education in China and worldwide.

XJTLU distinguishes itself by prioritising science, technology, and management subjects, with an emphasis on their practical applications, as opposed to a strictly liberal arts focus. The institution is resolute in forging its unique identity rather than merely replicating the traits of Liverpool University or Xi'an Jiaotong University. This distinctiveness is rooted in the collective strengths of the two parent institutions. Specifically, the partnership between these universities is encapsulated by the phrase 'strengthening cooperation' ('qiang qiang he zuo'), which diverges from academically imbalanced collaborations.



## 5. International school programmes

**Basic education in Viet Nam comprises 12 years of schooling, which includes five years of primary education, four years of intermediate or lower education, and three years of upper secondary education.**

**This section introduces the international mobility of academic programmes at the school level.**

### 5.1 Overview of the international secondary school market

The global secondary school market is expected to grow from \$402.11 billion in 2022 to \$437.54 billion in 2023, with a compound annual growth rate of 8.3 per cent, and forecast to reach \$601.07 billion by 2027.

South-East Asia, including Viet Nam, has experienced a 23 per cent growth in the enrolment of students in its international schools over the last five years. Some of the factors driving growth in the international schools market in Viet Nam include government policies, rising income levels, and changing societal attitudes towards education. For example, the Vietnamese government has increased budget allocations, liberalised private sector involvement, and encouraged foreign participation in developing education and training services.

The International Schools Database lists 125 schools teaching international curriculum in Viet Nam, typically English and Vietnamese and additional languages. The majority of the schools were teaching the Cambridge curriculum (75 schools). In total, over 89,250 students were taught at the schools. However, this is a heavy underestimate, based on only 53 per cent of the schools publishing data on the number of students. There was no information for 59 schools.

The international secondary school market includes various educational programmes and curricula including:

#### International Baccalaureate

The International Baccalaureate offers four educational programmes to more than 1.95 million students aged from 3 to 19 across the globe. The number of IB programmes offered worldwide has grown by 34.2 per cent between 2018 and 2022. The IB provides a range of supportive materials for schools, including a digital toolkit with downloadable publications, templates, and promotional materials. In Viet Nam, there are 18 IB World Schools, all authorised to offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma, while six teach all three IB programmes.

#### Cambridge

Cambridge offers integrated marketing solutions for international student programmes, targeting a defined global market. The Cambridge curriculum is designed for students aged from 11 to 18 and is supported by print and digital teaching and learning content. Cambridge has experienced significant growth in the United States, competing against popular academically challenging programmes like Advanced Placement and the IB. Viet Nam has seen an exponential increase in the number of Cambridge students in recent years, encouraged by the government's efforts to expand English-language education as well as to promote transnational cooperation and exchange with other countries.

#### Edexcel

Edexcel, a part of Pearson, offers international qualifications for learners aged from 11 to 18. Its International GCSE and International A-Level programmes are designed to prepare students for exam success and progression. In Viet Nam, there are several schools offering Edexcel qualifications, including BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND), which is recognised by universities and employers all over the world.



## 5.2 Use of international school curriculum in national education systems

*Author: Michael O'Sullivan, Fellow, Wolfson College Cambridge*

This section studies the extent to which international curricula are permitted or required to be taught in schools in various countries. Its purpose is to identify, with examples, some of the policy drivers and contextual differences that lie behind national policies (or sub-national state policies in countries where the education mandate is devolved, such as India and the USA), regarding the use of international curricula in schools, and to consider the advantages and disadvantages of such policies in context.

Four main types of curriculum policy are identified:

1. A single national curriculum is enforced in all public schools and private schools.
2. A single national curriculum is enforced in public schools but not in private schools.
3. There is state-organised use of an international curriculum in certain stages of the national education system.
4. Alongside a national curriculum, public schools and private schools are given flexibility to use elements of international curriculum, and some schools choose to do so.

For each example, consideration is given to:

- The context and policy objectives which explain the policy
- The advantages and disadvantages that could be associated with the policy.

### 5.2.1 A single national curriculum is enforced in all public schools and private schools

**Example: Singapore.**

In Singapore at primary, middle and senior secondary education stages, from ages 6 to 15 and for continuing students to age 18, all students study the Singapore Curriculum, which prescribes compulsory content, optional subjects and methods of assessment to be followed by all schools enrolling Singaporean citizens. Only children who are not citizens of Singapore may be taught other curricula in private schools, although there is also limited access to IB diploma programmes for Singaporean high school students.

A common examination system determines progress between stages of education. From ages 16 to 18,



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students who remain in school similarly follow a common curriculum, though with a wide choice of subjects. Many students apply for entry to overseas universities, and Singapore school-leaving qualifications (Singapore A-Levels) are widely recognised internationally.

The enforcement of a single curriculum for all Singaporean children has deep roots in nation-building since independence. It has been supported by continuous high investment in the quality of curriculum, teaching and assessment, with the intention of creating both a single national identity and a competitive, meritocratic economy and society.

Given its role in Singapore's success as a nation and the consistently high performance of Singapore schoolchildren in comparative national assessments, the policy enjoys wide support. Criticisms have mainly focused on the difficulty some children experience in achieving well within the system, questions about whether the curriculum fosters creativity in children, and lack of choice for children who do not respond well to an academic curriculum.

### 5.2.2 A single national curriculum is enforced in public schools but not in private schools

**Example A: France.**

In France all state schools follow a detailed standard curriculum from ages 3 to 16, following which most students prepare for the national Baccalaureate examination at age 18. However, private schools are permitted either to teach the national curriculum (in which case they are under contract to the state, which employs and pays their teachers), or teach alternative curricula at any or all stages of education, in which case they must be entirely self-financing.

A highly centralised national education system has been a feature of France since the Napoleonic period. The education system is generally considered of high quality, and although about 15 per cent of children attend private schools, these schools mostly teach the National Curriculum under

contract to the state. The role of alternative curricula in the education of French children is therefore very limited, and mostly consists of the use of some alternative curricula such as Montessori in private pre-schools. Nevertheless, the freedom remains for private schools to opt out of the national system at any or all levels and offer alternative curricula while relying on their own resources. Several factors have limited to use of international curricula in private schools: in particular the high quality of state education, its role in preparing young people for competitive entry to elite higher education institutions and careers, and the state subsidies granted to private schools that adhere to the National Curriculum.

Overall, French policy has ensured a dominant role for a well regarded National Curriculum-based education system in both public and private schools, while still allowing some freedom to private schools to offer alternative curricula for children of parents who can afford the fees such schools charge.

#### Example B: India.

In India education is primarily within the competence of each of the 28 states. Each state has adopted a state curriculum, which is taught at all stages of education in public schools, but private schools in most states may choose to offer alternative curricula including international curricula. A thriving private education system, which in some parts of the country educates as many children as the public education system, may be divided broadly into three types of school: low-cost private schools that offer the state curriculum, but reach parts of the community poorly served by public schools; medium-cost private schools that offer at high school level the curriculum and qualifications of approved federal Indian examination boards, which are generally regarded as of higher quality than most state curricula and assessments; and high-cost private schools offering international curricula, in some cases at all stages of education, and mainly adhering to the Cambridge or IB curricula. Entry to university in India is open to graduates of any approved high school curriculum including international curricula. Because of low trust in the

final assessments of students within many state curricula, the most selective elite universities in India rely heavily on their own entry tests to select students.

The diversity of curricula on offer in India means that standards of education, and expected attainment of pupils, vary greatly between different types of school. On a positive note, this could be said to meet the very diverse needs of different segments of the population. For example, it provides for some children effective preparation for entry to the best universities in the world as well as in India, something it would be hard or impossible for many public schools in India to offer. On a negative note, it clearly has some effect in entrenching social inequality and inequality of opportunity.

#### 5.2.3 There is state-organised use of an international curriculum in certain stages of the national education system

##### Example A: Mauritius (high school)

Mauritius follows its own national curriculum from grades 1 to 9 of a 13-year system. In grades 10 to 11 students are required to prepare for the School Certificate by studying for compulsory and optional Cambridge International O-Level examinations examined by Cambridge University Press and Assessment. The syllabus studies are compulsory and optional subjects are mostly standard international qualifications, but with a few syllabuses especially tailored to Mauritius, for example a qualification in French language at a higher level of demand than in the standard international qualification. If they perform adequately in the School Certificate examinations, students continue for a further two years of senior high school, in which they prepare for the Higher School Certificate, consisting of a range of optional Cambridge International A-Levels.

The principal policy advantages associated with this use of a large international curriculum and syllabus structure at high school level are:

1. There is limited higher education provision in Mauritius. Because school leavers who have sat for the Higher School Certificate hold a number of internationally recognised Cambridge A-level grades, they are able to enter universities in many countries without disadvantage.
2. In a relatively small country (population 1 million), outsourcing high-stakes public examinations to an international agency ensures a generally high level of public trust in the integrity of the assessments, by ensuring that exam paper setting and grading take place remote from society.



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- Updating of subject syllabuses to reflect new international practice, new scientific discoveries etc. is achieved without expenditure of resources. The greatest policy drawback is reliance on curricular content at high school level that in large part has not been developed specifically for the needs of the children of Mauritius.

#### Example B: Brunei (high school)

Brunei follows a similar system to Mauritius, in which Cambridge international qualifications form the larger part of the senior high school curriculum, and most students graduate with Cambridge International A levels. A small number of Brunei-specific syllabuses are available, mostly concerned with religious knowledge, but the high school curriculum largely consists of standard international qualifications.

As in Mauritius, the policy has equipped students who complete high school successfully with qualifications that are widely recognised in the countries where Bruneians study at university, primarily Malaysia, the UK, Australia and the USA. A particular challenge with the policy is the low attainment of many boys, who show little motivation to learn in a curriculum which does not connect well with their life ambitions. Great efforts have been made to develop alternative vocational education pathways and make them attractive to such students, but the social status of international academic qualifications makes such innovation challenging.

#### 5.2.4 Alongside a national curriculum, public schools and private schools are given flexibility to use elements of international curriculum, and some schools choose to do so

##### Example A: China

China enforces the teaching of the Chinese National Curriculum (with some divergence of versions used in each province of China) from grades 1 to 9 of schooling ('compulsory education'). The policy applies to both public and private schools in mainland China, except those schools that only enrol foreign passport-holders. Teaching of the national curriculum takes most of each school day. Schools are permitted to supplement the national curriculum with other courses to the extent that time permits, but there are substantial restrictions on the use of foreign curricula, even as supplementary courses, in grades 1 to 9.

In the final three years of school education, grades 9 to 12, the great majority of schools prepare pupils for the national university entrance examination, the Gaokao, but licensed public and private schools have been permitted to offer international curricula

instead – the most popular being the American College Board AP syllabuses and assessments, the UK International GCSE/A-Level system, and the IB. Recent policy changes have constrained the offer of such programmes in public schools, stopping the issue of new licences to public schools, but such programmes remain popular in licenced public and private schools.

The entry of Chinese young people to universities in China is only available to students who take the Gaokao at the end of high school. Therefore students who opt to study international curricula from grade 10 have already decided that their higher education will be outside China, usually at a university in the USA, UK or Australia. Students who remain within the national system and sit for the Gaokao will in most cases enter universities in China. However, it is also possible for them to enter many overseas universities – though they may be less well prepared



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in terms of English language skills and study methods than students who have followed international curricula in high school.

China's policy on compulsory education in grades 1 to 9 is an affirmation of the importance of a common curriculum in the primary and middle years for formation of national identity, mother-tongue literacy and citizenship knowledge. It is also a response to difficulties encountered with previous more flexible policies: in particular, the emergence of fierce competition between schools, including public schools, to insert heavily marketed international content into the curriculum, resulting in cost increases for parents and sometimes questionable allocation of state resources. The continuing policy of allowing international curricula in grades 9 to 12 reflects the limits of capacity within the national higher education system to accept all students who wish to study, and the consequent fierce and stressful competitive preparation for the Gaokao. International curricula provide an 'off ramp' for students whose parents see them as better suited to an overseas higher education, or as more likely to gain entry to a high-ranked university through that route.



### Example B: USA

Education in the USA is a state mandate, and the federal role in education is limited. Typically, US states are less prescriptive of the content taught in public schools than education authorities in other countries (though some have legislated to prevent the teaching of content deemed objectionable). States have relied on the formulation of target standards and standardised state-wide assessments of student attainment, rather than laying down in detail what schools should teach each day. Even greater flexibility is given to private schools, and the doctrine of choice (for parents, about what type of education their child should receive and in which school) plays a large role in education politics and policy.

Within this liberal and open system, international curricula have found a place. This is most clearly true of the IB, about half of whose registered schools in the world are located in the USA, despite the IB's European origins. The state of California alone has registered 125 'IB Schools'. Most IB schools in the USA are public schools that offer the IB Diploma at high school level to a sub-group of high-attaining students. IB Diploma scores are well recognised by elite US universities as part of their complex admission assessment processes. A much smaller number of private schools offer all three IB stages. In recent years the Cambridge curriculum has also expanded in some states of the USA, playing a similar role to the IB as an 'accelerator' programme for the most able high school students in many schools, and has also been adopted as the general curriculum in a smaller number of schools.



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In a country where target and actual average attainment standards at various stages of education are often quite low by international standards, and where prescription of education content is quite loose, the use of international curricula in American schools has been seen by its supporters as an answer to both problems: a system that targets internationally benchmarked attainment standards while offering a much clearer structure of content and pedagogic approach, linked to aligned assessments (IB or Cambridge).

