

# Southampton Business School

UK Vietnam University Governance and Quality  
Assurance – comparative studies

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# Research Project Overview

- ***To develop a comprehensive understanding of current governance practices in a selection of Vietnamese HEIs and compare this to current practices of UK governing structures of HEIs.***



- Identify areas of similarities or differences and perceived or actual weakness/strengths to propose improvements to Vietnam HEI governance systems, with reference to current practice in the UK;
- To highlight the managerial and stakeholder implications of governing boards in Vietnam HEIs.

# Brief Project Overview

- Review of Governance frameworks
- Interviews, observations at UK and Vietnam Higher Education Institutions
- Conference in DaNang (Nov 2016) and round table discussions with major stakeholders
- Reflections and critical analysis of the findings



## What are we try to find out?

- ▶ How do members of the HE governing board perceive the role of the governing board as a whole?
- ▶ How do members of the HE governing board construct their individual role and responsibilities, particularly in their interaction with HE executives such as the Vice-Chancellor or equally in terms of the executive's perceptions when dealing with non-executive board members?
- ▶ What factors (organisational, individual, legal/regulatory, and any other) do HE governing board members consider to be relevant (and/or important) in enabling or disabling their governance role within the institution.

## Similarities and Differences between Vietnam & UK

- Both countries adopted top down approach (government lead legislation and set the legal framework)
- Both countries have laws and legislation in place to provide main direction and principles
- Both countries have positive attitude to further advance the HEI governance
- Both countries mention diversity of categories within the board

# Similarities and Differences between Vietnam & UK

## Differences:

- The UK HE Code of Governance 2014 provide clear approach, core values, key elements and guidance on how to implement these elements.
- The UK encourage self monitoring and self reporting mechanism to ensure compliance.
- The UK HE Code provides autonomy for the HEI to decide and explain how they adhere to the regulations and provide evidence on how they implement the key elements.

## Summary

- UK and Vietnam have a similar size Councils (on average over 22 members).
- UK has a higher female representation on average.
- Vietnam has a high representation of university staff, ministry and members working for government.
- UK has a high representation of university staff, business sector and non-profit organization.
- While UK has a small student representation, Vietnam has no student representation.

# **Working Paper**

**A study of governing boards in Vietnam Higher Education Institutions**



## A study of governing boards in Vietnam Higher Education Institutions

- Critical analysis of the current governing board practices
  - Challenges of state control/ influence
  - Autonomy and governance battle
  - UK governance progressively moved to autonomy and very little state intervention
  - Vietnam governance has tried to move towards an institutional steering model but cultural and political issues exist ('parent' agencies/ ministries retain some form of command and control)
    - Results in frustrations, lacking initiatives, inaction of leadership, lacks power sharing

## **A study of governing boards in Vietnam Higher Education Institutions**

- Recommendations
  - Greater proactivity in open conversation with Vietnam HEIs about future governance
  - Law and Charter need to guarantee autonomy and clarify key principles in a practical code. Consider self assessment/ reporting as a first step
  - Is reform the objective? Is greater autonomy and good HEI governance the end objective? Are stakeholders ready or willing?

# **Working Paper**

**Quality Assurance Processes for Higher Education in  
Undergraduate Business/Management Education: A  
Comparative Study between UK and Vietnam**

# Quality Assurance Processes

- To develop a comprehensive understanding of the current QA processes in UK and Vietnam HE system.
  - Our focus is on business management undergraduate education, collecting data on quality of delivery and impact.
- **Main results**
  - *Perception of whether accreditation and validation improves HE institution esteem abroad* (for instance, whether students and parents choose top-end accredited institutions) as well as *whether student voice and engagement* are important, play significant roles in the QA process. Our initial estimates (mediated ordered logistic regression) show that: the process complexity is a significant determinant for the QA rating improvement.

# Quality Assurance Processes

- **Main results**

- Student involvement in the quality assurance process improves perception of QA process.
- Active engagement of respondents in the quality assurance, appears to have a negative effect on QA rating.
- While we find the results consistent for both UK and Vietnam. A greater percentage of respondents (in Vietnam) do feel that accreditation does improve the rating of the institution, but they are not yet ready to go through the actual rigour of the quality assurance (time, cost, quality and dedication).
- However, our initial estimates show that the Vietnam QA process can ‘learn’ from the persistence of achievement in QA year-on-year, with better adaptability and adherence to quality standards.

# YOUR QUESTIONS

