Decision of the FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Committee

15th Meeting on September 13, 2024

PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

Project Number:	22/084 Cluster 2
Higher Education Institution:	Ho Chi Minh City Open University
Location:	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Study Programme:	Bachelor of Arts in English (Advanced Programme)
Type of Accreditation:	initial accreditation

The FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Committee has taken the following decision:

According to § 7 (6) in conjunction with § 9 (1) of the FIBAA General Terms and Conditions within the framework of procedures for the award of the FIBAA Quality Seal for Programmes from January 1, 2021, the study programme is accredited with one condition.

Period of Accreditation: September 13, 2024 until September 12, 2029.

Condition 1:
The University reviews and updates all course descriptions to provide clear information on the courses and makes sure the literature is up-to-date.

Proof of meeting this condition is to be supplied by June 12, 2025.

The FIBAA Quality Seal is awarded.

Assessment Report

Higher Education Institution:
Ho Chi Minh City Open University, Vietnam

Bachelor programme:
Bachelor of Arts in English (Advanced Programme)

Qualification awarded on completion:
Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)

General information on the study programme

Brief description of the study programme:
The Bachelor of Arts in English (B.A.) is a four-year Advanced programme, offered by the School of Advanced Studies (SAS). The programmes primary focus is English Language with a concentration in Business English.

Type of study programme:
Bachelor programme

Projected study time and number of ECTS credits / national credits assigned to the study programme:
127 credit units (254 ECTS credits)

Mode of study:
full-time

Didactic approach:
study programme with obligatory class attendance

Double/Joint Degree programme:
no

Scope (planned number of parallel classes) and enrolment capacity:
190 students

Programme cycle starts in:
other start date

Initial start of the programme:
2016

Type of accreditation:
initial accreditation

Procedure

A contract for the initial accreditation of the Bachelor of Arts in English (B.A.) was made between FIBAA and HCMC Open University on July 18, 2022. On August 03, 2023, the HEI submitted a self-evaluation report, which included a detailed description of the programme and further documents in order to prove that the criteria for programme accreditation are met.

At the same time, FIBAA appointed a review panel[1]. The HEI has agreed with the chosen experts. The panel consisted of:

Dr. Le, Thi Giao Chi
University of Foreign Language Studies, The University of Danang
Dean & Senior Lecturer (English Language, English Language Teaching, Teacher Education, Media and Communication, Business Communication, Language and Literature)

Prof. Dr. Andrea Dlaska
Middlesex University London
Professor em. of Language Studies (Language Teaching and Languages for Specific Purposes, Language Assessment, Courses with English as the language of instruction, Internationalization, Intercultural Communication)

Susanne Hoffmann
Cooperative Comprehensive School Alexander v. Humboldt
Acting Head of English Department (English Lessons, Didactics/Methodology, internal differentiation; Language Acquisition, Literature lessons)

Elisa Knief
University of Bremen
Student with a two-subject Bachelor's degree with the option to become a teacher: English-Speaking Cultures & Hispanic Studies (B.A.)

Prof. Dr. Hans-Georg Wolf
University of Potsdam
Professor of Development and Variation of the English Language ((English) Linguistics, Communication Studies, BA and MA courses as well as corresponding teacher training courses)

FIBAA project manager:
Maya Köhler

The assessment is based on the self-evaluation report, amended by further documents, as requested by the panel, and an online conference. The online conference took place on April 15, 16 and 17, 2024, via the video conferencing tool *Zoom*.

At the end of the online conference, the panel has given a short feedback on its first impressions to representatives of the HEI.

---

[1] The panel is presented in alphabetical order.

The assessment report based on this was delivered to the HEI for comment on September 03, 2024. The University has chosen not to provide in a statement.

Summary

The Bachelor of Arts in English (B.A.) offered by Ho Chi Minh City Open University fulfils with few exceptions the FIBAA quality requirements for bachelor programmes and can be accredited by the Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA) for five years starting on September 13, 2024, and finishing on September 12, 2029, under one condition. The programme is in accordance with the national and the European Qualification Frameworks and the European Standards and Guidelines in their applicable version valid as of the time of the opening of the procedure, and in accordance with the Bologna Declaration.

The panel members identified need for improvement regarding the following aspect[2]: 3.3.2 Course materials. They recommend the accreditation on condition of meeting the following requirements:

- **Condition 1** (see chapter 3.3): The University reviews and updates all course descriptions to provide clear information on the courses and makes sure the literature is up-to-date.

Proof of meeting this condition is to be submitted by June 12, 2025

Furthermore, the quality requirement that have not been fulfilled – Internationality of student body (see chapter 3.4) – is not an asterisk criterion and therefore does not lead to a condition. The measures the HEI takes to solve the identified problem are to be considered during the re-accreditation.

The panel members also identified several areas where the programme could be further developed by:

- reviewing the curriculum to ensure it more clearly reflects the core focus of the programme, which is Business English (see chapter 3.1).
- outlining the integration of theory and practice more clearly in the module descriptions (see chapter 3.1).
- evaluating why the success rate is rather low and why students study usually longer than four years normally and to include further measures (see chapter 3.2).
- including the application of different teaching and learning methods to a greater extent in the course descriptions (see chapter 3.3).
- testing whether the measures to attract international full-time students are successful and if necessary, implementing further concepts to increase the number of international students (see chapter 3.4).
- actively involving students in discussions of their feedback and to work with students to develop measures to address these issues (see chapter 5.).
- sharing the results more systematically with the alumni and to include them in developing the measures to address any concerns (see chapter 5.).
- showing all current/updated information on the new website (see chapter 5.).

---

[2] These aspects are asterisk criteria which means that they are essential for the study programme.

The measures that the HEI takes in order to implement the recommendations of the panel members will have to be considered during the re-accreditation.

There are criteria in which the programme exceeds the quality requirements:
- Student support by the faculty (see chapter 4.1).
- Career counselling and placement service (see chapter 4.5).

For the overall assessment of the programme, please refer to the quality profile at the end of this report.

List of Tables

Information

Information on the Institution

Ho Chi Minh City Open University (HCMCOU) is a public institution, offering multidisciplinary programmes in both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. HCMCOU is one of the first two universities[3] of Vietnam that has allowed open enrolment into the Bachelor programmes since 1990. It is also one of the first two universities of Vietnam that provides distance learning programmes in addition to the conventional face to face programmes. HCMCOU was founded on June 15, 1990, according to the Decision No. 451/Ttg signed by the Minister of Education and Training. In 2017, HCMCOU was institutionally accredited by the Center of Education Accreditation (CEA), Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC).

Currently, HCMCOU offers 27 Bachelor programmes, eleven advanced Bachelor programmes, twelve Master programmes and five Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programmes. There are more than 21,000 full-time students, more than 12,000 part-time students and 600 teaching staff. The University has 13 faculties and schools in the fields of economics and management. The University has two types of training: full-time (mainstream system) and continuing education including in-service and distance education (both face-to-face and online).

It has illustrated its mission and vision as follows:

Figure 1 Mission, vision, core values and educational philosophy at HCMCOU
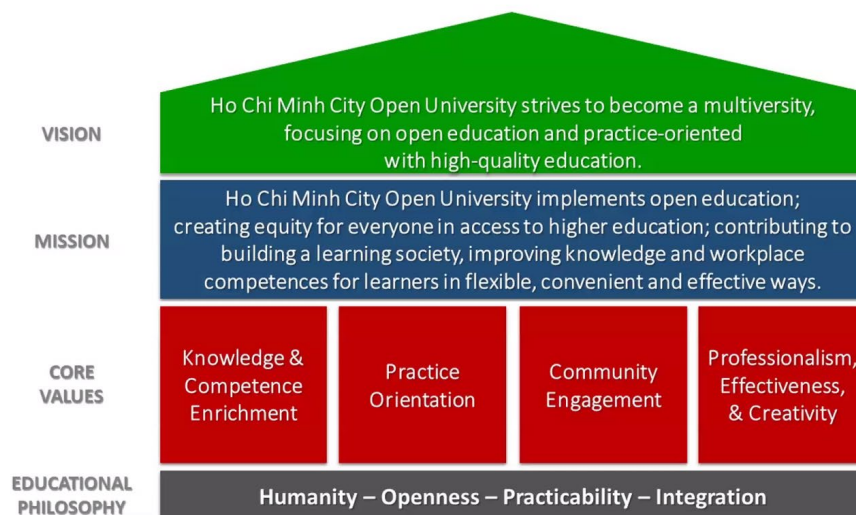
During the online reception, the University's representatives stated that their goal is to develop HCMCOU into a "multiversity" that is a multi-disciplinary public university. Therefore, until 2030, HCMCOU intends to integrate issues like global integration, digitalization, connection to employers and diversity to its operations.

---

[3] HCMCOU and Ha Noi Open University

HCMCOU received institutional accreditation from the Ministry of Education and Training in 2017 and 2023.

The School of Advances Studies (SAS) aims at providing high quality higher education and training. The advanced programmes it offers are mainly based on the regular equivalent study programme but differ from them in terms of higher admission requirements (English proficiency), higher demands concerning the learning outcomes that are one level higher on the Bloom's taxonomy (professional competence of graduates, IT competences, foreign language proficiency) and higher scholarships for students.

The Faculty of Foreign Languages (FFL), established in 1990, is one of the first three faculties at HCMCOU, pioneering "open learning" and new teaching methods. Its mission is to enhance learners' knowledge, practical skills, and potential strengths in educational goals.