## 5.3 Policy considerations

International practice suggests that the mandated use of international curricula in place of national curricula is only seen at high school level and then only in special cases. These are countries (including the examples of Mauritius and Brunei given above) in which: the medium of high school instruction is English; a large proportion of high school graduates seek entry to overseas universities; and there are considerations of scale in regard to developing an internationally well recognised high school curriculum and assessment system covering a wide range of curriculum subjects, which would be challenging for small countries.

For most countries, the relevant policy questions are whether and to what extent to allow some use of international curricula, either to supplement the national curriculum or as an alternative pathway, especially at high school level.

In regard to the use in schools of supplemental international curriculum content in the primary and middle school years of education, key considerations are:

- The amount of time available for teaching such content, taking account of teaching time required for national curriculum content.
- The incentives such freedom would create for school leaders (for example, to compete with other schools by offering more international content) and the expected positive or negative effects on decision-making and use of resources. These concerns are likely to be weightier in regard to public schools, because of their reliance on public funds, than in regard to private schools, which rely on their own resources.

In regard to high schools, there are substantial reasons for allowing international curricula to be offered as an alternative to national curricula, and this is quite common international practice, especially in private schools. The principal advantages likely to be gained are:

- For countries in which many students choose to study at overseas universities, a distinct preparation route suitable for such students, which can be offered without burdening the national curriculum with a requirement that is not relevant to the needs of most students.
- The stimulus an internationally benchmarked, well-recognised curriculum may bring to innovation and improvement in the national system. It is noticeable, for example in India, that improvements in federal and state curricula and assessments are sometimes stimulated by the examples of the competing IB and Cambridge curricula within the country.

A key policy consideration to be resolved alongside deciding on permitted use of international high school curricula is the system of national university admission: whether this should be restricted to students who complete national education to the end of high school (as in China), or open also to students who have followed international high school curricula (as in India). Various countries provide

examples of the different ways this issue is resolved in cases where international high school curricula are quite popular. In Egypt, limited quotas of university places are reserved for students who have followed international high school curricula; in Pakistan, a complex equivalence system is used to express international curriculum assessment outcomes as national test scores.



# 6. Overview of TNE programmes in Viet Nam

**The mobility of higher education programmes, which takes the form of transnational education partnerships, has grown substantially over the past 20 years. This growth has been driven mainly by international expansion in the provision of universities from three countries: the USA, the UK and Australia.**

A British Council report shows that the largest group of TNE programmes in Viet Nam were franchised degree programmes where the overseas partner supplies the curriculum and awards the degree, but students are taught by a local provider and study entirely in Viet Nam.

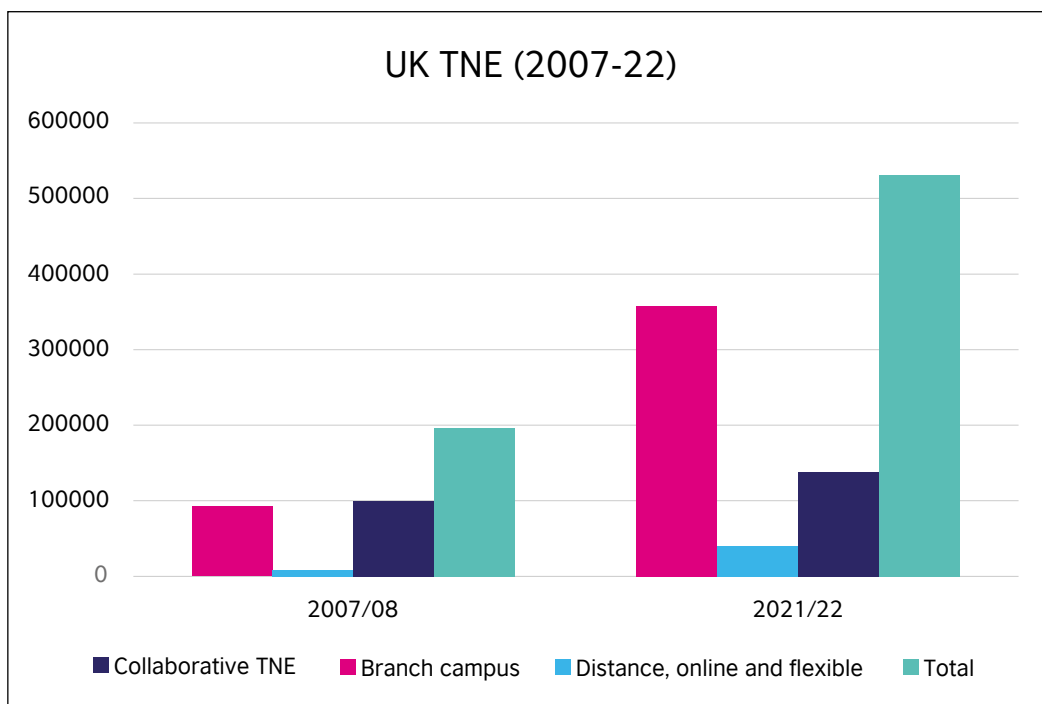
Typically, the partner HEI oversees the quality of the higher education programmes and acts as an external examiner.

In the 2021-22 academic year, 532,460 TNE students were registered at UK institutions, representing a 9

per cent increase from the previous year and about 100,000 more than in 2019-20. UK TNE degrees were delivered in over 230 countries and territories in 2021-22, with TNE provision being a core component of many universities' strategic approaches to international growth. Figure 2 shows these numbers by type of provision.

Viet Nam is the 20th largest UK TNE market, with approximately 7,500 students in 2022.

**Figure 2: UK TNE from 2007 to 2022**



*Data source: UK Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Data excludes Oxford Brookes University Association of Chartered Certified Accountants programme.*





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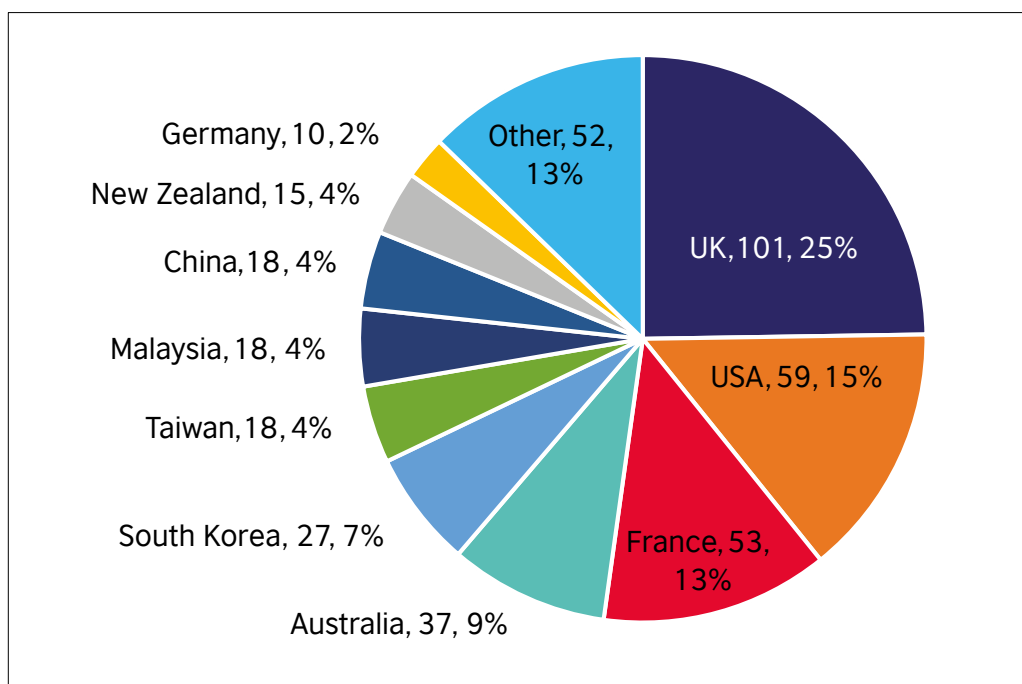
TNE is not new to Viet Nam, and the landscape has evolved over the past 25 years. Annex B summarises the main developments that have impacted TNE provision in the country and shaped the current framework. The overall trend points towards gradual liberalisation of the international education provision in the country.

Our analysis of the available data on TNE programmes in Viet Nam for 2021 summarises the TNE activities in the country, as detailed below and shown in Figures 3 and 4.

- **Diverse International Partnerships:** Viet Nam has established TNE programmes with universities from various countries. This highlights the internationalisation of Viet Nam’s higher education sector and the country’s commitment to offering diverse educational opportunities to its students.

- **Dominance of key TNE players:** the UK is the leading country in terms of the number of TNE programmes in Viet Nam, with 101 programmes. This is followed by the USA with 59 programmes, and France with 53 programmes. These countries collectively account for over half of all TNE programmes in Viet Nam.
- **There is a significant presence of Asian universities:** beyond the dominant Western partners, there is a notable presence of universities from Asian countries like Korea, China, Malaysia, and Taiwan, each offering between 18 and 27 programmes. This signifies the regional importance of Asian countries in Viet Nam’s TNE landscape.
- **Diverse subjects of study:** TNE activities in Viet Nam in 2021 indicate a variety of fields of study being offered under these TNE programmes, ranging from Science and Technology to Economic and Management. This diversity ensures that Vietnamese students have a broad range of options to choose from in terms of disciplines.
- **Presence of renowned foreign universities:** many globally renowned universities have TNE partnerships in Viet Nam, including universities from the UK, Australia, the USA and other countries. The diversity of institutions active in Viet Nam indicates that a diverse and wide-ranging teaching provision of high quality is available to Vietnamese students.

**Figure 3: Number of TNE programmes in Viet Nam by country of origin**



The TNE market in Viet Nam has a diverse range of offerings at both the bachelor's and master's levels. However, the distribution and dominance of certain countries vary between the two levels.

- While the UK is the dominant player at the bachelor's level, France emerges as a key provider of master's programmes.
- Asian countries, which have a significant presence in bachelor's programmes, have a reduced footprint in the master's segment.

- This differential distribution suggests that Vietnamese students have varied preferences and opportunities when choosing their level of study and the country of the foreign university.

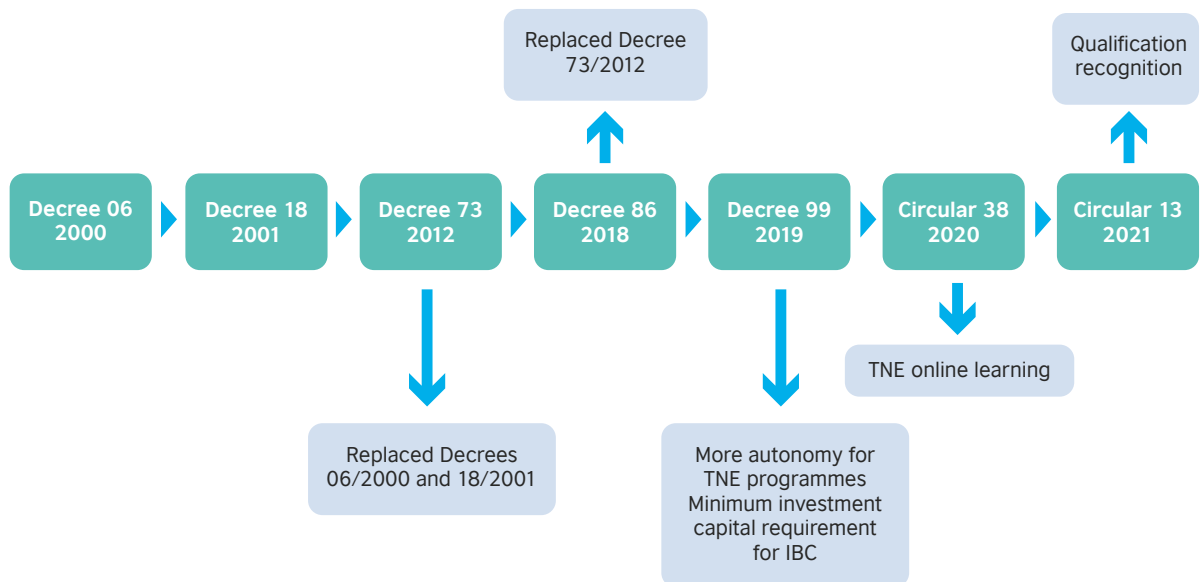
In summary, the TNE market in Viet Nam is robust and diverse, with a mixture of Western and Asian universities offering a wide range of programmes. The country's strategic partnerships with these international institutions underscore its commitment to enhancing the quality and diversity of higher education for its students.



## 7. The environment for TNE in Viet Nam and international comparisons

This section studies the TNE environment in Viet Nam in terms of a range of criteria, and benchmarks it against a peer group of countries in Asia. The peer group was selected in discussion with MOET and the British Council.

A series of regulatory reforms have shaped the regulatory landscape in the country over the past 25 years, as illustrated in the diagram below.