The faculty offers programmes in four majors: English, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean languages, as well as foreign language courses for non-language major students across the University. Currently, approximately 2,000 students are enrolled in language majors.

The **Bachelor of Arts in English**, established in 1990, has a 34-year history in English language training. The programme is believed to gain a reputation in foreign language training field, in providing high quality training to the enrolled students, and in providing a qualified workforce for the society. The programme initially offered a major in English Language Teaching. In 2001, the Translation and Interpretation major was introduced, followed by Business English in 2008. Currently, approximately 1,500 students are enrolled across these three majors. Over the past decade, 1,752 students have graduated from the study programme.

Statistical Data

		Academic year 2016-2017	Academic year 2017-2018	Academic year 2018-2019	Academic year 2019-2020	Academic year 2020-2021	Academic year 2021-2022	Academic year 2022-2023
# Study Places offered by HEI		77	90	120	180	200	190	190
# Applicants	∑	628	95	145	339	584	526	534
	f	477	57	100	263	448	409	427
	m	151	38	45	76	136	117	107
Application rate		815.6%	105.6%	120.8%	188.3%	292.0%	276.8%	281.1%
# First-Year Students (accepted applicants)	∑	77	110	104	178	201	174	188
	f	58	55	75	132	147	133	143
	m	19	55	29	46	54	41	45
Rate of female students		75.3%	50.0%	72.1%	74.2%	73.1%	76.4%	76.1%
# Foreign Students	∑	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	f	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	m	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rate of foreign students		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Percentage of occupied study places		100.0%	122.2%	86.7%	98.9%	100.5%	91.6%	98.9%

		Cohort 2016-2020	Cohort 2017-2021	Cohort 2018-2022	Cohort 2019-2023	Cohort 2020-2024	Cohort 2021-2025	Cohort 2022-2026
# Graduates	∑	46	68	75	75	0	0	0
	f	37	53	54	61	0	0	0
	m	9	15	21	14	0	0	0
Success rate (students who finished their studies)		59.7%	61.8%	72.1%	42.1%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dropout rate (students who dropped their studies)		22.07%	7.27%	0.00%*	0.00%*	3.48%	2.87%	0.53%
Average		56.61	55.59	51.84	48	N/A	N/A	N/A

		Cohort 2016-2020	Cohort 2017-2021	Cohort 2018-2022	Cohort 2019-2023	Cohort 2020-2024	Cohort 2021-2025	Cohort 2022-2026
duration of study (months)								
Average duration of study (years)		4.71	4.63	4.32	4	N/A	N/A	N/A
Average grade of final degree (scale of 4)		2.95	3.04	3.07	3.25	N/A	N/A	N/A

Note: * Students are still in the permissible duration of study as they have up to 8 years to complete their programs (MOET's regulation).

Appraisal

The number of applicants shows a steady number of interested student in the bachelor programme. The study places offered increased from 2016 to 2022 from 77 to 190. The number of accepted first-year students shows that the adjustment was appropriate and future-oriented. Typically, students complete their studies within four to five years. Most students in the programme are female. There are no foreign fulltime students.

Programme Description and Appraisal in Detail

1.   Objectives

1.1   Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)

The programme aims to equip students with an appropriate body of knowledge, professional skills, political qualities, morality, professional behaviours, and good health so that they can work effectively in Business English, meeting all the working requirements of today's society and of the economy in the period of international integration.

Additionally, the undergraduate programme fosters self-study and research skills, enabling students to become successful lifelong learners and pursue further studies.

Table 1 Programme Learning Outcomes (PLO) (updated by December 2022)[4]

---

[4] See self-evaluation report p. 7.

PLO codes	Specifications
Knowledge	
PO1	Provide basic knowledge of nature, society, and human beings for leaner career development and self-improvement.
PLO1	Demonstrate basic knowledge of natural sciences and social sciences as foundation for the development of critical thinking skills.
PLO2	Develop positive world view and outlook on life as a result of the application of scientific perspectives of the revolutionary and human nature of the Marxist-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh ideologies, and the Communist Party's policies and directions.

PLO codes	Specifications
PO2	Provide theoretical and practical knowledge of the English language system in relation to culture and literature of English-speaking countries, combined with business-related knowledge, helping learners to solve professional problems.
PLO3	Apply theoretical and practical knowledge of the English language, culture, and literature of English-speaking countries to address profession-related problems.
PLO4	Evaluate the outcomes when applying theories in practice to make necessary adjustments in a variety of settings.
PLO5	Achieve professional standards for business English (BEC Vantage of Cambridge English).
PLO6	Apply system of professional knowledge of business in professional practices and business-related issues.
PO3	Enable learners to develop their cognitive, professional, and interpersonal skills needed to perform their professional tasks relevant to their career positions.
PLO7	Demonstrate systems thinking and critical thinking skills
PLO8	Demonstrate problem solving skills Develop the ability to apply specialised knowledge of business and commerce to professional practices in the English-speaking business environments.
PLO9	Demonstrate effective verbal and non-verbal communication in both written and spoken forms in an international working environment.
PLO10	Complete a research project in the learner's area of specialisation.
PO4	Develop learners' ability to work independently and/or on a team in different work conditions, taking responsibilities for individual and group work performance in the instruction, dissemination, knowledge transmission as well as supervising others to perform the required tasks.
PLO11	Develop the ability to work individually and cooperatively.
PLO12	Develop the ability to organise work and to study for self- improvement
Autonomy and accountability	
PO5	Develop learners' awareness of compliance with laws, sense of responsibility towards themselves, community, and sense of involvement in public services and professional ethics.
PLO13	Develop learners' awareness of responsibility, professional ethics, and compliance with laws.

These objectives are developed based on the demands and needs of stakeholders, including employers, alumni, academics, and current students, to meet national standards for graduates. The PLOs are aligned with both national and European frameworks.

The PLOs align with the University's mission and vision, as well as stakeholders' requirements. The curriculum adheres to the standards set by EQF[5] and VQF[6] for bachelor programmes, specifically Level 6 for undergraduate programmes. Graduates of the programme meet the requirements of the labour market both locally and globally.

---

[5] European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
[6] Vanuatu Qualifications Framework (VQF)

The programme aims to equip students with profound knowledge, the ability to apply knowledge in real-life situations, and sufficient practice. This ensures graduates are confident in their professional knowledge, skills, foreign language proficiency, appropriate attitudes, and working capacity.

Appraisal:

The qualification objectives of the programme are explained and convincingly presented in 13 PLOs. They are in relation to the target group, targeted professional field and societal context of the discipline. They embrace academic proficiency, comprehensive employability, as well as the development of the individual student's personality.

The subject-specific qualification objectives and skills to be acquired correspond with the aspired level at graduation. They take into account the requirements of the national qualification framework.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
1.1* Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

1.2 International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion)

The programme is internationally oriented, enhancing its attractiveness and students' employability. This is reflected in the following points:

1. The programme content is benchmarked with three Vietnamese HEIs and three international Bachelor of Arts in English programmes: Hong Kong University (Hong Kong), Bangkok University (Thailand), York St John (England), and Singapore University of Social Sciences and Humanities (Singapore). These institutions are leading programmes in English training, ensuring compatibility with international standards.
2. The main part of the programme is delivered in English[7] using international materials. Most lecturers are graduates from foreign universities, including Australia, England, the United States, and Thailand.
3. Experienced international guest lecturers from Western and Asian countries, as well as Vietnamese overseas, are regularly invited to give thematic lectures. Staff and student exchanges are organised with partner institutions. Students frequently attend seminars with international speakers, exposing them to a multicultural environment.
4. Various extracurricular activities, such as exchanges with Asian and other international students, and attending international workshops and conferences, enhance the international learning context and promote research and practice sharing.

---

[7] All courses are taught in English except Political Sciences, Law, IT, and Introduction to Linguistics and Vietnamese language.

5. Students can transfer to Flinders University (Australia) for English language specialisation (credit transfers between the two programmes are approved). The joint Bachelor programmes in English between HCMCOU and Flinders University offers students opportunities to study abroad and have international experience.

Appraisal:

The programme design appropriately takes into account the required international aspects (as the language of instruction, international contents, and faculty with international experiences), with respect, too, to its graduates' employability.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
1.2* International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

1.3 Positioning of the study programme

On the educational market
Almost all universities in Ho Chi Minh City have Bachelor of Arts in English programmes. HCMCOU was the first in Ho Chi Minh City to offer the programme and has established its uniqueness through three main foci.
1. The top priority is effective student support, both in and out of class, including office counselling hours and interactions with academic advisors via the University's LMS or email system.
2. Transferable and practical professional skills are regularly updated and introduced to students.
3. Building strong relationships with employers to provide internships for students.

Additionally, classes are held in the city centre. Consequently, the HCMCOU programme remains competitive and is considered one of the top programmes among state universities in Ho Chi Minh City. This is reflected in the National High School Exam scores required for admission.

Among the three advanced programmes in public universities in Ho Chi Minh City, the programme at HCMCOU was the first offered, and entrance scores have steadily increased over the years. The selection process is highly competitive, with an average selection rate of 3.16% from 2016 to 2021, and it remains competitive throughout the years (2017: 1.48%, 2018: 1.38%, 2019: 1.99%, 2020: 2.97%, 2021: 2.81%).

On the job market for graduates
There are several career paths for students of the programme to pursue after graduation. SAS and FFL have analysed stakeholder feedback and the job market for graduates, incorporating the results into the study programme. The most recent alumni survey (Graduation year 2020) shows that around 68% of students are currently employed.[8]

---

[8] See self-evaluation report p. 12.

Table 2 below indicates that most graduates from the programme work for private companies and international organisations/companies. These job opportunities align with the programme's objectives, leading to a high compatibility level between training and employment: 76.19% (28.57% high + 47.62% rather high) as shown in Table 3.

Table 2 Working areas of graduates[9]

Business types	Percentage
Government Agencies	4.76%
Governmental Organisations	0
Private Companies	66.67%
Individual Business Households	0
International Organisations/ Companies	28.57%

Table 3 Compatibility level between the training with their employment[10]

Level	Percentage
High	28.57%
Rather high	47.62%
Medium	14.29%
Low	9.52%

<u>Within the HEI's overall strategic concept</u>
At HCMCOU, the programme is in the top ten out of 36 programmes. FFL's mission and vision align with the University's strategic goals. The programme integrates seamlessly with HCMCOU's overall development strategy and that of SAS and FFL, as reflected by the following:
1. HCMCOU's mission is to promote a learning society through flexible and accessible teaching methods. The programme employs various teaching methods to enhance knowledge, applicability, and lifelong learning. The SAS and FFL strategy mandates that 100% of lecturers use diverse teaching methods and are proficient in English, with all courses supported by ICT.
2. The programme supports HCMCOU's vision to be the leading multidisciplinary public university in Vietnam with a practice-oriented approach. It equips students with comprehensive knowledge, practical application skills, and sufficient practice, ensuring graduates are confident in their professional abilities, language proficiency, and work readiness.
3. The programme upholds HCMCOU's core values: knowledge enrichment, applicability, lifelong learning, public engagement, professionalism, effectiveness, creativity, and hospitality. Students engage in a variety of extracurricular activities, including sports, music, charity work, community support, club participation, academic contests, and research projects.

[9] See self-evaluation report p. 12.
[10] See self-evaluation report p. 12.

Appraisal:

The reasons given for the positioning in the educational market of this study programme are plausible. The location of the University is an advantage on the educational market.

The arguments in support of graduate employability on the basis of the stated qualification objectives are convincingly presented. The future fields of employment for graduates are plausibly set forth.

The study programme is convincingly integrated into the HEI's overall strategic concept. The programme is in the top ten out of 36 programmes. The study programme's qualification goals are in line with the HEI's, SAS and FFLs mission and strategic planning.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
1.3 Positioning of the study programme					
1.3.1 Positioning of the study programme in the educational market			X		
1.3.2 Positioning of the study programme on the job market for graduates ("Employability")			X		
1.3.3 Positioning of the study programme within the HEI's overall strategic concept			X		

2.   Admission

<u>Admission requirements and selection procedure</u>
Every year, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) issues regulations on university admissions, in which there are two main types of selection. The selection can be based on the results of the current national high school exam or based on the institution examination selection or a combination of examination and selection. Each institution decides the type of how to select their students. HCMCOU President works as head of the Admission Council with the faculties to build up the University's admission project, informs MOET, and announces it to public as well as releases all details on its website.

The Admission Council is set up every year to oversee building up the admission project, decides on the scores to be accepted, and assigns the subordinate boards to help with selection and acceptance of the candidates and enrolment of students for their study.
The HCMCOU admission project consists of the following main information:

- The total number of student's position "quota" allowed by the MOET of the year for each of the bachelor programme, full time mode (including the second-degree students and those upgraded from the three-year Bachelor programmes).
- The infrastructures, the faculty staff and materials in library as the requisite quality conditions for the courses eligible to be offered.
- Requirements for the candidates.
- How to select and the criteria to select the candidates.
- Procedures to select the candidates.
- Tuition fee, scholarship.

In general, there are three types of candidates nation-wide eligible:

1. Those who have graduated from Vietnam's high school programme (in the form of formal education or continuing education) or have graduated from vocational schools hereinafter referred to as high school graduates.
2. Those who graduate from vocational schools but do not have a high school diploma must study and complete high school cultural subjects according to current regulations.
3. Graduates of foreign high school programmes, attaining a level equivalent to the high school level of Vietnam, abroad or in Vietnam.

HCMCOU selects students for the advanced programmes based on their previous scores. There are five methods of selecting students whose quota of selection is also stated.
1. The priority is to select students who have won international or national prizes in the top three.
2. The second priority for students who have been rated as very good during three years in high school, with the average scores of each of the three subjects that they register for selection from 7.0 up.
3. The selection (the long tradition and most popular so far as well as the largest portion of selected students) is based on the total score of the registered group of three subjects that students have achieved in their national high school exam.

Table 4 Registered groups of subjects for the programme selection[11]

NO.	ADVANCED PROGRAMMES	CODE	QUOTA (PROPOSED)	REGISTERED GROUPS OF SUBJECTS
1	English language	7220201C	95	Maths, Physics, English (A01) Maths, Literature, English (D01) Literature, History, English (D14) Literature, Social Sciences, English (D78)

To guarantee the quality MOET sets out the minimum scores to be eligibly accepted into any bachelor programmes every year. The entrance quality assurance threshold of HCMCOU is set according to the entrance quality assurance threshold specified by the MOET, i.e. applicants can apply into HCMCOU if their scores meet the entrance quality assurance threshold of HCMCOU.

4. Selection is based on the high school scores of the cited groups of subjects during the five terms except the last term of Year 12 with the min. average scores of three subjects reaching 20. Especially, students, whoever with this level but have IELTS from 5.5 or equivalent, have more priority.
5. Selection is based on the IB[12] scores with the minimum score 26, or A Level (all C), or SAT (1100/1600).

In addition, HCMCOU has the direct admission with the gifted students, disabled students and those have noted contribution to the country and admission with priority policies with highly merit students, with details following the regulations of MOET on university admissions.

The HCMCOU Admission project defines the criteria and methods of student selection. HCMCOU selection procedures follow the regulations of University admission of the year issued by MOET. HCMCOU yearly reviews the selection criteria, methods, and procedures to recruit candidates during the annual enrolment period. In addition, HCMCOU announces the scholarships for candidates who have been rated as excellent students in high schools, and those who have achieved high scores in the national high school exam to encourage students with good academic records to study at the University.

In 2019, HCMCOU added another method, which is the selection based on the results of three high school subjects related to each major with 20 points as minimum. In 2020, HCMCOU added another method and gave priority to students applying for the fourth type of admission who have international certificates in English proficiency (more priority if students having IELTS 5.5 up, or equivalent). The criterion for selection is based on the students' scores of the combination of three subjects related to the programme they want to enroll in.

Counselling for prospective students
HCMCOU offers counselling services throughout the year for prospective students nationwide through a variety of practical and diverse counselling activities.

---

[11] See self-evaluation report p. 14.
[12] The International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB Diploma) is a school-leaving qualification awarded by the Geneva-based private International Baccalaureate Organisation (IB Organisation) and can be obtained at many schools worldwide.

On the daily base, all the staff of the Office of Academic Affairs oversees counselling directly to high school students and their parents at their office, via email, via the free phone line, and via its fan page[13]. Brochures, leaflets are also available for the candidates to bring home for further consideration. On the website applicants can find all information needed. The information includes the programmes that HCMCOU is offering, the scores selected in the previous years for each programme; tuition fee and scholarship; percentage of graduates from each programme having job; and the MOET documents related that have been issued.

In addition, once a year HCMCOU undertakes a campaign for the main recruitment of the year. First, HCMCOU officially presents its admission project on the HEI admission portal of the MOET, and on the admission website of HCMCOU.

The SAS has developed its own enrolment plan, separate from the general enrolment plan of HCMCOU. This plan includes several effective strategies, namely organising training sessions for its students to participate in admission counselling for advanced programmes; SAS admission counselling team being sent to most high schools wearing SAS uniforms; SAS dedicated fan page for enrolment of advanced programmes, appointing a specialist in charge of online enrolment counselling.

HCMCOU current students and alumni are very active to support the consultancy, promotion and career guidance to the prospective students via various activities. They help deliver brochures to high school students and administrators of the schools they had studied; offering live stream advice; sharing their feelings about the school and the learning environment as testimonials.

Diversified activities have been provided by HCMCOU, such as providing radio/TV consultancy programmes, or joining the consultancy days for the pubic organised by the newspaper (Thanh Nien, Tuoi Tre, Education, Lao Dong newspaper) in the provinces of the Central, Central Highlands, Western region, Southeast regions, and HCMC), live stream consultancy programmes, counselling programmes at high schools in HCMC and provinces (estimated around 60 to 70 high schools yearly). HCMCOU also participates in the Admissions Conference organised by the HCMC Department of Education and Training or those in provinces, and in the educational forums in Laos.

When students are selected and do the enrolment, HCMCOU continues offering the counselling activities to help them transfer to the University life smoothly, quickly settle down and start studying. The counselling embraces guides for the newcomers such as housing assistance, orientation on the student life, effective study methods at the University, study regulations and codes of conducts, students' activities. The counselling is provided in official or personal sections and through printed material of the Student Handbook.

Ensuring foreign language proficiency
The advanced programmes at the SAS of HCMCOU require students to acquire a foreign language proficiency of C1 level of CEFR upon graduation for the English language major, as needed for their education and employment.

---

[13] https://www.facebook.com/tuyensinh.ou.edu.vn/, last access on April 18, 2024.

To be accepted into the programme, students must take an English test to assess their proficiency. The University then tailors the training programme based on students' English levels. Foreign language proficiency is a key selection criterion. Admission is based on the total scores of three subjects from the National High School Exam or average high school scores (Maths - Physics - English, Sciences - English, or Maths - Literature - English).