The most significant changes are:

- Decree 06/2000/NĐ-CP dated 6 March 2000 of the Government regarding investment cooperation with foreign countries in the field of medical examination and treatment, education and training, scientific research
- Decree 18/2001/ND-CP dated 4 May 2001 of the Government regulating the establishment and activities of foreign cultural and educational establishments in Viet Nam
- Decree 73/2012/ND-CP dated 26 September 2012 of the Government regulating foreign cooperation and investment in the field of education
- Decree 86/2018/ND-CP dated 6 June 2018 of the Government regulating foreign cooperation and investment in the field of education (replacing Decree 73/2012/ND-CP). The revised Higher Education Law provides higher autonomy to qualified universities to self-approve their joint training programmes (including 2 national, 3 regional and 23 autonomous universities)
- Decree 99/2019/ND-CP dated 30 December 2019 of the Government detailing and guiding a number of articles of implementation of the Law on Higher Education
- Circular 38/2020/TT-BGDĐT dated 6 October 2020 of MOET providing regulations on online and blended TNE programmes
- Circular 13/2021/TT-BGDĐT dated 15 April 2021 of MOET is a significant improvement in the foreign degree recognition process (carried out by VN-NARIC)



## 7.1 Benchmarking criteria and comparisons

The criterion for selecting the peer countries for benchmarking was that they should meet at least two of the following:

- track record in TNE engagement evidenced by a high number of international institutions active in the country
- recent changes leading to liberalised TNE regulatory framework
- similar challenges in the local provision of education, e.g.: high proportion of students studying abroad; comparatively low tertiary education participation rate; limited R&D capacity
- similar levels of economic development.

A policy context scorecard was used to grade eight countries, including Viet Nam, across various aspects of transnational education related policy using a 0 to 3 scale. The scorecard has the following metrics:

- 0 indicates no policy

- 1 indicates an unfavourable, restrictive or limited policy
- 2 indicates a policy exists but with some restrictions or complexities
- 3 indicates a favourable policy with minimal restrictions.

Using this scale allows the conversion of qualitative data into quantitative metrics. Also, the numeric scale demonstrates progression from no policy to ideal policy conditions. This helps assess where each country is in terms of TNE policy maturity and openness.

The eight countries are assessed in terms of their policy and regulation of the following:

- international branch campuses
- TNE programmes
- quality assurance of TNE
- recognition of TNE degrees and qualifications

These are discussed in 7.2-7.5 with the policy context scorecard gradings shown in Figures 4-8.





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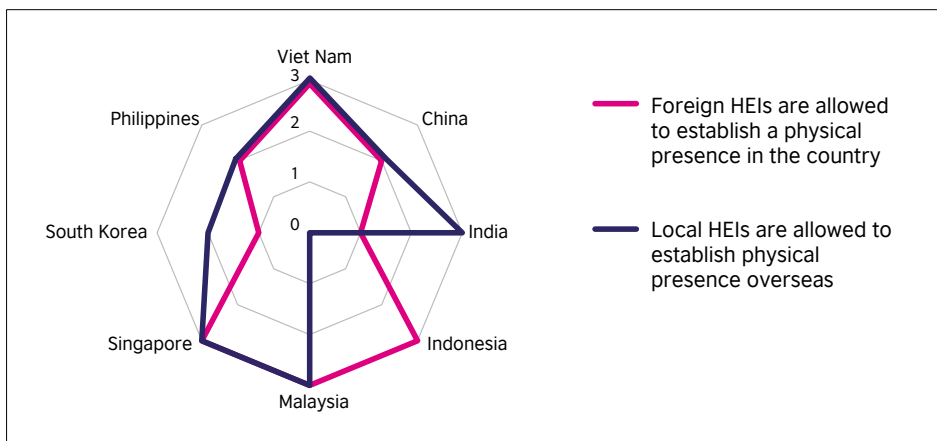
## 7.2 International branch campuses

The regulation of IBCs considers the inbound and outbound flows of HEIs in relation to the host country for TNE. This is represented by the following provision in the national TNE frameworks:

### 1. Mobility of higher education institutions

- ability of foreign HEIs to establish and operate in the country
- ability of local HEIs to operate internationally.

Viet Nam’s ability to attract foreign HEIs in regulatory terms compares with those of Malaysia and Singapore, and most recently, with the revised conditions for IBCs in India. However, a significant downside is the high capital requirements (VND 1 trillion is required for international universities, and VND 500,000 billion for international branch campuses<sup>8</sup>), which combined with restrictive work permits, is resulting in a relatively small number of IBCs in the country.



Ability of foreign HEIs to establish and operate in the country (0=no policy, 1=no or evolving policy, 2=yes but with restrictions, 3=yes without restrictions)

Ability of local HEIs to operate internationally (0=no policy, 1=prohibited, 2=yes but with restrictions, 3=yes with minimum restrictions)

### 7.3 TNE programmes

The mobility of TNE programmes considers the presence of the following attributes:

- regulations to allow TNE provision
- TNE online with local support
- transparency and consistency in the regulation of TNE.

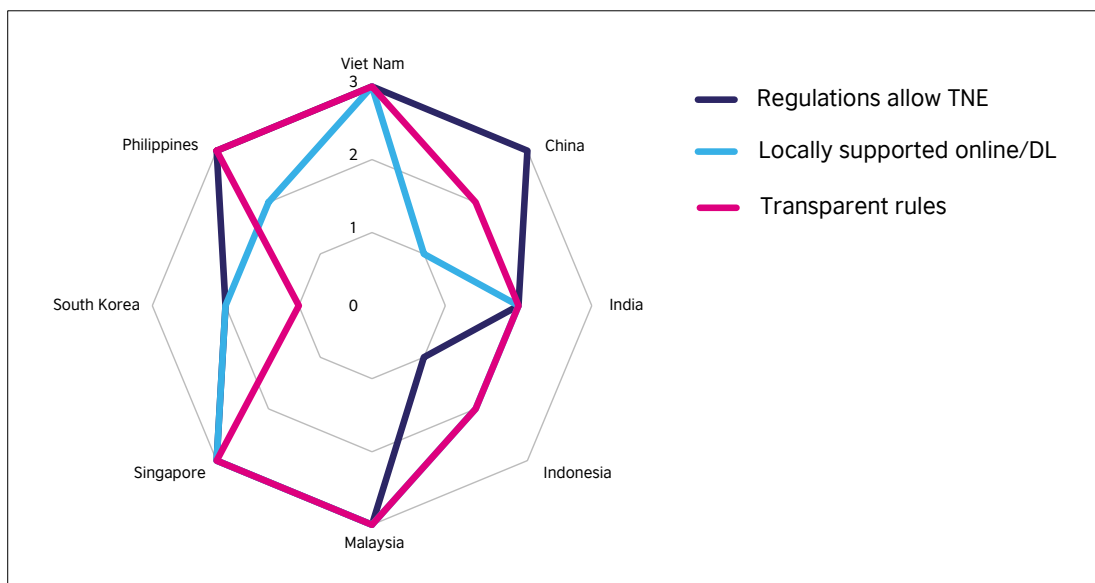
Viet Nam, China, Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines have a well developed regulatory environment for TNE programmes. This reflects a mature market condition for TNE, primarily in the cases of Malaysia, Singapore and China, which are leading TNE markets by size. Some countries, such as India and China, may have moderate scores due to conditional permissions, such as requiring partnerships with local institutions or needing to meet specific educational standards. These conditions could be seen as balancing act fostering international collaboration with ensuring quality and alignment with national educational goals.



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While Viet Nam permits programmes taught online, all programmes require significant face-to-face teaching. The online component of TNE programmes is limited to 30 per cent. It is not clear how hybrid programmes and blended learning, including virtual internships, are treated as part of the 30 per cent cap<sup>9</sup>. Figure 6 illustrates this.

**Figure 5: Mobility of international programmes**



Regulations to allow TNE provision (0= no policy, 1=not allowed 2= allowed but with complexities, 3=allowed with clear regulations)  
 TNE online with local support (0=no policy, 1=not allowed 2=allowed but with complexities, 3=allowed)  
 Transparency and consistency in the regulation of TNE (0=no policy, 1=substantial complexities, 2=some complexities, 3=clear and evenly enforced).

9 Ministry of Education and Training (2020) Circular 38/2020/TT-BGDĐT dated 6 October 2020, Providing for joint training programs for bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees delivered by online and blended learning methods. Retrieved from <https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/EN/Giao-duc/Circular-38-2020-TT-BGDĐT-training-programs-for-bachelor-s-degrees-online-and-blended-learningmethods/455884/tieng-anh.aspx>.



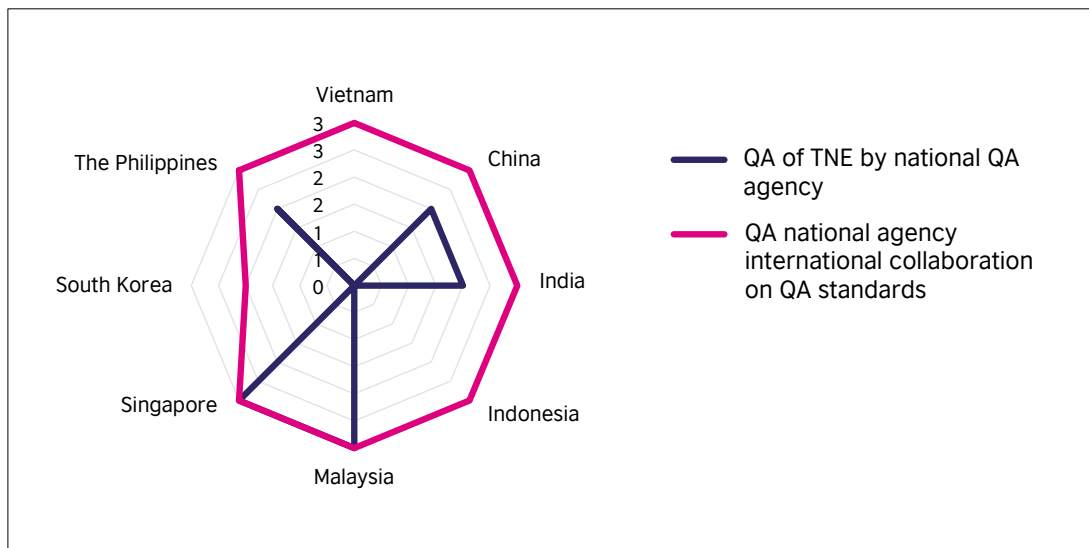
### 7.4 Quality assurance of TNE

The following attributes are required for the effective quality assurance (QA) of TNE programmes:

- QA of TNE by a national QA agency
- national QA agency’s international collaboration on QA standards

The quality assurance of TNE programmes by national agencies shows some progression but remains an area requiring improvement across most countries. With the exceptions of Malaysia and Singapore, which actively monitor TNE quality through periodic reviews, scoring 3, countries either lack systematic QA of TNE or undertake only minimal oversight during licensing, scoring 1 or 2. There also appears to be limited involvement of local partners in assuring TNE quality. While national QA bodies are increasingly collaborating internationally on QA standards, their focus has predominantly been on domestic rather than cross-border provision. Figure 7 illustrates this.

Figure 6: Quality assurance of TNE



## 7.5 Recognition of TNE degrees and qualifications

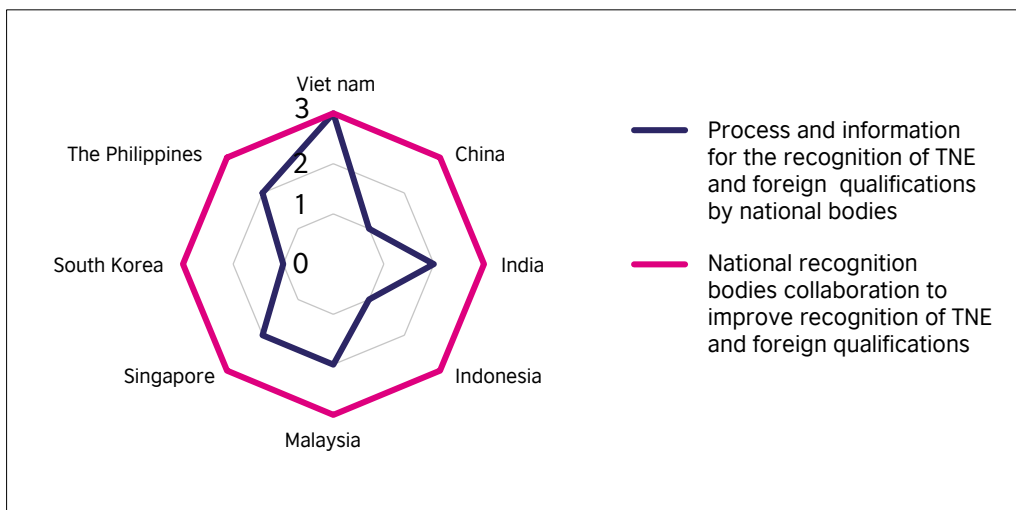
This section considers the following criteria:

- process and information for the recognition of TNE and foreign qualifications by national bodies
- collaboration by national recognition bodies to improve recognition of TNE and foreign qualifications

The recognition of transnational education (TNE) qualifications for employment and further study is

present in most countries but often there are issues with the availability of information. Viet Nam, Malaysia and Singapore have a developed, well-communicated, and streamlined process for recognising TNE qualifications. In India and the Philippines there is provision for the recognition of TNE qualifications, but the process is still complex and subject to local conditions. Indonesia, China and South Korea have minimal information on the recognition processes of TNE. At the same time, the national recognition bodies across all countries collaborate internationally on qualification recognition. This is encouraging for the future progress on TNE recognition at national level

**Figure 7: Recognition of TNE**



Process for the recognition of TNE and foreign qualifications (1=no evidence of this, 2=some evidence but the process and/or information are unclear, 3=clear and streamline process)