HCMCOU encourages students with strong English proficiency to enrol by allowing the use of international English language proficiency test results instead of national high school exam scores or high school English scores. These international test results are converted into admission scores as shown in Table 4.

Table 5 Admission converted points for international English language proficiency test results[14]

Certificate types	Converted points for admission			
	7.0	8.0	9.0	10.0
TOEFL ITP	450 - 474	475 - 499	500 - 524	Above 525
TOEFL iBT	45 - 52	53 - 60	61 - 68	Above 68
IELTS	4.0	4.5	5.0	Above 5.5

<u>Transparency and documentation of admission procedure and decision</u>
The annual admission project of HCMCOU is the official document of the University to MOET and to the public. It is based on the legal basis as follows: The annual regulations about the university admission of MOET, and other dispatches of MOET on the admission guidance of university enrolment every year.

After the HCMCOU Admission Council comes to decision on the minimum scores to be accepted, the Academic affairs Office will announce the scores, the list of the successful candidates in many forms such as notice on the HCMCOU website and on all the popular newspaper. The candidate can check their own result by logging in the admission result system online.

Following that, the Academic affairs Office and Information management Center proceed with the admission procedures including sending admission notice to each successful candidate, providing student ID numbers and email account, inputting student data on HCMCOU academic management system (Edusoft), activating his/her learning support system (LMS), and issuing decisions and list of accepted students for University academic record.

Finally, the Academic Affairs Office will send MOET the report of the admission results of the year and the list of successful candidates of each programme who have finished their enrolment procedures. MOET will send the inspection delegation to HEIs from time to time to check the whole admission procedures whether they are as what have been described in the admission project which has been informed to MOET and to the public.

Appraisal:

---

[14] See self-evaluation report p. 19.

HCMCOU has clearly regulated the admission requirements for all advanced programmes. The admission requirements for national and international students are defined by state regulations, which are embedded in the University regulation. The national requirements are considered.

Applicants can directly turn to a student counselling service, or to whatever other helpdesk at the HEI, for clarification of specific questions, of personal aptitude, of career perspectives etc. Personal dialogue between applicants and the HEI is provided by defined office hours, by telephone and via e-mail.

Through compulsory English courses, Bachelor graduates shall achieve level B2 after graduation. During the digital conference, the University stated that the English level requirements are by the regulations of MOET that must be followed. The University also offers supplementary English language courses for students to promote their English language skills.

The admission procedure is described, documented, and accessible for interested parties e.g. via the University's website.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
2.1* Admission requirements (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
2.2 Counselling for prospective students			X		
2.3* Selection procedure (if relevant)			X		
2.4(*) Professional experience (if relevant; Asterisk Criterion for master programmes that require professional experience)					X
2.5* Ensuring foreign language proficiency (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
2.6* Transparency and documentation of admission procedure and decision (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

3. Contents, structure and didactical concept of the programme

3.1 Contents

Logic and conceptual coherence

The programme aims to educate students with political qualities, social responsibility, knowledge, and professional competence in Business English to develop their careers and themselves in the context of the country's integration and development.

It is designed with 127 credit units, excluding Physical Education and Military and Defence Education. The programme lasts 4 academic years (eight years of study max).

Courses are categorised into three knowledge groups:
- General courses account for 37 credit units,
- Fundamental courses for 49 credit units, and
- Specialised courses for 37 credit units.

Table 6 Curriculum structure[15]

Structure		ECTS equivalent	CUs/Courses	Compulsory /Elective CUs
General Knowledge (37 CUs/ 29.1%)	Political Theory	22	11 (5 courses)	11/0
	Social Sciences & Humanities, Law	10	5 (2 courses)	0/5
	Information Technology, Natural Sciences	12	6 (2 courses)	0/6
	Additional Foreign languages	30	15 (5 courses)	0/15
	Physical education	6	3 (2 courses)	Not counted
	Military and Defense education	16	8 (1 course)	Not counted
Knowledge of Profession (80 CUs/ 64.6%)	Foundation Knowledge	100	50 (17 courses)	9/0
	Disciplinary Knowledge	22	11 (5 courses)	9/2
	Professional Knowledge	30	15 (5 courses)	12/3
	Supplementary Knowledge	18	4 (2 courses)	0/4
Internship and Graduation Paper (10 CUs/ 6.3%)	Internship	8	4 (1 courses)	4/0
	Graduation Paper/ Bachelor Thesis (or alternative courses)	12 or 14	6 or 7 (3 courses)	6/0 or 0/7
Total		**254**	**127**	**95/32**

(Source: FFL - updated by December, 2022)

The curriculum organises courses in a logical sequence from basic to advanced knowledge. General courses cover basic knowledge in law, social sciences, politics, computer skills,

---

[15] See self-evaluation report p. 21.

national defence, and physical education, providing a foundation for subsequent basic and professional knowledge courses.

The curriculum includes elective courses, enabling students to choose their major and minor. The major is the primary focus of students' studies in the programme, which is English Language with a concentration in Business English. A minor is a secondary specialisation. In the programme, students can select other courses of interest for their minors, such as business, translation and interpretation, and teaching methodology. Students can consult with their academic advisors for guidance on their major and minor choices. They can also study subjects from other majors and transfer 21 accumulated credit units to their programme. Additionally, students can take courses with partner universities.

Bachelor of Arts in English Curriculum Overview
Bachelor's Programme, 11 Semesters

Modul No.	Title of Module / Course Unit + Compulsory or Elective?	Credit Points per Semester											Workload		Method of Teaching	Form and Duration of Examinations	weight of exam related to final grade
		1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	Hours in Class	Hours Self-Study	i.e. lecture course, seminar		
	1st Semester																
M1	Listening- Speaking 1 - ENGL5308 (Compulsory Course)	6											100	125	L, S, D	Final term Listening (40min - 60 min) & Oral (8-12 min) Tests	6/254
M2	Reading - Writing 1 - ENGL5302 (Compulsory Course)	6											100	125	L, GA, Blended, OP, Process writing	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M3	Grammar - ENGL5301 (Compulsory Course)	6											100	125	L,D	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M4	Pronunciation - ENGL5314 (Compulsory Course)	6											100	125	L, S, D	Final term Listening & Oral Tests	6/254
M5	Marxist - Leninist philosophy - POLI1304 (Compulsory Course)	6											75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
	2nd Semester																
M6	Listening - Speaking 2 - ENGL5309 (Compulsory Course)		6										100	125	L, S, D	Final term Listening (40min - 60 min) & Oral (8-12 min) Tests	6/254
M7	Reading - Writing 2 - ENGL5303 (Compulsory Course)		6										100	125	L, GA, Blended, OP, Process writing	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M8	Additional foreign language (1): students can choose one of the following courses		6										100	125			6/254
M8.1	Chinese 1 - GCHI2301 (Elective Course)		6										100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M8.2	Japanese 1 - GJAP 2301 (Elective Course)		6										100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M8.3	Korean 1 - KORE2301 (Elective Course)		6										100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M9	Social sciences and humanities electives:		4										50	100	L	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M9.1	Vietnamese Culture - VIET6301 (Elective Course)		6										75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M9.2	Introduction to Anthropology - SOCI6303 (Elective Course)		6										75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M9.3	The Vietnamese Language - VIET6302 (Elective Course)		6										75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M9.4	Introduction to Vietnamese Linguistics - VIET6201 (Elective Course)		4										50	100	L	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M9.5	History of World Civilization - SEAS6303 (Elective Course)		6										100	125	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M9.6	Comparative Linguistics - VIET6303 (Elective Course)		6										75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M9.7	Career Orientation and Academic Skills Training - EDUC6301 (Elective Course)		6										75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M10	Information Technology (IT) electives:		6										100	125	L, P	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M10.1	Information Technology Basics - COMP6301 (Elective Course)		6										100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M10.2	Applied Computer Science - COMP6302 (Elective Course)		6										100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M10.3	Introduction to Informatics - ITEC6301(Elective Course)		6										100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
	3rd Semester																
M11	Listening - Speaking 3 - ENGL5310 (Compulsory Course)			6									100	125	L, S, D	Final term Listening (40min - 60 min) & Oral (8-12 min) Tests	6/254