National agency international collaboration on recognition (1= no, 2= some evidence of international collaboration, 3= international collaboration with known networks/conventions)



## 7.6 Navigating cultural dimensions in Viet Nam's TNE: a focus on individualism and long-term orientation

Cultural values have significant influence on both public attitudes toward education and on individual learning styles. In the context of Viet Nam, the cultural dimensions that impact on transnational education programmes are crucial to their success. Specifically, this study uses Hofstede's Individualism and Long-Term Orientation dimensions<sup>10</sup> to explore the cultural dimensions and how these might be navigated. This is for two reasons:

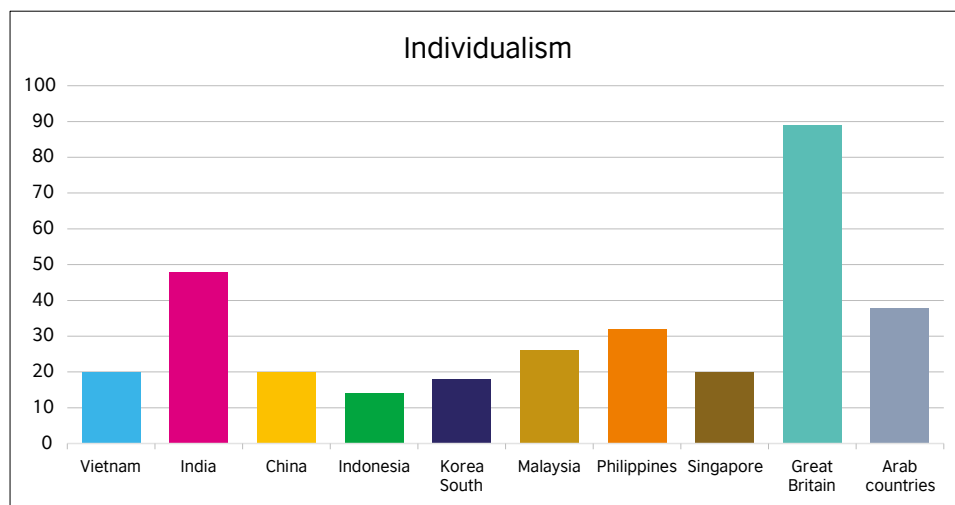
1. Long-term orientation shapes perceptions about education's value.
2. The balance between collaboration and individualism is key to the teaching and learning model in TNE.

### Individualism

The dimension of individualism versus collectivism explores the extent to which a society values self-reliance or communal interdependence. In individualistic cultures, education is often geared towards personal achievements, autonomy, and critical thinking. Conversely, collectivist cultures emphasise social harmony, group achievement, and respect for authority in their educational settings.

As shown in Figure 9, Viet Nam's low individualism score of 20 emphasises its collectivist culture, which has significant implications for education, including TNE programmes. Contrary to the perception that Western models solely focus on individual achievement, they actually place a considerable emphasis on collaboration and group learning. This makes TNE initiatives particularly compatible with Viet Nam's collectivist educational culture. However, to optimise programme effectiveness and cultural sensitivity, it is crucial to understand nuances such as Viet Nam's focus on familial loyalty and communal responsibility.

Figure 8: Countries ranked for individualism



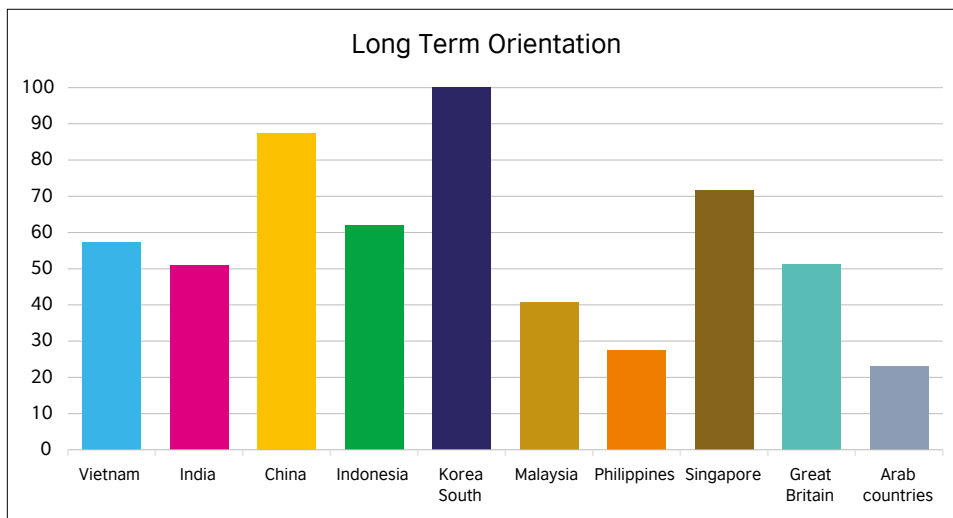
### Long-term orientation

The Long-Term Orientation dimension assesses how societies balance their connection to historical traditions with the demands and opportunities of the present and future. Societies scoring low are normative in nature, favouring established traditions and viewing societal change sceptically. High-scoring societies, in contrast, adopt a pragmatic stance, emphasising future preparedness through thrift and a focus on modern education.

As shown in Figure 10, Viet Nam's Long-Term Orientation score of 57 reflects a pragmatic societal

view, affecting not only educational methods but also the value placed on education for future preparedness and social mobility. This aligns well with the contemporary approach across foreign HE systems, which also sees education as a means for both personal and societal progress. In TNE initiatives, such as collaborations between foreign and Vietnamese institutions, this shared perspective offers an advantage as it drives a strong sustained demand for high-value HE programmes. Curricula can be designed to be future-oriented and adaptable, aligning with both countries' long-term educational values while remaining culturally sensitive.

10 See <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/>.

**Figure 9: Countries ranked for long-term orientation**

## 7.7 Easy step guide to setting up a TNE programme in Viet Nam

This section aims to provide an “at a glance” overview of the steps required to set up a TNE programme in Viet Nam. The guide is simplified, and the steps may vary according to the type of local TNE partner or the programme.

### Process for setting up a TNE programme in Viet Nam

**Step 1.** Identify local partner HEI.

**Step 2.** Prepare the required documents for the TNE partnership:

- An application for approval of the joint training programme signed by both partners.
- A cooperation agreement or contract between the partner institutions, specifying information about the partners, their responsibilities and commitments to the curriculum, learning and teaching materials, teaching staff, physical facilities, testing and assessment, financial information and other details.
- Documents proving the legal status of both partners: a certified true copy, or a copy enclosed with an original, of the establishment decision or the establishment licence granted to the educational institutions; or other equivalent documents.
- Documents proving that both Vietnamese educational institutions and foreign educational institutions are permitted to provide training in the proposed field of joint training (a certified true copy or a copy enclosed with an original).
- A certificate of accreditation of the foreign curriculum or documents on recognition of the education quality by a competent agency (a certified true copy or a copy enclosed with an original).
- A written approval of the joint training programme to be conducted with a foreign partner from the superior body (line ministry), which is applicable to the Vietnamese educational institution (if any).
- The project proposal for the joint training developed by both partners to include: necessity; objectives of the joint training programme; introduction to both parties; contents of the joint training programme; discipline and level of training; facilities, equipment and teaching contents; list of expected lecturers enclosed with their CVs; recruitment criteria; training scale; forms of examination and assessment; qualifications expected; equivalence between the foreign certificates and Vietnamese certificates; measures for education quality assurance and benefits of learners and employees; management staff; CVs of Vietnamese and foreign representatives managing the programme; tuition



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and financial support from Vietnamese and foreign entities (if any); budget estimates; financial management mechanism; responsibilities and entitlements of both parties; responsibilities and entitlements of teachers and learners.

**Step 3.** Apply for approval from the licensing authority

One set of the documents listed in step 2 must be submitted by hand or by post to the competent licensing authority.

- Within 20 working days of receipt of the complete documents, the application receiving agency will appraise them and issue an approval of the joint training programme.
- If the documents are incomplete, within five working days the application receiving agency will notify the applicant by writing either directly or by post or by email.

**Note:** 28 HEIs, including two national, three regional and 23 autonomous universities are authorised to license in-person (offline) delivery of their member institutions. The complete list of HEIs is included in Table 3.

**Table 3: List of autonomous, regional and national universities**

No	Name in Vietnamese	Name in English	Type	Typical tuition fees per year for local courses	Tuition fees for TNE students
1	Đại học Bách khoa Hà Nội	Hanoi University of Science and Technology	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
2	Trường Đại học Công nghiệp Hà Nội	Hanoi University of Industry	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
3	Trường Đại học Điện lực	Electric Power University	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
4	Trường Đại học Hà Nội	Hanoi University	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
5	Trường Đại học Kinh tế Quốc dân	National Economic University	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
6	Trường Đại học Ngoại thương	Foreign Trade University	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
7	Học viện Nông nghiệp Việt Nam	Viet Nam National University of Agriculture	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
8	Trường Đại học Thương mại	Thuong Mai University	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
9	Học viện Công nghệ Bưu chính Viễn thông	Post and Telecommunications Institute of Technology	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
10	Trường Đại học Mở Hà Nội	Hanoi Open University	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
11	Trường Đại học Công nghiệp Dệt May Hà Nội	Hanoi Industrial Textile Garment University	Autonomous	24-61 million VND/year	Not capped
12	Trường Đại học Kinh tế - Kỹ thuật Công nghiệp	University of Economics - Technology for Industries	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
13	Trường Đại học Kinh tế (Đại học Đà Nẵng)	University of Economics – The University of Danang	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
14	Trường Đại học Công nghiệp Tp. Hồ Chí Minh	Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
15	Trường Đại học Công nghiệp thực phẩm Tp. HCM	Ho Chi Minh City University of Food Industry	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped

16	Trường Đại học Kinh tế Tp. Hồ Chí Minh	University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
17	Trường Đại học Mở Tp. Hồ Chí Minh	Ho Chi Minh City Open University	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
18	Trường Đại học Luật Tp. Hồ Chí Minh	Ho Chi Minh City University of Law	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
19	Trường Đại học Sư phạm kỹ thuật Tp. Hồ Chí Minh	HCMC University of Technology and Education	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
20	Trường Đại học Tài chính - Marketing	University of Finance – Marketing	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
21	Trường Đại học Tôn Đức Thắng	Ton Duc Thang University	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
22	Trường Đại học Trà Vinh	Tra Vinh University	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
23	Trường Đại học Y Dược Cần Thơ	Can Tho University of Medicine and Pharmacy	Autonomous	24-61 million VND	Not capped
24	Đại học Quốc Gia Hà Nội	Viet Nam National University Hanoi	National	24-61 million VND	Not capped
25	Đại học Quốc Gia Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh	Viet Nam National University Ho Chi Minh City	National	12-24 million VND	Not capped
26	Đại học Đà Nẵng	University of Da Nang	Regional	12-24 million VND	Not capped
27	Đại học Thái Nguyên	University of Thai Nguyen	Regional	12-24 million VND	Not capped
28	Đại học Huế	University of Hue	Regional	12-24 million VND	Not capped

**Note:** 1USD = 24,000 VND. This table is valid as of October 2023.





## 8. The Value of TNE to higher education in Viet Nam

This section draws on the findings of a report for the British Council on the value of transnational education partnerships<sup>11</sup>. The report studies TNE in a wide range of countries, including Viet Nam, and identifies the benefits TNE brings to those countries. Benefits include increasing the supply of higher education in the country, widening local access to higher education, reducing brain drain, capacity building and institutional development, and contributing to economic development by upskilling the workforce and attracting talent. Sections 8.1- 8.5 provides examples from other countries as well exploring the benefits identified for the Vietnamese higher education system. This suggests that TNE has potential to play an important role in achieving MOET's ambitious agenda for higher education.