Code	Description	CP	CP	CP	Contact	Self-study	Methods	Examination	Weight
M12	Reading - Writing 3 - ENGL5304 (Compulsory Course)	6			100	125	L, GA, Blended, OP, Process writing	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M13	Additional foreign language (2): students can choose one of the following courses	6			100	125			6/254
M13.1	Chinese 2 - GCHI2302 (Elective Course)	6			100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M13.2	Japanese 2 - GJAP 2302 (Elective Course)	6			100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M13.3	Korean 2 - KORE2302 (Elective Course)	6			100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M14	Natural sciences electives	6			75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M14.1	Logic - ACCO6317 (Elective Course)	6			75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M14.2	Critical thinking - BLAW6303 (Elective Course)	6			75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M14.3	Critical Thinking (English) - BLAW5302 (Elective Course)	6			75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M14.4	Logics (English) - ACCO5328 (Elective Course)	6			75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M14.5	Human Environmental Interaction - BIOT6301 (Elective Course)	6			75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M14.6	Human Environmental Interaction (English) - BIOT5301 (Elective Course)	6			75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M15	Law electives	6			75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M15.1	Introduction to Law - GLAW6301 (Elective Course)	6			75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M15.2	Theories of State and Law - BLAW6301 (Elective Course)	6			75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
	4th Semester								
M16	Listening - Speaking 4 - ENGL5311 (Compulsory Course)		6		100	125	L, S, D	Final term Listening (40min - 60 min) & Oral (8-12 min) Tests	6/254
M17	Reading - Writing 4 - ENGL5305 (Compulsory Course)		6		100	125	L, GA, Blended, OP, Process writing	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M18	Translation 1 - ENGL5315 (Compulsory Course)		6		100	125	L, Pra, GA, D	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M19	Additional foreign language (3): students can choose one of the following courses		6		100	125			6/254
M19.1	Chinese 3 - GCHI2303 (Elective Course)		6		100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M19.2	Japanese 3 - GJAP 2303 (Elective Course)		6		100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M19.3	Korean 3 - KORE2303 (Elective Course)		6		100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M20	Marxist-Leninist Political Economics - POLI1305 (Compulsory Course)		4		75	150	L	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
	5th Semester								
M21	Listening - Speaking 5 - ENGL5312 (Compulsory Course)			6	100	125	L, S, D	Final term Listening (40min - 60 min) & Oral (8-12 min) Tests	6/254
M22	Advanced Reading comprehension - ENGL5306 (Compulsory Course)			6	100	125	L, GA	Final term work (90 min)	6/254
M23	Academic writing - ENGL5307 (Compulsory Course)			6	100	125	L, P	Project work	6/254
M24	Additional foreign language (4): students can choose one of the following courses			6	100	125			6/254
M24.1	Chinese 4 - GCHI2304 (Elective Course)			6	100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M24.2	Japanese 4 - GJAP 2304 (Elective Course)			6	100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M24.3	Korean 4 - KORE2304 (Elective Course)			6	100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M25	Scientific Socialism - POLI1306 (Compulsory Course)			4	50	100	L	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
	6th Semester								

Code	Course	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11			Method	Assessment	Weight
M26	Listening - Speaking 6 - ENGL5313 (Compulsory Course)						6						100	125	L, S, D	Final term Listening (40min - 60 min) & Oral (8-12 min) Tests	6/254
M27	Research methodology - EDUC5201 (Compulsory Course)						4						75	100	L,D	Project work	4/254
M28	Translation 2 - ENGL5316 (Compulsory Course)						6						100	125	L, Pra, GA, D	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M29	Additional foreign language (5): students can choose one of the following courses						6						100	125			6/254
M29.1	Chinese 5 - GCHI2305 (Elective Course)						6						100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M29.2	Japanese 5 - GJAP 2305 (Elective Course)						6						100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M29.3	Korean 5 - KORE2305 (Elective Course)						6						100	125	L, GA	Final term test (60 - 90 min)	6/254
M30	History of Vietnamese Communist Party - POLI1307 (Compulsory Course)						4						50	100	L	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
	7th Semester																
M31	Phonetics - Phonology - ENGL5201 (Compulsory Course)							4					75	100	L, P	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M32	Students can choose ONE of the following courses							4					75	100			4/254
M32.1	British literature - ENGL5204 (Elective Course)							4					75	100	L, R, P	Project work (role playing) Or Final term paper (120	4/254
M32.2	American literature - ENGL5205 (Elective Course)							4					75	100	L, R, P	Project work (role playing) Or Final term paper (120	4/254
M33	British-American culture - ENGL5317 (Compulsory Course)							6					100	125	L, P, D	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M34	Ho Chi Minh's Ideology - POLI1308 (Compulsory Course)							4					50	100	L, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
	8th Semester																
M35	Morphology and Syntax - ENGL5202 (Compulsory Course)								4				75	100	L, P	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M36	Microeconomics - ENGL5321 (Compulsory Course)								6				100	125	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M37	Introduction to Marketing - ENGL5319 (Compulsory Course)								6				100	125	L, D, GA	Project work	6/254
M38	One major elective								6				100	125			
M38.1	Public Relations - ENGL5322 (Elective Course)								6				100	125	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M38.2	Office Skills - ENGL5323 (Elective Course)								6				100	125	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M38.3	Money & Banking - ENGL5324 (Elective Course)								6				100	125	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M39	One additional course of FIRST electives								4				75	100			4/254
M39.1	Banking Services - ENGL5206 (Elective Course)								4				75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M39.2	International Transaction - ENGL5207 (Elective Course)								4				75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M39.3	International Trade - ENGL5208 (Elective Course)								4				75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M39.4	Business Negotiation - ENGL5209 (Elective Course)								4				75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M39.5	Business Communication - ENGL5210 (Elective Course)								4				75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M39.6	English for Tourism - ENGL5211 (Elective Course)								4				75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M39.7	English for Business - ENGL5212 (Elective Course)								4				75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M39.8	English for Employment - ENGL5213 (Elective Course)								4				75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M39.9	Public Speaking - ENGL5214 (Elective Course)								4				75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M39.10	TOEFL preparation - ENGL5215 (Elective Course)								4				75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M39.11	Entrepreneurship - BADM6306 (Elective Course)								4				75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
	9th Semester																
M40	Semantics and Pragmatics - ENGL5203 (Compulsory Course)									4			75	100	L, P	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M41	Principles of Accounting - ENGL5320 (Compulsory Course)									6			100	125	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M42	Introduction to Management - ENGL5318 (Compulsory Course)									6			100	125	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M43	One additional course of SECOND electives									4			75	100			4/254
M43.1	Banking Services - ENGL5206 (Elective Course)									4			75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M43.2	International Transaction - ENGL5207 (Elective Course)									4			75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M43.3	International Trade - ENGL5208 (Elective Course)									4			75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M43.4	Business Negotiation - ENGL5209 (Elective Course)									4			75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M43.5	Business Communication - ENGL5210 (Elective Course)									4			75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M43.6	English for Tourism - ENGL5211 (Elective Course)									4			75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M43.7	English for Business - ENGL5212 (Elective Course)									4			75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M43.8	English for Employment - ENGL5213 (Elective Course)									4			75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M43.9	Public Speaking - ENGL5214 (Elective Course)									4			75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M43.10	TOEFL preparation - ENGL5215 (Elective Course)									4			75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M43.11	Entrepreneurship - BADM6306 (Elective Course)									4			75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
	10th Semester																
M44	Internship - ENGL5401 (Compulsory Course)										8		200	200	Internship	Internship Report	8/254
	11th Semester																
M45	Graduation Paper/ Bachelor Thesis or Alternative Courses																
M45.1	Graduation Paper/ Bachelor Thesis - ENGL5601											12	450	450	Rearcher and Self-study	Graduation Paper	12/254
M45.2	ONE Elective Professional Course and TWO Elective Supplementary Courses																
M45.2.1	Elective Professional Courses: Students can choose ONE of the following courses											6	100	125			6/254
M45.2.1.1	Public Relations - ENGL5322 (Elective Course)											6	100	125	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M45.2.1.2	Office Skills - ENGL5323 (Elective Course)											6	100	125	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M45.2.1.3	Money & Banking - ENGL5324 (Elective Course)											6	100	125	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	6/254
M45.2.2	Elective Supplementary Courses: Students can choose TWO of the following courses											8	75	100			8/254
M45.2.2.1	Banking Services - ENGL5206 (Elective Course)											4	75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M45.2.2.2	International Transaction - ENGL5207 (Elective Course)											4	75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M45.2.2.3	International Trade - ENGL5208 (Elective Course)											4	75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M45.2.2.4	Business Negotiation - ENGL5209 (Elective Course)											4	75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M45.2.2.5	Business Communication - ENGL5210 (Elective Course)											4	75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M45.2.2.6	English for Tourism - ENGL5211 (Elective Course)											4	75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M45.2.2.7	English for Business - ENGL5212 (Elective Course)											4	75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
M45.2.2.8	English for Employment - ENGL5213 (Elective Course)											4	75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M45.2.2.9	Public Speaking - ENGL5214 (Elective Course)											4	75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M45.2.2.10	TOEFL preparation - ENGL5215 (Elective Course)											4	75	100	L, D, GA	Project work	4/254
M45.2.2.11	Entrepreneurship - BADM6306 (Elective Course)											4	75	100	L, D, GA	Final term test (90 min)	4/254
C	Colloquium																
BA	Bachelor's Thesis											12	450	450	Rearcher and Self-study	Graduation Paper	
total		30	28	30	28	28	26	18	26	20	8	12	4,475	5,850			

L: Lecture, S: Seminar, T: Tutorial, GA: Group Assignment, D: Discussion, R: Role play, P: Project work, OP: Oral Presentation, Pra: Practice

* Notes:
- According to MOET's regulations, the total number of credits does not count the number of credits of these courses, including National Defence - Security Education, Physical Education.

<u>Rationale for degree and programme name</u>
The study programme awards a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.). The study programme, coded 7220201C, aligns with MOET's subject area classification for undergraduate studies and corresponds to a bachelor's degree in VQF. This Circular defines the requirements for advanced programmes, such as:

(1) The advanced programmes offer at least 20 % of the credits for domain common to the block of disciplines, domain to the set of disciplines, and domain to the subject matter content instructed in languages of international education programmes or in English.

(2) Lecturers that teach theoretical knowledge of courses of domain to the set of disciplines and domain to the subject matter content must hold a PhD degree or a title of Professor or Associate Professor, or a master's degree of these majors from developed countries.

(3) Lecturers must be competent in professional knowledge and skills, scientific research skills obtaining a minimum of three years of teaching experience and deploying effective teaching approaches.