### 8.1 Increasing the supply of higher education

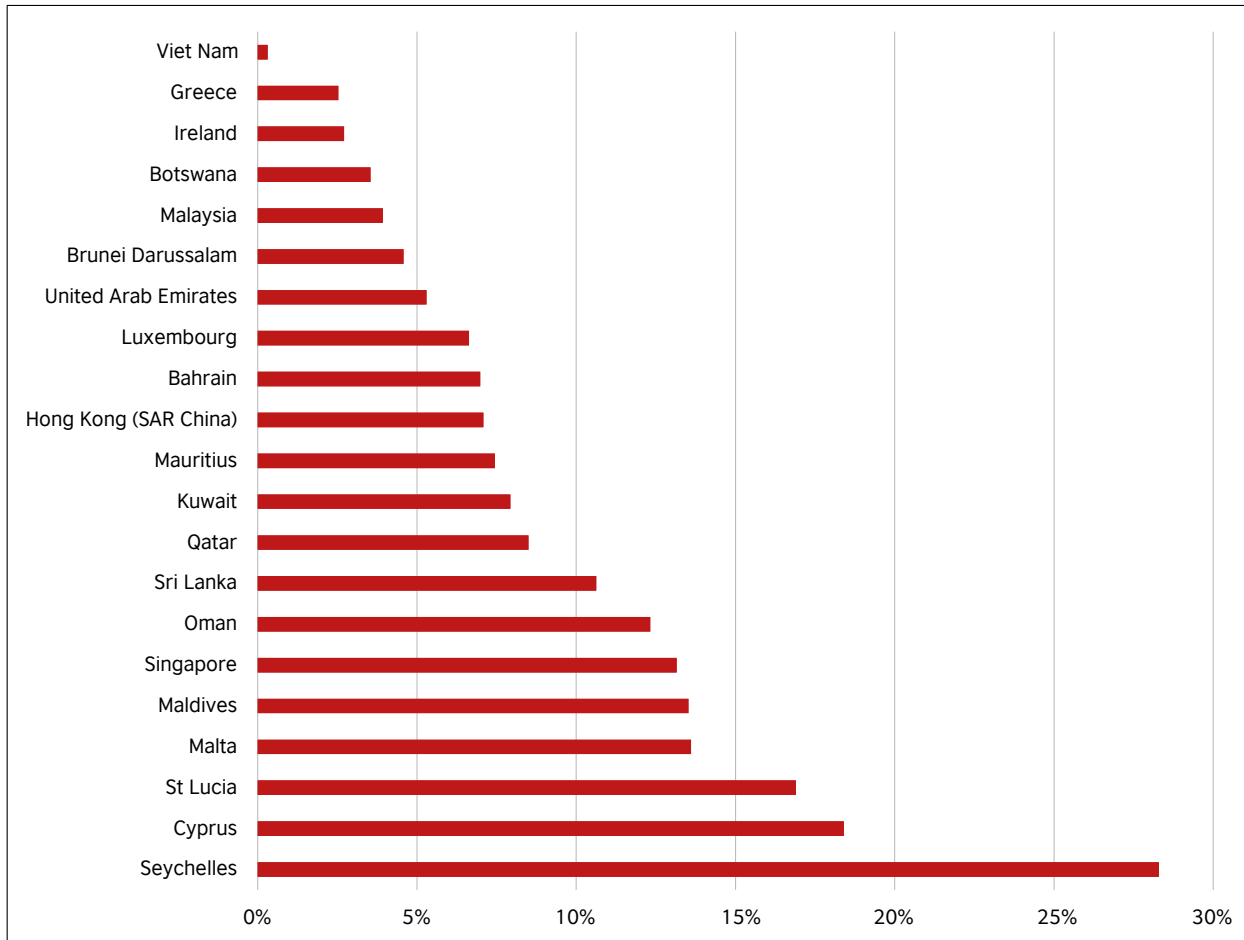
TNE increases the supply of higher education, specifically in local systems where demand for HE places outstrips supply, both historically (e.g., Malaysia, Singapore) and currently (over a fifth of tertiary students in the Seychelles and 10 per cent in Malta and Maldives are enrolled on UK TNE programmes).

Figure 11 expresses UK TNE enrolments as a proportion of the domestic tertiary enrolments. It shows the top 20 countries where the UK TNE is most significant in relation to the domestic student population. The TNE students in Viet Nam on UK programmes form an estimated 0.31 per cent of the domestic enrolments.

Viet Nam's gross enrolment ratio was 35 per cent in 2021<sup>12</sup>. A potential role for TNE is to support the local capacity of HEIs to accommodate unmet domestic

HE demand. Greater TNE provision will likely result in strengthened local higher education capacity.

Greece presents an interesting contrast to Viet Nam. While its tertiary education gross enrolment ratio is one of the highest in the world – 151 per cent – Greece is also the UK's largest TNE host country in Europe. TNE students in Greece accounted for 2.7 per cent of the country's domestic enrolments in 2020. Notwithstanding the high participation rate, TNE has evolved to cater to subject-specific local demand for HE, where if students want to study locally, they would need to change their preferred subject and substitute it for a discipline that is available. In this context, TNE complements local HE provision in subjects of high local demand. The flexibility of TNE is highly responsive to the needs of local employers, and is also able to accommodate shifts in student demand for specific subjects in a timely manner. This example highlights how TNE can better serve the needs of employers across the different regions in Viet Nam, if TNE is to expand across the country.

**Figure 11: UK TNE students expressed as a percentage of domestic tertiary enrolments**

Source: HESA Aggregate Offshore Record, UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Adapted from British Council (2022) Value of transnational education partnerships. <https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/he-science/knowledge-centre/transnational-education/value-transnational-educati>

## 8.2 Widened local access to higher education

An important benefit of TNE is that it widens access to higher education, for example, for students from underrepresented socio-economic groups; contributes to a better gender balance; and improves access for underrepresented ethnicities. It is most impactful in terms of widening opportunities for women and those with socioeconomic disadvantages.

The research found that TNE in Viet Nam plays a prominent role here<sup>13</sup>.

Evidence from other countries shows that the widening access role of TNE is maintained across

most countries – from Greece, with a relatively high participation rate in higher education (145 per cent in 2020), to Pakistan, with comparatively low participation rates (12 per cent in 2019)<sup>14</sup>.

Examples of how TNE contributes more broadly to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) are available on a dedicated open access website<sup>15</sup>, which has a searchable database with case studies showcasing the impact of TNE across a wide range of countries. The UN SDGs are used as a framework that captures impact. Almost all case studies included in the Impact of TNE database demonstrate how TNE contributes to SDG4, Quality of Education. Other prominent areas of impact were found to be SDG8, Decent work and economic growth, and SDG17, Partnerships for the goals.

13 Nguyen, X and C. Ziguras (2022), Environment for transnational education partnerships and UK Qualifications: Challenges and opportunities – Viet Nam and the UK. Report for the British Council. [https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/bc\\_environment\\_for\\_tne\\_partnerships\\_in\\_viet\\_nam\\_a4.pdf](https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/bc_environment_for_tne_partnerships_in_viet_nam_a4.pdf).

14 UNESCO Institute for Statistics, <http://data.uis.unesco.org/>.

15 See [www.tneiimpact.org](http://www.tneiimpact.org).

### 8.3 Reductions in brain drain

TNE makes a significant contribution to the reductions in 'brain drain'. In particular, government stakeholders in a number of countries highlight this as an explicit value of TNE partnerships.

One way to quantify the local impact of TNE is to express it as a percentage of the number of outbound students, as illustrated in figure 12. This shows in relative terms the proportion of TNE students studying a foreign programme in their own country and compares them to those studying abroad.

The most firmly established TNE destinations have almost as many TNE students studying in their home country as those studying abroad. One example is Malaysia where the number of TNE students is 85 per cent of those studying abroad at degree level. Singapore has more TNE students on UK programmes than those studying abroad. TNE students in the country are estimated at around 128 per cent of the level of Singapore's internationally mobile students. One of the explanations for this is that TNE also attracts international students to the location of its delivery. Most TNE programmes are taught in English, and as a result, are popular with international students. Thus, TNE not only counteracts brain drain but is actively contributing to brain circulation.

Viet Nam is the world's third largest source country for internationally mobile students, after China and India. TNE students equate to 5 per cent of the number of its internationally mobile students. Compared with established study destinations, this indicates a potential to grow TNE in the country, but also to encourage greater brain circulation – i.e., to attract international students to the locality of TNE delivery.

**Figure 12: UK TNE expressed as a proportion of international students in the host country**

	UK TNE	Outbound students	%
China	67,720	1,088,466	6%
India	11,000	516,238	2%
Indonesia	970	55,961	2%
Malaysia	46,815	55,311	85%
Singapore	27,785	21,666	128%
South Korea	955	100,610	1%
The Philippines	572	26,162	2%
Viet Nam	7,125	132,559	5%

Source: HESA Aggregate Offshore Record, UNESCO Institute for Statistics.







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## 8.4 Capacity building and institutional development

There is strong evidence that TNE contributes to the improved quality and diversity of higher education provision in countries. Previous research, however, found that the impact of TNE was significantly limited in places where it has been allowed to develop without adequate regulatory or quality assurance frameworks.

Examples from Singapore and Malaysia point to TNE enhancing the ability of local HE systems to attract international students. In turn, this also contributes to attracting talent to the country and increased competitiveness in university global rankings. Growing the local pool of academic talent through international teaching faculty results in TNE programmes exposing local HEIs to new pedagogies and assessment methods.

Most TNE programmes are taught in English, and the curriculum is collaboratively developed, drawing on the strengths of the partner HEIs. This results in an improved international outlook.

Evidence points to TNE graduate employability being generally higher than for local graduates. One reason highlighted is that courses focus on developing professional skills needed by local and international employers. UK partners often also bring a different approach to industry engagement, encouraging much closer links with employers.

TNE tends to make notable contributions to building local capacity in niche subject areas, and by doing so it increases the subject choices for students. It also caters to the changing employer demand for skills.

## 8.5 Economic development

The TNE Impact portal<sup>16</sup> lists SDG 8, Economic growth and decent work, as the second largest area of TNE impact. Often, TNE offers the means to upskill the existing workforce with minimal disruption through online education and continuous professional development. By attracting talent with foreign language capital and intercultural competencies, it caters to the needs of multinational companies, and attracts business activities to the location of TNE delivery.

## 9. Developing successful TNE partnerships - selected case studies

This section draws on case studies that have survived the test of time and proved to be successful models of sustainable TNE engagement. The case studies have been selected to reflect the diversity of TNE provision in Viet Nam, and highlights aspects of TNE engagement that have sustained the partnerships over the years.

Some of the most successful long-term engagement through TNE is evidenced by the collaboration between Hanoi University and Australia's La Trobe University; the University of Nottingham partnership with Viet Nam National University (2005); and the RMIT branch campus established in 2000.

The case studies included in this section cover a period of over two decades of TNE engagement in Viet Nam.

No.	Partner HEIs	Type of TNE	Start date
1.	La Trobe University (Australia) Hanoi University (Viet Nam)	Joint programme	2003
2.	RMIT Viet Nam	IBC	2000
3.	University of Nottingham (UK) Viet Nam National University (Viet Nam)	Articulation agreement	2005
4.	British University Viet Nam	Foreign-invested campus	2008
5	Cardiff Metropolitan University (UK) National Economics University, Hanoi (Viet Nam)	Collaborative TNE (franchise)	2018
6.	University of Lincoln (UK) National Economics University Hanoi (Viet Nam) University of Economics Ho Chi Minh (Viet Nam)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>undergraduate articulation programme</li> <li>PhD partnership</li> </ul>	2018 2020





Graduation day for HANU-LTU business Program

## Case study 1: La Trobe-HANU joint programme as a case study of successful TNE in Viet Nam

*Author: Ngan Phan Thi Kim, PhD, Vice-Director, Academic Manager LTU-HANU Joint Business Programme, Hanoi University.*

The partnership between La Trobe University (Australia) and Hanoi University (Viet Nam) was the first joint programme in Hanoi in 2003. Joint programmes are a model of transnational higher education. Although in recent years Viet Nam has experienced a tremendous increase in the number of joint programmes, the joint programme between La Trobe University and Hanoi University has been a unique and valuable programme. It is referred to as La Trobe-HANU joint programme.

The joint programme started out when Hanoi University diversified its education programmes in 2002, with various business majors alongside the foreign languages teaching. In an attempt to reach out to foreign education institutions, Hanoi University was welcomed by La Trobe University, Australia, to set up a joint programme in Hanoi University campus. Since the launch, the joint programme has become popular in Viet Nam. The programme offers majors in both Finance and Marketing, and delivers all courses in English. All lecturers are highly qualified and must be approved by the partner universities. At present, all lecturers of the joint programme are PhDs and PhD candidates in relevant majors. All the curricula, assessment process and quality assurance are controlled by the Australian partner university. The students are allowed to transfer to La Trobe University campus in Australia. Upon completion of the programme, students are awarded a Bachelor of Business Degree of La Trobe University. The excellent quality of the La Trobe-HANU joint programme has enabled graduates to achieve success in their career in Viet Nam as well as overseas.

In the specific sociocultural environment of Viet Nam, the hurdles for the La Trobe-HANU joint programme were plenty. The joint programme had to satisfy MOET regulations, such as the equivalent number of credits required for degree earning. Meanwhile, local students rushed for the top rank universities of Vietnamese national higher education system rather than making joint programmes with overseas education institutions their priority. The high tuition cost compared with local public universities was also a hurdle to the recruitment of the joint programme.

The impact of joint programmes including La Trobe-HANU programme to the education system in Viet Nam is obvious. Vietnamese students were sent overseas to study in socialist countries by the government in the 1980s and 1990s. The turn of the millennium experienced the rapid expansion of Vietnamese higher education institutions, in terms of both quantity and quality. However, there were still a large number of students who had to go abroad to study a foreign programme. The joint programme between La Trobe University and Hanoi University has met the market needs of families who want the high-quality education of a reputable overseas university while having the convenience and low cost of studying in-country. This joint programme has therefore had more than 1,000 MBA and 3,000 Bachelor of Business graduates. The graduates from the joint programme have contributed to the high-quality human resources needed for Viet Nam's market oriented and open economy.

The sustained partnership over the past two decades has proved the appropriate strategic decision for both universities, in terms of expanding through involvement in TNE. Local students in Viet Nam can enjoy world-ranking education programme in business while being excused the difficulties of studying abroad. Thanks to the continued success of the joint programme, Hanoi University and La Trobe University continue offering the Bachelor of Business programme, which has been widely popular for 20 years and still stays relevant to local market needs.

## Case Study 2: Capacity building through PhD training of university lecturers – partnership between the University of Lincoln, the National Economics University in Hanoi and the University of Economics in Ho Chi Minh City

*Author: Dr Hao Quach, Professor of Banking and Finance, Lincoln International Business, College of Arts, Social Science and Humanities, University of Lincoln.*

The University of Lincoln has developed educational partnerships with two universities in Viet Nam, the National Economics University in Hanoi and the University of Economics in Ho Chi Minh City. The undergraduate partnerships allow students from Viet Nam to apply to and attend the second year of programmes at Lincoln. The first years in Viet Nam play an important role in improving the probability of success for students when they arrive in Lincoln. Students should be familiar with teaching and learning when they are still in Viet Nam, and therefore in the long run capacity building for lecturers at the two universities is essential for sustainable partnerships.

The PhD partnership was developed with a view to helping build capacity for lecturers at the two



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universities, with an expectation that in turn they will contribute to the teaching of the undergraduate programmes. Over the years, this partnership has also attracted lecturers from other universities in Viet Nam. This has been beyond our expectations, indicating the partnership's growing reputation.

The partnership allows Vietnamese students to study part-time, with joint supervision from the

University of Lincoln and the partner university. The first supervisor, from Lincoln, also holds the role of Director of Studies, while a member of staff from the partner universities can be the second supervisor. The supervisors can prepare research projects of interest to them, and then recruit the most suitable students to work on them. Students are based mostly in Viet Nam but pay short visits to Lincoln during their study. Their viva is held in Lincoln. The partner universities help with the selection process and provide additional research training and other research facilities to students. They have project units appointed to manage and oversee the PhD partnership with Lincoln.

The PhD partnership started in 2020, two years after the undergraduate partnership. The first cohort students are expected to graduate from 2024 as they are part-time students. So far, three PhD cohorts with a total number of approximately 36 students are enrolled on the programme.

Although students have not graduated yet, their participation in the PhD partnership has improved their understanding of the learning and teaching as well as the academic environment of Lincoln and the UK in general. They have also influenced undergraduate students through their teaching. The number of students applying to Lincoln has recently increased from four to six students initially to 10 to 12 annually in the first two programmes we chose

from the two universities to start as a pilot. Now we have expanded the scope of cooperation to almost all programmes at the two universities, and we expect the number of students to rise. Another fact that we can observe is that students have now adapted to, and very quickly followed, Lincoln's learning and teaching as well as its social life. We also see that students applying for our PhD partnership come from other universities and research institutes in Viet Nam. This suggests that we have created some form of impact within the academic community in Viet Nam.

In our approach we expect that those who have studied with us will help those who will be studying with us. For example, those who graduate from our PhD partnership could be the supervisors for future students. We focus on the quality of research rather than the quantity. Apart from the research capacity building for the lecturers, we also want to direct our research projects to focus more on helping economic growth in Viet Nam.



### Case study 3: British University Viet Nam – a flagship of the UK-VN higher education partnership

Author: Chris Jeffery, Chief Academic Officer, BUV

#### Background

British University Viet Nam was founded in 2008 in response to an invitation from the Vietnamese government. The aim was to align with their national policy on internationalising education, particularly in higher education, to ultimately enhance and contribute to a high-quality workforce for a developing economy. BUV plays a multifaceted role in the HE landscape of Viet Nam, serving not only as an educational institution but also as a significant investor and contributor to the national HE sector.

Since its formation, BUV has actively forged partnerships, collaborations, and initiatives aimed at elevating the overall quality of higher education in Viet Nam. BUV serves as a bridge that connects and brings premium UK educational providers to Viet Nam, acting as a distinguished UK educational hub.

BUV actively advocates for the UK higher education sector's independent expert quality body, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), with a remit to maintain and enhance the quality of teaching and learning in tertiary education in the UK and beyond, to establish its operations in

Viet Nam under MOET's approval. QAA is already working closely and collaborating with MOET to enhance the academic quality in the higher education sector, especially for international programmes in Viet Nam.

As both an investor and a higher education provider in the country, BUV demonstrates commitment to a unique and sometimes challenging situation: balancing an unwavering respect for the regulatory frameworks of both the UK and Viet Nam, together with a deep understanding and appreciation of the culture and traditions of the host country in which it operates.

Recognising the paramount significance of education in the lives of the Vietnamese people, BUV understands that educational decisions are made collaboratively, involving both the student and their family. BUV places a high premium on actively valuing and listening to each individual student and their family, while steadfastly committing to the delivery of top-tier British educational quality.

#### The current BUV

BUV currently offers a comprehensive array of undergraduate programmes and an MBA, delivering a learning experience on par with studying in the UK. The university is proud to be able to state that 100 per cent of its graduates secure job positions in esteemed industries, or choose to pursue advanced education, within three months of graduation. BUV's





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extensive network of over 400 enterprise partners, coupled with immersive internship programmes, equips students with invaluable professional knowledge and practical skills, aligning them with employers' demands.

The inaugural phase of the BUUV campus in Ecopark (near the Vietnamese capital, Hanoi) boasts cutting-edge facilities: from multi-functional hi-tech classrooms and a modern library to an extensive food court, student hub and sports facilities. The overall environment is conducive to achieving a practical, collaborative and experiential academic learning experience, with a full programme of extracurricular and social activities to ensure each student's individual personal and social growth.

### Facilities

BUV's USD 165 million Campus Expansion Plan has made its mark as the top international educational investor in Northern Viet Nam. By establishing and continually expanding its campus infrastructure, BUV has made substantial financial investment in creating state-of-the-art learning environments, and exemplified its dedication to providing world-class facilities for education.

In tandem with the United Kingdom's 'A Green Future' plan and BUV's own Environmental, Social, and Governance plan, the Campus Expansion Plan is designed to be the first carbon-neutral university

campus in Viet Nam, underscoring BUV's commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

### Quality and accreditation

Ensuring the highest levels of quality remains paramount at BUV, and at present the university remains the only university in Viet Nam to be formally accredited by QAA through a rigorous year-long accreditation process, including site visits by assessors to its Ecopark campus.

BUV is currently supporting both QAA and MOET in facilitating their joint commitment to quality assurance for higher education in Viet Nam. The aim is to ensure that delivery of all international programmes in Viet Nam undergoes similar rigorous accreditation processes by internationally recognised quality assurance bodies, thereby meeting international standards for academic excellence.

In summary, BUV collaborates and partners actively with leading UK and Vietnamese government ministries, embassies, universities, industry, corporate accreditation bodies and quality assurance agencies, to ensure that Vietnamese people have access to quality British degrees (undergraduate and postgraduate programmes) and a totally authentic British education experience in Viet Nam.





## Case Study 4: Cardiff Metropolitan University Collaboration with National Economics University, Hanoi Viet Nam

*Author: David Thomas, Deputy Head Partnerships, Cardiff Metropolitan University.*

National Economics University (NEU) in Hanoi was established in 1956, it is one of the leading universities in economics, management, and business studies in Viet Nam. NEU places a high priority on the quality of teaching and preparing students for employment in an increasingly competitive environment. NEU has over 1,200 faculty members and support staff. NEU currently has over 35,000 students annually at bachelor, master, and PhD levels.



TNE collaboration with NEU started in 2018. NEU is running one Cardiff Met franchised programme – BA (Hons) Accounting and Finance. The programme was approved by Cardiff Met in July 2018, and NEU had the first cohort of students enrolled in September 2018.

Our collaboration with NEU shows steady growth in terms of students' numbers, as the programme started running in September 2018 with 25 students

(first cohort) and now we have over 600 students enrolled into the programme across all levels. The programme is popular with Vietnamese students who are interested in British education, and those who are interested in coming over to the UK to pursue their postgraduate studies. The programme has only three batches of graduates – unfortunately, during the COVID-19 pandemic – so there is no concrete data yet on employability rate. However, colleagues at NEU are working on collating data on employability.

Cardiff Met and colleagues at NEU and QAA worked together in the British Council Viet Nam–Fostering a Culture of Quality at NEU project, to enhance quality at NEU within learning and teaching, with a focus on student engagement. The project was co-funded by the British Council as part of the UK-Viet Nam Higher Education Partnership.

Over a period of 12 months, the project team have delivered two rounds of training workshops, developed and implemented a community of practice and surveyed more than 500 students. The British Council project successfully ended in January 2020 and the toolkit for student engagement was created and developed by Cardiff Met, NEU and the QAA.

In September 2019, the British Council and the UK-VN Higher Education Network hosted a forum in Hanoi to discuss approaches to quality assurance, quality enhancement and the delivery of high-quality TNE programmes in an international context. The forum was in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Training, National Economics University, Hanoi, Cardiff Metropolitan University, UK and the QAA.

Cardiff Met is working in closely with NEU staff and students during visits to NEU, as well as monthly meetings that take place with staff and students to ensure that TNE operation is sustainable and fit for purpose on the long run.

## Case Study 5: University of Nottingham partnership with International University – Viet Nam National University

### Overview

The University of Nottingham (UoN) currently maintains an active undergraduate articulation collaboration (2+2<sup>17</sup>) with International University – Viet Nam National University (IU). This partnership, which began in 2005 as a multi-school and multi-campus collaboration, has evolved significantly over the years, also with some challenges exposed throughout the TNE journey.

In 2009, both universities agreed to establish a 2+2 articulation agreement, which is currently in its fourth-generation renewal process. The collaboration spans Schools of Computer Science, Biosciences, Electrical and Electronic Engineering, and Business at Nottingham, encompassing both UoN's UK and Malaysia campuses.

In the past, this partnership saw a substantial number of students, with 64 participants enrolled at the Malaysia campus and up to 40 at the UK campus in 2014. However, recent years have witnessed a decline in enrolment numbers, and challenges continue posed by the pandemic.

Despite these challenges, successful engagement initiatives have benefitted students and academics involved in this collaboration. Research workshops, academic seminars, and joint open days have been key highlights. The School of Bioscience has notably demonstrated a strong student progression record, with nine students enrolled at the UK campus in 2019, and several from continued postgraduate and PhD programmes with Nottingham.

Students are recruited at IU onto Nottingham-specific programmes that align with Nottingham UK and Malaysia curricula to ensure academic quality and a positive student experience. These programmes at IU are known for their rigorous academic standards, necessitating higher level of English language proficiency.

It's worth noting that Viet Nam presents a unique market for teaching partnerships, with cost considerations heavily influencing student preferences. Students often favour franchises and 3+1 or 4+0 arrangements over the 2+2 model. Although the partnership covers multiple schools, enrolment to the UK has been dominated by Biosciences, with growing interest in Computer Science. Continued discussions between UoN and IU are in progress, marked by increased engagement and a more profound collaboration that extends to additional academic fields such as Food Technology, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Computer Science, aiming to foster deeper collaboration, enhance the benefits for students and make a broader impact on employability, research, and transformative changes.

### Employability and alumni

UoN takes a unified approach to career support, offering equal service to home and international students. The comprehensive guidance, resources and online platforms are available from day one of enrolment and continue after graduation. International career opportunities are included. Recognising the specific needs of international students, we have a dedicated team to provide additional support regarding visa and immigration regulations.

Students progressing via the IU-UoN pathway will benefit from the academic excellence and career services of both institutions. UoN is ranked 66 in the world by the QS Graduate Employability Rankings 2022, and is the second most targeted university by the UK's top employers, according to the Graduate Market in 2023 report by High Fliers Research.



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Alumni enjoy lifelong access to the career services and a vibrant local alumni network.

UoN's alumni database (Raiser's Edge) shows that there are approximately 750 University of Nottingham alumni living in Viet Nam. Many alumni go on to work in tech, e.g. TikTok, ZaloPay and PowerGate Australia. Some notable Alumni include:

- Andrew Vallis (BA Law 1980), Vice Chairman of Nutri-San, bio-technology company
- Luong Nguyen Hoang An (BSc Computer Science 2010, MSc International Business 2012), Director of Technology Risk Management at Asia Commercial Bank.
- James Miles Lambert (MSc International Relations and Global Issues 2012), Executive Chairman at Maison Retail Management International and Founder and Non-Executive Director of Hello Health Group.
- Vu Nguyen (LLM Commercial Law 2006), Managing Partner at Venture North Law Limited
- Anh Nguyen (MPharm 2013), Group Brand Manager at AstraZeneca.
- Ly Le (PhD International Relations and Affairs 2023), Department Head of Institutions, Infrastructure, Economics and Business at Mekong Development Research Institute (MDRI)

- Quang Nguyen (BA Finance, Accounting and Management 2007), Executive Director at Morgan Stanley.

### Impact

At a local level, this collaboration has supported the development of the academic ecosystem in Viet Nam. By providing access to high-quality British education and pedagogical practices, UoN and VNU have worked together to produce a programme where students benefit from exposure to world-class faculty, cutting-edge research, and innovative teaching methods, and are able to translate this into the Vietnamese workplace on graduation. This not only enhances their educational experience but also equips them with valuable skills and knowledge that are in high demand in local and global job markets. Additionally, this partnership has led to the establishment of joint research initiatives and academic exchanges, further enriching the academic landscape in Viet Nam.

On a global scale, the partnership has broader implications. It exemplifies the potential for international cooperation in higher education, promoting global citizenship and cultural understanding. As students and staff from both institutions collaborate, they exchange ideas and perspectives, transcending geographic and cultural boundaries. This cross-cultural fertilisation of ideas can lead to breakthroughs in research, innovation, and problem-solving, with implications that extend far beyond the confines of the partnership.