(4) Lecturers teaching courses of domain to the subject matter content are required to attain an English language proficiency reaching level 5 out of 6 according to Vietnamese English Teacher Competency Framework or equivalent or undertaken a full-time undergraduate education programme instructed in languages that are officially used in foreign countries.

(5) All students must conduct scientific research projects supervised by institutional lecturers meeting the satisfying requirements.

<u>Integration of theory and practice</u>
The study programme integrates theory and practice, with 35.4 % of the workload dedicated to practice and 64.96% to theory (82.5 credit units for theory and 44.5 credit units for practice).

Programme Level: Students gain a solid theoretical foundation and are encouraged to apply this knowledge through activities such as thematic reports by senior managers, field trips to enterprises, and participation in business and English clubs. The compulsory eight-week internship allows students to apply and reflect on their learning in a real-world context.

Course Level: Courses emphasise theoretical aspects and enhance knowledge through practical applications. Teaching methods include presentations, group work, project assignments, and case studies, allowing students to apply theoretical concepts to business problems.

The curriculum includes foundation knowledge, professional knowledge, and graduation practice/project (see Table 7 for details):
- Foundation knowledge (30.4%) covers language skills, philosophy, literature, and British and American culture, providing a solid theoretical base.
- Professional knowledge (59.2%) focuses on Business English (e.g., marketing, management, banking) to develop students' abilities to analyse and solve complex

professional issues. These courses are designed with 70% theory and 30% practical application, where experts implement the practical part.

- The graduation internship and thesis (10.4%) offer students practical experience. Internships at domestic or foreign enterprises culminate in an internship report, guided by lecturers and mentors. This allows students to apply their knowledge to real-life situations, achieving the programme's goals.

Table 7 Theory and practice in the programme construction[16]

Structure		Theory CUs/ ECTS	Practice CUs/ ECTS
General Knowledge (37 CUs/ 29.1%)	Political Theory	10.5/21	0.5/1
	Social Sciences & Humanities, Law	5/10	0
	Information Technology, Natural Sciences	5/10	½
	Additional Foreign languages	10/20	5/10
Knowledge of Profession (80 CUs/ 64.6%)	Foundation Knowledge	33/66	17/34
	Disciplinary Knowledge	6/12	5/10
	Professional Knowledge	10/20	5/10
	Supplementary Knowledge	2/4	2/4
Internship and Graduation Paper (10 CUs/ 6.3%)	Internship		4/8
	Graduation Paper/ Bachelor Thesis (or alternative courses)		6/12
Total		82.5/165	44.5/89

(Source: FFL - updated by December, 2022)

Interdisciplinary thinking

Programme Level: The study programme combines English with business-related subjects such as management, finance, accounting, and economics. Foundation knowledge includes natural sciences, social sciences, political ideology, research methodology, IT, physical education, and military education.

Course Level: Students develop interdisciplinary thinking through courses that combine related areas like British and American culture, intercultural communication, management, finance, marketing, and banking services. Courses such as Intercultural Communication, Introduction to Management, Introduction to Marketing, Principles of Accounting, and Microeconomics are beneficial for students aiming to work in international business contexts.

Course Content: Courses like British and American Literature, Business Communication, and English for Tourism blend literature, business, culture (geography, history, education, political systems), and tourism. The programme also targets various skills such as communication, presentation, negotiation, and adaptability.

Ethical aspects

Ethical aspects are addressed in the study programme both academically and professionally.

Academic Ethics: Students must adhere to proper conduct during examinations, respect intellectual property, and avoid plagiarism. Research involving human subjects must meet ethical standards. HCMCOU uses Turnitin software, supervised by the University library, to

---

[16] See self-evaluation report p. 25.

control plagiarism. Final essays and theses are checked for plagiarism and evaluated according to university regulations, enhancing academic honesty and research quality.

Professional Ethics: Courses address ethical issues in the business profession, helping students build a sense of responsibility to the community and professional ethics. Courses such as Research Methodology (including a section on ethical issues in research), Academic Writing, and Thesis, along with workshops on research methodology, provide ethical guidance.

Methods and scientific practice
The study programme aims to equip students with essential methods and scientific practices through courses such as Philosophy, Logic, Critical Thinking, and Research Methodology.

Graduates are trained to apply their research skills and knowledge to solve emerging problems. The programme provides students with methodological competences and research abilities in Business English through specialised courses such as Introduction to Management, Introduction to Marketing, Principles of Accounting, and Microeconomics. A seminar on research methodology is provided before students begin their research topic. Workshops on research methodology assist students in conducting their thesis research, with guidance from supervisors throughout the thesis writing process. Conducting research in Business English is compulsory for all participants. The University supports research through annual funds, seminars, workshops, and supervision.

In the advanced programmes at HCMCOU, students must complete a scientific research project before they graduate. Moreover, every year, students have the chance to participate in the research contest at University. This experience shall help them to practise scientific research through guidance from lecturers. Students can do it alone or in groups of five members or less. A lecturer will guide the students while doing research. The review board of HCMCOU will approve their proposal to proceed with the research.

Students must write a research project and an internship report. In the research project and the internship report, students shall develop a topic and research question, collect relevant business and accounting data, and analyse the state of the art to discuss a solution. Hence, students can survey, analyse, and explore the issues in work and evaluate the impacts of solutions.

Examination and final thesis
Depending on the expected learning outcomes of the course, different assessment methods are used. The type and level of examinations are designed to meet the Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) detailed in each course syllabus, provided to students in the first week of each term.

The study programme uses formative assessment and summative assessment aligned with the requirements of the MOET. Formative assessments account for 50 percent (maximum) of the course score. In each syllabus, different types of assessments can be used, such as multiple choice on the LMS system, discussions, role-plays, presentations, group works, case studies, etc. The summative assessments account for 50 percent (minimum) of the course score. The evaluation of summative assessment is in different forms depending on the requirements of the course, such as multiple-choice, true-false, short-answer questions, essays, and projects.

After the internship at a company or other professional unit, all students must write a report, and they can choose one of the following four types: professional internship report, business plan, research, and case study. This shall serve as an opportunity for students to approach reality and determine their work direction after graduation. The report is evaluated based on the internship report rubric. To ensure the scientific reliability and validity of internship reports, the course outline and marking guidelines have been revised, updated, and approved by the HCMCOU Academic Board.

In the last semester, students who are eligible for writing a thesis[17] will undertake an upgraded study from their internship report or choose another topic. To be eligible, students must have a GPA of all courses of 8.0/10 or higher. If not, they must take two additional courses to be recognised for a bachelor's degree.

Usually, the final thesis structure consists of four chapters including Chapter 1 for Literature review, Chapter 2 for Introduction, Chapter 3 for Findings, and Chapter 4 for Conclusions and Recommendations. Students will conduct a thesis defence session in front of the council.

Appraisal:

Overall, the curriculum adequately reflects the qualification objectives of the study programme. However, the panel **recommends** reviewing the curriculum to ensure it more clearly reflects the core focus of the programme, which is Business English. Therefore, the curriculum review should aim to develop a coherent focus on Business English across all modules. This objective could be achieved by consulting with all stakeholders, including students and alumni. The contents of the courses are well-balanced, logically connected and oriented towards the intended learning outcomes. Elective courses enable students to acquire additional competences and skills.

The degree and programme name correspond to the contents of the curriculum and the programme objectives.

Theoretical questions are, where possible, explained by means of practical examples (e.g. case studies, internships). At the same time, the panel **recommends** integrating these aspects more clearly in the module descriptions.

There is evidence that the programme qualifies for interdisciplinary thinking on programme and course level as well as in the course content.

Ethical implications are appropriately communicated both academically and professionally. Students build a sense of responsibility to the community and professional ethics.

Students acquire methodological competences and are enabled to do scientific work on the required level. Students learn with methodological competences and research abilities in Business English through specialised courses (e.g. Principles of Accounting, and Microeconomics, a research project and Thesis training).

---

[17] The graduate thesis is developed based on the graduation internship report if the student's GPA is 8.0/10 or higher.

All exams, as they are defined for the courses, are suited in format and content to ascertain the intended learning outcomes. The requirements are in accordance with the desired qualification level. The study programme uses formative assessment and summative assessments.

The final theses are evaluated based on previously published and coherently applied criteria, rules, and procedures.

The students prove, especially in their thesis, their ability to do scientific work and the achievement of the study programme's qualification objectives.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.1 Contents					
3.1.1* Logic and conceptual coherence (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.2* Rationale for degree and programme name (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.3* Integration of theory and practice (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.4 Interdisciplinary thinking			X		
3.1.5 Ethical aspects			X		
3.1.6* Methods and scientific practice (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.7* Examination and final thesis (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

3.2 Structure

Projected study time	4-8 years
Number of credits (national credits and ECTS credits)	127 credit units (CUs)/254 ECTS credits
Workload per credit	A Vietnamese CU (at the undergraduate level) requires 15 theoretical teaching hours, or 30 practice teaching hours, or 45 hours of self-study work for practicum or for a project, thesis, and 30 hours maximum of self-study/guided study workload. The teaching hour is 50 minutes each face to face in class.
Number of modules/courses	3 knowledge blocks: 43 courses (excluding Physical and Military education) + 1 Internship + 1 thesis (or 3 courses)
Time required for processing the final thesis/project and awarded credits	3 months, 6 CUs for thesis or 3 equivalent courses

Modular structure of the study programme

At the SAS, the study programmes are all full time whose courses are taught face-to-face. As mentioned in chapter 1, all study programmes include three categories of knowledge into their curriculum, namely theoretical or foundational knowledge, professional knowledge, and practical skills.