## Case study 6: RMIT University – Viet Nam’s leading international university

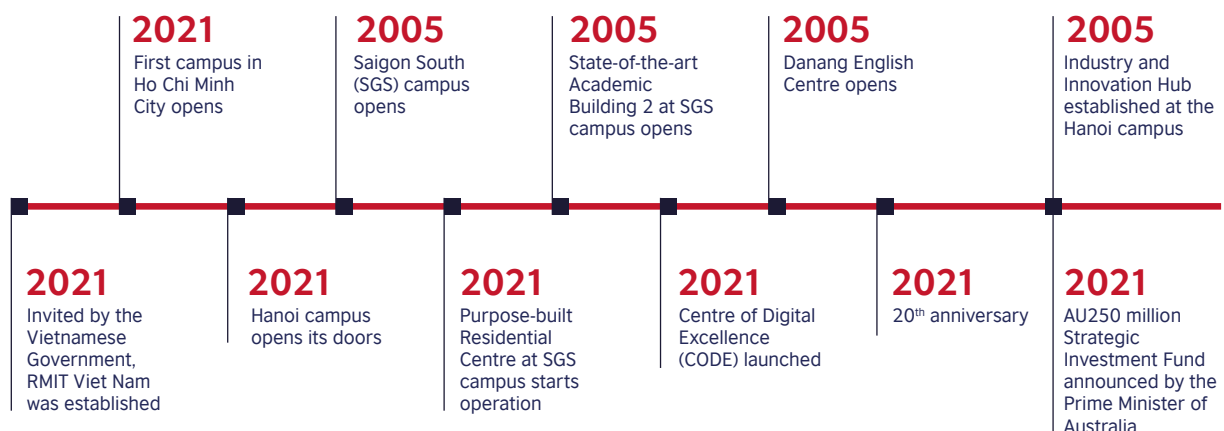
Author: Professor Claire Macken, Pro Vice Chancellor and General Director, RMIT Viet Nam

Founded in 2000, RMIT Viet Nam brings a world-class education and international study environment to Viet Nam. RMIT Viet Nam is the first foreign-owned international university to open in Viet Nam, with vibrant campuses in Hanoi and Saigon, and a Foreign Language Training Centre in Danang. The University has four schools, currently offering 17 undergraduate programmes, four postgraduate programmes and eight English and pathways programmes, focused on the disciplines of business and management, science and technology, communication and design, and English: offering Australian degrees right here in Viet Nam.

RMIT University in Viet Nam has more than 12,000 students, 20,000 alumni and over 1,000 staff, and has provided 1,600 scholarships worth an estimated 468 billion VND since 2001.

RMIT Viet Nam is ranked in Viet Nam’s 100 Best Places to Work, has won the prestigious Golden Dragon Awards for Foreign Direct Investment enterprises in Viet Nam 19 times, and has received certificates of merit from the Prime Minister of Viet Nam, Minister of Education and Training and People’s Committee of Ho Chi Minh City. For more information on RMIT Viet Nam and our [Viet Nam Country Commitment](#), go to [www.rmit.edu.vn](http://www.rmit.edu.vn).

### Historical overview of significant milestones: Our engagement in Viet Nam



### Our value proposition

In Viet Nam, RMIT University operates as a self-autonomous institution with responsibilities under the Higher Education Standards Framework in Australia and for its offshore operations in Viet Nam.



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This means that its quality assurance is regulated by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency.

RMIT University is ranked seventh globally in the 2023 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings. RMIT ranks first globally in Reducing Inequalities, equal first globally in Supporting Decent Work and Economic Growth. RMIT also ranks equal second in Partnering for the Goals. This ranking focuses on measuring universities’ social, environmental, and economic impact and progress towards the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals . In 2023, 1,591 universities were included in the ranking.

RMIT Viet Nam leverages this high-calibre reputation, providing an international education that is differentiated by its quality, applied approach, and focus on employability. We have a strong reputation as the preeminent university, offering a superior student experience with curricular and extra-curricular learning activities, industry-integrated learning and qualifications recognised domestically and internationally.

RMIT Viet Nam’s signature pedagogy includes:

- **Industry-partnered learning:** RMIT Viet Nam has deep industry relationships, work integrated learning opportunities and industry-connected curricula offering learning in real-world contexts. Our strongly embedded industry experiences



ensure high employability (more than 90 per cent across nearly all programmes).

- **Dynamic, responsive, and interactive learning:** We offer an inclusive learning approach, with active learning in small classes of no more than 35 students. A 'teaching first' university, we offer engaged learning via blended, synchronous, and asynchronous learning environments.
- **Authentic learning and assessment:** Leading in authentic learning pedagogy, RMIT Viet Nam focusses on the growth of the individual and a sense of self and responsibility to others. Thus our courses are assessed using real-world assessment, ensuring strong graduate attributes.
- **Lifelong learning:** We foster lifelong capacities, setting the foundation for students to be good citizens, contribute to society and establish long careers in their discipline. Our graduates are ready for work, with the skills to obtain their first job, professionalism, and sector-specific knowledge.

We demonstrate local and global impact through:

- Contribution to Vietnamese society by creating outstanding highly employable graduates, community engagement and research.
- Our influence in local industries, with more than 29,500 students engaged in work integrated learning projects with over 300 partners.

- Awarding scholarships to more than 1600 high-achieving students, worth more than 468 billion VND.
- Leadership and influence on Australia-Viet Nam relations.
- Exemplifying to other Australian universities a positive model of foreign investment in higher education in Viet Nam.

Graduates from RMIT are difference-makers across numerous industries, both locally and internationally. RMIT alumni are a highly influential cohort of professionals in Viet Nam and internationally. There are nearly 20,000 members of the RMIT Viet Nam alumni community in Viet Nam.

- Our alumni are affiliated with at 6000 companies in at least 18 different industries.
- At least 4000 RMIT Viet Nam alumni currently hold managerial positions.
- 12% of our alumni are entrepreneurs.
- Our alumni-to-alumni circle includes more than 300 leaders across industries and has held more than 19 networking events since 2020.
- RMIT Viet Nam alumni have reach and impact across Viet Nam and beyond, with 69.5% based in the south of Viet Nam, 1.5 % in central Viet Nam, 27% in north of Viet Nam and 2% overseas.





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## 10. Summary of findings and considerations for policy

### 10.1 Summary of findings

Benchmarking the regulatory environment for TNE in Viet Nam against peer group countries in South and East Asia shows that it has a comparatively liberal environment. Nevertheless, the scale of TNE activities remains limited. While the UK has the highest number of TNE programmes in the country, the number of TNE students in 2021 was only 7,125.

The first IBC was set up in 2000. Altogether, eight foreign-invested universities are now operating in the country.

The evidence highlights a number of important limiting factors. One is the high capital requirements for setting up in the country compared with neighbouring countries.

Another limitation is the visa regime for academic staff which restricts their stay to two years. This results in foreign staff shortages which affect the education provision in both foreign-backed universities and TNE programmes in the country. In other peer group countries, for example Singapore and Malaysia, TNE activities have attracted both high-calibre academic staff and international students.

A key emerging finding is that, while the TNE landscape is liberal and highly opportune for international partners, the wider operating environment is restrictive. This hampers TNE expansion and limits its impact.

TNE programmes attract comparatively little regulatory oversight from MOET. If they are forged with one of the country's autonomous, regional or national universities, then the regulation is minimal. However, foreign HEIs need to consider the inclusion of compulsory subjects as part of the curriculum, to be mindful of subjects they are not permitted to teach, and to bear in mind other restrictions which may be in place depending on the subject portfolio of the local partner HEI.

While Viet Nam allows online delivery, this is limited to 30 per cent of the overall programme.

A detailed account of some of the existing challenges to TNE in Viet Nam are addressed in

section 10.2, which considers how the TNE environment can be further enhanced to increase the impact of TNE.

## 10.2 Considerations for the creation of a more competitive environment for TNE

The considerations listed in this section aim to support the creation of a more competitive environment for TNE, with a view to improving Viet Nam's national and international competitiveness, and enhancing the overall impact and quality of TNE delivery in the country.

This section draws on the findings from a report for MOET prepared by members of the research team, as well as reflecting the findings from this study.

At the national level, we recommend the creation of a dedicated and well-resourced TNE unit that is tasked with the overseeing and supporting TNE activities in Viet Nam. Additional responsibilities may include collection of information on international collaboration activities. This will ensure that national agencies can access timely and accurate data on the state of TNE in the country. In turn, this will contribute to informed policy-making based on current data, and enable policymakers to engage proactively in the regulation of TNE activities, rather than taking a reactive approach.

The audiences for such data collections are government departments, national agencies and international HE stakeholders interested in engagement in TNE in Viet Nam. Detailed information sends a strong signal about the transparency of the TNE environment in the country, and the levels of TNE activities. These can be used to communicate to potential partner HEIs that Viet Nam welcomes international engagement through TNE.

The data collection database could be integrated with MOET's website, allowing learners to access essential information<sup>18</sup>.

Another area that will benefit Vietnamese institutions is training and developing capability to support their international engagement. This will also support local HEIs to strengthen the internationalisation of education and training, as well as to strengthen wider institutional capacity.

Participation in mutual recognition of international degrees, credits and qualification will facilitate inbound and outbound student mobility.

### 10.2.1 Considerations for Viet Nam's attractiveness as a hotspot for international branch campuses

To date, Viet Nam is home to only one international branch campus, Australia's RMIT. To encourage



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greater numbers of inbound IBCs, the current capital investment requirements need to be reduced – at present, VND 1 trillion is required for international universities, and VND 500 billion for international branch campuses. Compared with neighbouring countries, Viet Nam's capital requirements are considerably higher. This is a particularly pertinent issue in the current frugal funding environment for HE globally. It would be difficult for any of the large foreign HEIs, including those from high-income countries, to justify the investment, while many are facing significant funding constraints at home.

A notable challenge to IBCs in the country is the lack of reasonable duration of work permits, which are currently restricted to up to two years. Current requirements for IBC academic staff demand they have a master's degree, and half must have a PhD. Recruitment of highly skilled academic staff is hampered by the lack of work permits, which would enable them to relocate to Viet Nam. This is particularly hard for those with family responsibilities. Alignment with international standards would result in an extension from two to five years. TNE normally attracts high-calibre academics, researchers and students to the host country. However, this potential is not realised in Viet Nam. Some work permit exemptions or other preferential treatment could be offered to highly skilled professionals such as professors, doctoral degree holders, or internationally recognised researchers. This will stimulate brain circulation and also strengthen the calibre of academic and research talent in the country.

Some countries in the peer group, for example, Indonesia and China, also offer personal income tax incentives.

The country's appeal as an IBC host destination can be strengthened by the introduction of new schemes, such as the establishment of Education Cities and Education Hubs. These have a growing popularity in other Asian countries. A new scheme could, for example, establish targets for attracting international students, the number of international universities or university branches, the

18 During the development of this system, MOET can refer to the National Information System on Foreign Investment maintained by the Ministry of Planning and Investment (<https://fdi.gov.vn>).



establishment of international high schools, and the proportion of students engaged in transnational programmes relative to the overall national student body.

Current regulations pertaining to foreign investment within the education sector lack consolidation – these appear to be part of the oversight of other government departments, such as the Law on Investment, Law on Education, Law on Higher Education, Law on Enterprises, the Law on Management and Utilisation of Public Property, and the Law on Public-Private Partnership Investments. Streamlining legislation will contribute to one clear set of guidelines for educational investors and foreign universities interested in setting up physical presences in Viet Nam.

### 10.2.2 Enhancing Viet Nam's attractiveness for TNE programmes

Viet Nam has a relatively open environment for inbound TNE programmes. However, to further enhance the attractiveness for TNE programmes and deepen institution-to-institution collaborations, the following could be considered:

- While there is very limited regulatory oversight, a simple and clear guide on how to engage in TNE programmes in Viet Nam will strengthen TNE engagement.
- Local HEIs are currently limited to engaging only in TNE programmes they already teach. Widening the scope to include interdisciplinary subjects through TNE programmes where the international partner has an expertise offers the following benefits:
  - Capacity building in niche areas where the local knowledge and provision is limited. The partner HEI can contribute to the development of new subjects and support the capacity building in subjects not available at the local partner HEI.
  - The local HEI will thus develop the ability to offer education and training in subjects that are sought after by the industries in the local area, and nationally.
  - This will also strengthen the engagement between universities and industry.
  - It will contribute to improved competitiveness of the local HEIs to offer highly sought-after programmes, and as a result to respond quickly to shifts in student demand and employers' needs.
- Distance learning and online education could be subject to more liberal regulation. Using advances in collaborative online international learning and experiential learning offers the following benefits:
  - Connecting with international universities globally – locally enrolled students are offered the opportunity to collaborate with students on similar subjects enrolled with the foreign partner institution.
  - Local students can access digital internships and study abroad online, without the need to leave the home campus. This will increase the participation of a wider range of student groups in international programmes that are locally supported. Any online internships and study abroad virtually should be exempt from caps on online education. Such restrictions mainly impact students who do not have the financial means to study abroad, or have family or other commitments, preventing them from international travel.
- Priority can be placed on subjects that are of high national importance or those deemed to be critical for the advancement of local economic development. Such subjects may relate to natural sciences, social sciences, humanities and the arts, and could include sustainable development, climate change, innovation, culture, and education.
- Special attention should be paid to niche subject areas where international partner HEIs offer expertise, and can support capacity building in those areas.





### 10.3 To contribute to the commitment of the British Council and the British Embassy

Viet Nam is liberalising its HE system and proactively inviting international engagement through TNE. At the policy level, therefore, this is a highly opportune time to engage with the country's HEIs and students. That engagement should, however, take account of the priorities of national policy makers, which are: enhancing the capability of the local HEIs to widen access to HE; strengthening the quality and diversity of HE provision; and widening local access to subjects that will position students favourably in relation to the demands of the economy in the years to come.

A stronger system-to-system level of engagement would strengthen the teaching and research engagement between UK and Vietnamese HEIs. Examples from other countries' foreign-invested universities, like Germany and Japan, show that investments in physical infrastructure are made by national governments. In the case of the UK's BUV, the capital investments are made by private investors.

A government-level initiative would cement the provision of UK degrees in the country, and would signal the UK's commitment to bilateral HE

engagement. An impactful area would be TNE programmes in niche subject areas that are in high demand from Vietnamese industry. Support for such development would position UK HEIs favourably at a time when Viet Nam is opening up to international cooperation. TNE activities in Viet Nam are currently limited and this, coupled with a liberal regulatory TNE landscape, is a great opportunity for UK HEIs to establish a firm TNE presence. This has the potential to lead to significant increases in TNE collaboration between HEIs in the UK and Viet Nam, and enable two-way student and academic mobility.

Government-backed schemes for postgraduate TNE students (mainly PhDs and master's), that are matched by scholarships offered by the UK HEIs, would also increase the impact of TNE programmes, widen access to UK programmes, and strengthen the engagement with reputable local HEIs.

Increasing system-to-system cooperation in facilitating knowledge sharing and networking between UK and Vietnamese HEIs would further support the expansion of TNE activities between the two countries and deepen the levels of partnerships. One important aspect of this is to identify and promote sources of help and advice for UK HEIs interested in engaging with partners in Viet Nam. Currently UK HEIs are often unclear about where to obtain reliable and trusted advice, particularly on regulations at operational level.



## Annex A: Case study – University of London

The University of London's role in widening access to education is illustrated through numerous examples of a network of affiliated local colleges, which, over time developed into independent universities of national importance.

Institution	Date special relationship established	Year first students admitted	Year last student admitted	Year institution became independent	Alternative names (and notes)
Gordon Memorial College, Khartoum, Sudan	22 May 1946	1948	1956	1946	University of Khartoum
University College of the West Indies	23 July 1947	1948	1964	1962	University of the West Indies
University College, Ghana	21 July 1938	1949	1960	1959	The University of Ghana, Legon
University College Ibadan, Nigeria	24 February 1948	1949	1961	1962	The University of Nigeria
Makerere University College, Uganda	16 November 1949	1951	1963	1963	Constituent of the University of East Africa
The University College, Nairobi, Kenya	29 March 1961	1961	1962	1963	The University of Nairobi; The Royal Technical College Nairobi; Ghandi Memorial College (Constituent of University of East Africa)

**Source:** *Local impact of transnational education: a pilot study in selected European countries*, page 24<sup>19</sup>.

## Annex B: Timeline of policy changes impacting the provision of TNE in Viet Nam

No	Year	Name of document	Document type	Issuing agency	Scope	Overall strategy	Regulations toward academic matters	Regulations toward non-academic matters
1	2000	Decree 06/2000/NĐ-CP regarding investment cooperation with foreign countries in the field of medical examination and treatment, education and training, scientific research	Decree	Government	Organisations in medical examination and treatment, education and training, scientific research	n/a	X	X
2	2001	Decree 18/2001/ND-CP of the Government issued on 4 May 2001 regulating the establishment and activities of foreign cultural and educational establishments in Viet Nam	Decree	Government	Foreign cultural and educational organisations	X	n/a	X
3	2003	Circular 15/2003 guiding the implementation of a number of articles of Decree 18/2001 dated 4 May 2001 of the Government regulating the establishment and activities of foreign cultural and educational establishments	Circular	MOET	Not-for-profit K-12 & HE	n/a	n/a	X
4	2005	Circular 14/2005 guiding instructions on some articles of decree 06/2000/ND-CP dated 6 March 2000 of the government on cooperation in foreign investment in the field of medical examination and treatment, education training, and scientific research	Circular	MOET, Ministry of Planning and Investment	Foreign investors including education institutions, organisations, and individuals	n/a	X	X

5	2005	Resolution No. 14/2005/NQ-CP of the Government on the Fundamental and Comprehensive Reform of Higher Education in Viet Nam 2006–20	Resolution	Government	HE	X		
6	2006	Decree No. 75/2006/ND-CP dated 2 August 2006 detailing and guiding the implementation of a number of articles of the Education Law	Decree	Government	Schools and other educational institutions	n/a	X	X
7	2011	Decree No. 31/2011/ND-CP dated 11 May 2011 amending and supplementing a number of articles of Decree No. 75/2006/ND-CP	Decree	Government	Schools and other educational institutions	n/a	X	X
8	2008	Decree No. 69/2008/ND-CP dated 30 May 2008 of the Government to encourage socialisation for activities in the fields of education, vocational training, health, culture, sports and environment and the Government's Decree No. 59/2014/ND-CP dated 16 June 2014 amending and supplementing a number of articles of the Government's Decree No. 69/2008/ND-CP dated 30 May 2008 to encourage socialisation of activities in the fields of education, vocational training, health, culture, sports and environment	Decree	Government	Education-training, vocational training, healthcare, culture, physical training and sports, and the environment	n/a	n/a	X
9	2009	Law No. 44/2009/QH12 amending and supplementing a number of articles of Education Law No. 38/2005/QH11	Law	National Assembly	National educational system; schools, other educational institutions	n/a	X	X
10	2009	Resolution No. 13/NQ-CP dated 7 April 2009 of the Government on orientations and solutions to attract and manage foreign direct investment capital	Resolution	Government	Foreign investment in Viet Nam	X	n/a	n/a
11	2010	Decree No. 80/2010/ND-CP dated 14 July 2010 regulating cooperation and investment with foreign countries in the field of science and technology	Decree	Government	Foreign cooperation and investment in science and technology.	n/a	n/a	X



12	2011	Resolution No 10/2011/QH13 on the Five-year Socioeconomic Development Plan 2011-2015	Resolution	National Assembly		X	n/a	n/a
13	2011	Socioeconomic development strategy for 10 years 2011 to 2020	Strategy	Communist Party of Viet Nam (11th Party Congress)		X		
14	2011	Directive No. 1617/CT-TTg dated 19 September 2011 of the Prime Minister on strengthening the implementation and rectifying the management of foreign direct investment	Directive	Prime Minister	Foreign investment	n/a	n/a	n/a
15	2012	Law on Higher Education No. 08/2012/QH13 dated 18 June 2012 of the National Assembly	Law	National Assembly	HE	n/a	X	X
16	2012	Decision No. 711/QD-TTg dated 13 June 2012 of the Prime Minister approving the Education Development Strategy for the period 2011-20	Decision	Prime Minister	Education in Viet Nam	X	n/a	n/a
17	2012	Decree No. 73/2012/ND-CP dated 26 September 2012 of the Government regulating foreign cooperation and investment in the field of education	Decree	Government	Foreign cooperation and investment in education and training, including educational association, foreign-capitalised educational institutions, representative offices of foreign education	n/a	X	X
18	2013	Law on Science and Technology No. 29/2013/QH13 dated 18 June 2013	Law	National assembly	N/A	X	n/a	n/a
19	2013	Resolution No. 103/NQ-CP dated 29 August 2013 of the Government on orientations to improve the efficiency of attracting, using and managing foreign direct investment in the coming time	Resolution	Government	N/A	X	n/a	n/a

20	2013	Resolution 29-NQ/TW of 2013 fundamentally and comprehensively innovates education and training, meeting the requirements of industrialisation and modernisation in the context of a socialist-oriented market economy and international integration of economy	Resolution	Central Executive Committee	N/A	X	n/a	n/a
21	2013	Decision No. 2448/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister dated 16 December 2013: Approving the Project on international integration in education and vocational training until 2020	Decision	Prime Minister	N/A	X	n/a	n/a
22	2014	Decree No. 08/2014/ND-CP dated 27 January 2014 of the Government detailing and guiding the implementation of a number of articles of the Law on Science and Technology	Decree	Government	Organisations and individuals operating in the field of the science and technology	n/a	n/a	X
23	2014	Law No. 67/2014/QH13 dated 26 November 2014 of the National Assembly promulgating the Investment Law	Law	National Assembly	Enterprises	n/a	n/a	X
24	2014	Law No. 68/2014/QH13 dated 26 November 2014 of the National Assembly promulgating the Enterprise Law	Law	National Assembly	Enterprises	n/a	n/a	X
25	2014	Resolution No. 187-NQ/BCSD dated 31 December 2014 of the Party Committee of the Ministry of Education and Training on innovating the management of joint training activities with foreign countries to meet integration requirements and improve efficiency of international cooperation in education and training	Resolution	Party Committee of MOET	n/a	n/a	X	X

26	2014	Joint Circular No. 29/2014/TTLT-BGDDT-BTC-BLDTBXH dated 26 August 2014 of the Ministry of Education and Training, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs regulating financial management, accounting, auditing and taxes for contracts foreign cooperation and investment in the fields of education, training and vocational training	Circular	Joint MOET, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs	Preschool institutions, general education institutions, vocational education institutions, higher education institutions and continuing education institutions	n/a	X	X
27	2014	Circular No. 34/2014/TT-BGDDT dated 15 October 2014 of the Ministry of Education and Training guiding the implementation of a number of articles of Decree No. 73/2012/ND-CP (expired on 1 August 2018)	Circular	Ministry of Education and Training	General education and HE	n/a	X	X
28	2016	Resolution on the Five-year Socioeconomic Development Plan 2016-2020	Resolution	National Assembly	N/A	X	n/a	n/a
29	2016	Decree No. 11/2016/ND-CP of the Government: Detailed regulations implementing a number of articles of the Labour Code on foreign workers working in Viet Nam	Decree	Government	Foreign citizens to work in Viet Nam	n/a	n/a	X
30	2016	Decision No. 40/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister on approving the overall strategy for international integration to 2020, vision to 2030	Decision	Prime Minister	N/A	X	n/a	n/a
31	2016	Law No. 03/2016/QH14 dated 22 November 2016 of the National Assembly amending and supplementing Article 6 and Appendix 4 on the list of conditional business investment industries of the Investment Law 2014	Law	National Assembly	Law on investment	n/a	n/a	X
32	2018	Law No. 34/2018/QH14 dated 1 July 2018 amending and supplementing a number of articles of the Law on Higher Education	Law	National Assembly	HE	n/a	X	X

33	2018	Decree No. 86/2018/ND-CP of the Government regulating foreign cooperation and investment in the field of education (replacing Decree No. 73/2012/ND-CP)	Decree	Government	Foreign cooperation and investment in education	n/a	X	X
34	2019	Education Law No. 43/2019/QH14 dated 14 June 2019 of the National Assembly	Law	National Assembly	National educational system	X	X	X
35	2019	Decree No. 99/2019/ND-CP dated 30 December 2019 detailing and guiding a number of articles of the Law amending and supplementing a number of articles of the Law on Higher Education	Decree	Government	HE	n/a	X	X
36	2019	Resolution No. 50/NQ-TW dated 20 August 2019 of the Politburo on orientations to perfect institutions and policies, improve the quality and efficiency of foreign investment cooperation until 2030	Resolution	Government	N/A	X	n/a	n/a
37	2020	Resolution No. 58/NQ-CP dated 27 April 2020 of the Government promulgating the Government's Action Program to implement Resolution No. 50/NQ-TW dated 20 August 2019 of the Politburo on orientations for completing Improve institutions and policies, improve the quality and efficiency of foreign investment cooperation by 2030	Resolution	Government	N/A	X	n/a	n/a
38	2020	Investment Law No. 61/2020/QH14 dated 17 June 2020	Law	National Assembly	Business investment activities in Viet Nam and outward business investment activities	X	n/a	X



39	2020	Circular No. 38/2020/TT-BGDDT dated 6 October 2020 of the Ministry of Education and Training regulating training links with foreign countries at university, master's, and doctoral levels in online and hybrid forms	Circular	Ministry of Education and Training	HE	n/a	X	X
40	2020	Circular No. 04/2020/TT-BGDDT of the Ministry of Education and Training detailing a number of articles of Decree No. 86/2018/ND-CP dated 6 June 2018 of the Government regulating cooperation, foreign investment in the field of education	Circular	Ministry of Education and Training	International cooperation and investment in education sector	n/a	X	X
41	2020	Decree 75/2020/ND-CP detailing a number of articles of the Law amending and supplementing a number of articles of the Law on entry, exit, transit, and residence of foreigners	Decree	Government	Foreigners entering Viet Nam	n/a	n/a	X
42	2020	Decree 152/2020/ND-CP managing foreign workers in Viet Nam	Decree	Government	Foreign workers in Viet Nam	n/a	n/a	X
43	2022	Decision No. 667/QD-TTg dated 2 June 2022 of the Prime Minister approving the Foreign Investment Cooperation Strategy for the period 2021-30	Decision	Prime Minister	Foreign investment project	X	n/a	n/a
44	2023	Decision No. 308/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister approving the action plan to implement the Foreign Investment Cooperation Strategy for the period 2021-30	Decision	Prime Minister	All areas	n/a	n/a	n/a



# Towards a more competitive environment for transnational education in Viet Nam

IMPROVING NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION FOR IMPACT AND QUALITY

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