Study and exam regulations

The study and exam regulations are defined in HCMCOU rules and regulations for Advanced Programmes. Aligned with the University, the SAS provides regulations on examination, a Student Handbook, and Guidelines on Thesis Writing.

The examination schedules are published on the HCMCOU website. Students are informed about their programmes and timetable at the beginning of the programme during the orientation time. To graduate at the SAS with a bachelor's degree (advanced programme), students must:

- Complete all the courses required with a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0/4.0 or more (1.0-4.0 scale).
- Complete a thesis (or replaced by 3 additional courses) which meets the requirements of the Examination Committee and obtain a minimum score of 4.0/10.0 (1.0-10.0 scale).
- Complete student scientific research outputs.
- Achieve English language proficiency at CEFR level B2 for all majors except English language major at CEFR level C1.

Examinations and grades are organised online via HCMCOU EDUSOFT, from which students can see their scores in their account. HCMCOU applies the Ten-scale grading (see table 16) which can be converted into two ways mandated by the MOET: (1) the letter scale (A, B, C…) with the corresponding descriptor (excellent, good, average) for the courses on their transcripts, and (2) the 0-4 scale as a final cumulative grade of the degree programme in line with the letter scale, in case students request to have their transcript that way.

Table 8 Grading system at HCMCOU[18]

Official conversion of 0-10 and 0-4 scale			
HCMCOU 10-scale grading for courses and GPA	Letter scale for courses	Descriptors	Numeric scale for GPA of the terms or school year
8.5-10.0	A	Excellent	4.0
7.0-8.4	B	Good	3.0
5.5-6.9	C	Average	2.0
4.0-5.4	D	Below average	1.0
0.0-4.0	F	Weak/Fail	0.0

Table 9 Timetable for one semester[19]

---

[18] See self-evaluation report p. 29.
[19] See self-evaluation report p. 30.

Activities	Schedule	Person in charge
Classroom meeting of the course length	10 -15 weeks	Conducted by the lecturer of the respective course
Midterm assessments	5th - 8th week	Conducted by the lecturer of the respective course
Final assessment: - Examinations https://ou.edu.vn/lich-thi	15th - 17th week	The Office of Testing oversees the exams. The lecturer of the respective course will mark and send the results of both midterm and final assessments to the Testing Office.
- (or) Paper submission	3 - 4 weeks after the last section	The Office of Testing collects students' papers and sends them to the teachers or students can send their paper by mail to their lecturer.

(Source: SAS - updated by December, 2022)

Feasibility of study workload

Upon admission to the advanced programmes, students receive an orientation, in which they are informed about the programmes and the curriculum requirements as prescribed in the student handbook. Based on credit points, the study programmes ensure that the programmes are feasible for students. Students take classes for a period of eleven terms, with one term reserved for internships and in which the last term is for the thesis. The programme comprises 127 credit units, with an average course workload of three credit units, following MOET and HCMCOU regulations.

The total workload includes at least 45 courses (excluding Physical and Military Education), one internship report, and a thesis (or two equivalent courses). Students typically take five or six courses per term, spending about 22.5-27 hours per week in class. According to Article 6 of HCMCOU Regulations on undergraduate level training, a minimum course load must not lower than 7.7, while a maximum load must not exceed 17.33. The average study workload for a semester for this study programme is 11.55 credit units or 23.10 ECTS credits.

At HCMCOU, 1 Vietnamese credit point equals 2 ECTS credits. For a "theory credit" unit, students are expected to spend approximately 30 hours of self-study, while for a "practice credit" unit, students spend 15 hours of self-study.

The programme ensures the feasibility of the workload. Credit units are used to calculate the academic load, with students typically spending at least 30 self-study hours per credit unit. HCMCOU reviews the programme every two years to adjust the course structure based on labour market changes and learner preferences.

Students are assessed through tests and assignments to ensure they achieve the expected learning outcomes. The programme prioritises formative assessments and includes summative assessments for each course. The Academic Board and Faculty analyse student results and feedback to make necessary adjustments. Assistance is provided to students upon request, and continuous monitoring helps identify and address issues promptly.

Data shows that students spend 1.5-2 times their class time on self-study, aligning with MOET and University regulations. Of the intakes 2016 and 2017, on average, the success rate was 49.4% and 37.3% of students respectively have graduated with the GPA over 2.94/4, and they take around 50 months on average to complete their study.

Equality of opportunity

Advocating the principles of life-long learning in education since its establishment, HCMCOU adheres itself to non-discrimination in admission against ethnicity, religion, gender, economic social background, marital status, people in extremely difficult conditions, or age.

Furthermore, based on the current regulations of MOET, HCMCOU also has priority schemes (bonus marks) in the admission policies for applicants who, for example, either:
- have worked for two consecutive years or more in remote localities defined as Region 1; or
- are war invalids, beneficiaries of policies like war invalids; or
- are children of martyrs; or
- are heroes of armed forces, labour heroes; or
- are ethnic minority people; or
- are children of people taking part in resistance wars and are victims of toxic chemicals.

As for disabled students, there are special considerations in the financial support, admission, and the support in their study and assessment waive. In general, HCMCOU seeks potential students who are committed to successfully pursuing the programme through a rigorous entrance examination with a clearly stated and transparent procedure from application, entrance examination, selection, and admission. Students in special circumstances (single parent, family grievance, illness, or academic difficulty) can lodge their request for financial assistance from HCMCOU for particular assistance such as extension of submission, further tutorials, consultation with the academic faculty.

Students with disabilities are exempted from 100% of tuition fees. HPCMCOU has established regulations for organizing educational activities that support people with disabilities, as well as standards to ensure a safe, healthy, and accessible environment for them.

Regarding facilities and equipment to support students with disabilities, at HCMCOU, there are signs posted in front of elevators to remind everyone to offer priority turns for the elderly, the pregnant, and the disabled. The entrances and exits are wheelchair accessible. All restrooms have an accessible stall for people with disabilities, designed to be larger, and with grab bars.

Appraisal:

The programme structure supports the smooth implementation of the curriculum and helps students to reach the defined learning outcomes. The programme consists of courses and assigns credits per course on the basis of the necessary student workload. Practical components are designed and integrated in such a way that credits can be acquired. The course descriptions provide detailed descriptions of intended learning outcomes and the information defined in the ECTS Users' Guide.

Moreover, there are legally binding study and exam regulations which contain all necessary rules and procedures and consider national requirements. The SAS informs students about the regulations, the timetable, and all important information at the beginning of each course. The study programmes are designed so that students can do an internship without any extension of their overall study time.

The SAS takes care of a plausible calculation of workload, an adequate number and frequency of examinations to ensure that the advanced programme is feasible.

However, the panel noticed that the success rate of students finishing their studies is rather low. Therefore, the panel **recommends** evaluating why the success rate is lower and why students study usually longer than four years normally and include further measures.

The panel formed the view that the HCMCOU ensures gender equality and non-discrimination. The HCMCOU confirmed that students with disabilities are provided with affirmative actions, e.g. concerning time and formal standards/requirements throughout the programme and examinations.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.2 Structure					
3.2.1* Modular structure of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.2.2* Study and exam regulations (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.2.3* Feasibility of study workload (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.2.4 Equality of opportunity			X		

3.3 Didactical concept

Logic und plausibility of the didactical concept
HCMCOU mission is dedicated to contributing and promoting knowledge to society by offering the upmost flexible and accessible methods of delivery. The didactical focus of the study programmes is therefore on learner-centred and interactive teaching methods. The teaching and learning methods are described in the course outline which is distributed to the students during the first lecture. Interactive teaching methods such as lectures, presentations, practical training, data presentations, project work, group discussions, debates, games and role plays are applied.

Lecture is still the main method for all courses, with increasing questioning and discussion in professional knowledge courses. The lecturers present the concepts, theoretical frameworks, analytical frameworks, and research. On the basis of the acquired knowledge and based on the students' understanding of the basic issues, the lecturer guides the students to self-study and research on the theoretical content in class as well as makes students prepare the assignment at home. In class presentations or discussions, under the guidance and assessment of lecturers, students will apply their acquired knowledge to state, defend, criticize their views, and ask questions. Lecturers only participate when it is necessary to lead the discussion, then summarise and conclude the content of the presentation and discussion so that students can understand the problem at the end of the session. Though most of the learning activities are in face-to-face classes, there is more use of the online learning support system LMS to perform additional individual and group assignments, or forum discussion.

The lecturers are encouraged to use a variety of assessment forms to assess the students' ability as follows: quiz, random multiple-choice test, case study analysis, Q&A, individual essay, and group essay. The course outlines and teaching methods are periodically reviewed and improved through department meetings. In addition, the teaching activities of the lecturers are also evaluated by students through surveying students' opinions about teaching activities by the end of the course.

Course materials

Lecturers are responsible for preparing their course materials for the course they teach. The course outline file is distributed to students during Week 1 of the term at LMS.

The learning materials are compiled by the full-time lecturers of the respective faculties and part-time lecturers from other universities offering corresponding study programmes. Prior to each school year or upon receiving proposals from the faculty, the library updates the list of study materials to ensure that lecturers and students have access to new and appropriate learning resources.

Course outline, textbooks and all other course materials are made available to students before the courses begin. For each course, there are two common types of materials: required textbooks and references. The required textbooks and references are in Vietnamese and English and published by leading publishers locally and internationally such as HCMC Economics, National University HCMC, McGraw Hill, Pearson, Routledge, and Longman, etc. They are all up to date, e.g., published after 2015. These books are all available in hard copies in the University's library and can be ordered in print or e-book versions. Additionally, the lecturers use online resources, supplementary materials such as journal articles or case studies, which are supposed to provide a better understanding of the course.

Guest lecturers

The study programme invites international and local guest speakers from different universities, institutes, and enterprises from various public and private sectors to deliver seminars, workshops or to join the classes to share their work experience with the students throughout the year.

The network of guest lecturers is diverse, including professionals from various Vietnamese institutions such as National University HCMC, University of Education, and University of Social Sciences and Humanities-HCMC. Many visiting lecturers hold Master's or PhD degrees from international programmes or abroad.

HCMCOU also has a large network of guest lecturers from internationally recognised universities, such as Monash University (Australia), the joint programme between HCMCOU and Flinders University (Australia), the University of Southern Queensland, and Suranaree University of Technology (Thailand). These lecturers are selected for their expertise to demonstrate the application of theories and concepts in English, Translation, and Business.

The study programme hosts various international and local guest speakers from universities, institutes, and enterprises across public and private sectors. They deliver seminars, workshops, and join classes to share their work experiences with students throughout the year. Both undergraduate and postgraduate students and lecturers share resources from these seminars, conferences, and lectures.

<u>Lecturing tutors</u>

SAS offers student support activities through form teachers and academic advisors for each class of the APs. Academic advisors support students' learning through face-to-face meetings, email, and LMS messages, available both online and offline. Tutors' schedules are set by classroom instructors, while academic counsellors schedule regular class appointments. Lecturers also provide academic support related to their expertise, with students commonly exchanging emails or posts with them.

Recently, the SAS has launched a lecturing tutor programme recruiting the institution's senior students. Candidates for tutoring positions in the courses are carefully chosen from eligible applicants, including trainee lecturers, graduate students, doctorate students, and undergraduate students of advanced programmes. They must be professionally competent and approved by the School's senior management board.

If undergraduate students want to work as tutors, they must fulfil the following criteria:
- They must be at least in their second year, maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5 on a 4-point scale, achieve a minimum grade of 3 in the course they wish to tutor.
- They must receive a student merit rating of satisfied or higher.
- Before assuming their roles as official tutors, all selected individuals participate in must a training course.

Tutors guide students in completing assignments and essays, support tasks designated by lecturers, and help analyse case studies and solve classroom exercises. All selected tutors participate in a training course before assuming their roles. So far, these tutors have received positive feedback from APs students.

Appraisal:

The didactical concept of the study programme is described, plausible, and oriented towards the programme objectives. It allows for the application of different teaching and learning methods, such as, for instance, case studies or practical projects. Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process. However, the panel **recommends** including the application of different teaching and learning methods to a greater extent in the course descriptions.

The accompanying course materials are oriented towards the intended learning outcomes and correspond to the required qualification level. However, the provided course descriptions were not informative and the majority of course descriptions do not give sufficient information about what and how students learn and how they are assessed. The literature is outdated and does not reflect current developments in the subject areas. Therefore, the panel recommends the following **condition**:
- The University reviews and updates all course descriptions to provide clear information on the courses and makes sure the literature is up-to-date.

Guest lecturers from universities and industries are invited and contribute to the students' qualification process with their special experience.

Lecturing tutors support the students in the learning process and help them develop competences and skills. They are a good support for students in the learning process and help them develop competences and skills.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.3	Didactical concept					
3.3.1*	Logic and plausibility of the didactical concept (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.3.2*	Course materials (Asterisk Criterion)			**Condition**		
3.3.3	Guest lecturers			X		
3.3.4	Lecturing tutors			X		

3.4 International outlook

International contents and intercultural aspects
The study programme emphasises international content and intercultural aspects.

Firstly, the faculty designed the programme with globalisation in mind, considering Vietnam's growing export and import flows and the dynamic international labour market. The programme development and updates reference those of the National University of Singapore, the University of Queensland (Australia), and the University of Southampton (UK), representing different continents.

Secondly, English is the medium of instruction for materials, assignments, reports, and theses. Thirdly, SAS has established a joint BA programme with Flinders University (Australia), offering students opportunities for exchange programmes. Additionally, students can take courses such as Intercultural Communication, where they learn about various cultural topics from different countries.

Internationality of the student body
Designing the programme with most courses in English is aimed to attract international students. With recent strong public advertising, more international students are expected to join HCMCOU programmes. So far, there are no foreign full-time students enrolled in the study programme.

HCMCOU intends the following measures to attract more international full-time students in the future:
1. Publish the international student admission project and finalise study regulations and support policies.
2. Strengthen international student support services, including:
   - Pre-departure preparation information
   - Private accommodation and homestay
   - Ongoing support from counsellors via email, hotline, and direct support at the Office of Student Affairs and Communications (OSAC)
   - Orientation sessions by faculties for new students
   - Vietnamese language and culture programmes, social activities, and seminars
   - International Student Newsletter on Facebook and YouTube

3. Enhance enrolment marketing on international channels with high traffic.
4. Promote communications with engaging content on official HCMCOU websites, Facebook, YouTube, X (Twitter), TikTok, and Instagram.
5. Maintain connections with international higher education institutions (HEIs) that are current or former partners.
6. Collaborate with Consulates General (e.g., Laos and Cambodia) and the Department of International Cooperation to introduce scholarships and support policies.
7. Increase extracurricular activities to connect international students.

SAS organises numerous cultural, academic, and integration exchange activities with international students and lecturers from universities worldwide, including Taiwan, Thailand, Japan, China, Indonesia, Laos, Bangladesh, Mexico, Sweden, Canada, Germany, and Australia.

Internationality of faculty

Additionally, most Vietnamese lecturers in the study programme hold Master's and Doctoral degrees from universities abroad, including those in England, Canada, the US, Thailand, Australia, and New Zealand. They have experience working in multinational organisations and teaching in international universities. The ratio of lecturers with foreign degrees is 52%. Additionally, foreign lecturers are recruited to teach skill and cultural courses, enhancing students' international experience. Pronunciation courses are co-taught by native speakers and local teachers.

The programme enhances the internationality of the faculty by inviting lecturers from renowned universities worldwide to teach courses and conduct seminars and workshops, such as Monash University and Flinders University (Australia) and Suranaree University of Technology (Thailand).

The University hosts specialists sponsored by the U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City, in collaboration with the Regional English Language Office, U.S. Embassy in Hanoi, to lecture and share experiences about American culture and values.

Foreign language contents

English is the medium of instruction for the study programme. Students are supported to achieve at least a C1 CEFR exit level. Course materials are sourced from renowned publishers such as Cambridge University Press, Cengage, Macmillan, and Oxford University Press. English is also used for reports, assignments, theses, seminars, and conferences. Vietnamese language references are provided to ensure comprehensive understanding.

To enhance employability in the international market and meet MOET requirements, foreign language majors must study another foreign language (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, or French) at B1 CEFR. Lectures and course materials in foreign languages predominate, supporting the programme's internationality.

All modules are taught in English except those in Political Sciences, Law, IT, and Introduction to Linguistics and Vietnamese language.

Appraisal:

International contents are an integral part of the curriculum as the students engage with different cultural contents. Students are thus prepared for the challenges in an international working environment. Through practical examples, students are enabled to act in an intercultural environment.

Currently, there are no foreign full-time students enrolled in the study programmes. While the University is striving to attract international full-time students, the panel acknowledges the taken measures and **recommends** testing whether they are successful and if necessary implementing further concepts to increase the number of international students.

The international composition of the faculty (teachers from different countries, teachers with international academic and professional experience) promotes the acquisition of international competences and skills. More than half of the faculty have international academic experiences. The measures taken are goal-oriented.

The proportion of foreign language courses and required foreign language materials corresponds with the qualification objectives of the study programme.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.4 Internationality					
3.4.1* International contents and intercultural aspects (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.4.2 Internationality of the student body				X	
3.4.3 Internationality of faculty		X			
3.4.4 Foreign language contents		X			

3.5 Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion)

Working in international business requires multifaceted knowledge. To ensure students succeed, the study programme integrates various disciplines such as English language, economics, finance, accounting, management, law, and IT. The programme targets skills such as communication, presentation, negotiation, and adaptability.

The programme emphasises skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, creative thinking, communication, teamwork, and leadership. These skills are developed through fundamental and professional courses involving pair work, group work, presentations, and projects. Internship programmes also play a significant role by allowing students to apply theories and concepts to real-life problems in working environments.

Public-speaking skills are honed through courses, debates, and presentations. Outstanding students are encouraged to present at seminars and conferences. Group assignments help students practise and improve communication, teamwork, and conflict-handling skills.

The Simple English Language Centre offers hands-on practicum, allowing students to experience roles in sales, marketing, academic consultation, copywriting, and teacher

recruitment. Through a thirty-hour workplace experience, students gain insights into the work world and apply essential skills like teamwork, critical thinking, and independent thinking acquired in the programme.

Appraisal:

Through group work, presentations and discussions (among others) students acquire communication and public-speaking skills as well as cooperation and conflict handling skills in accordance with the course descriptions. This is supported by means of suitable didactical and methodological measures.
The acquisition of further multidisciplinary competences, such broad contextual knowledge, is ensured.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.5* Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

3.6 Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion)

Employability is a key focus of the study programme, promoted through the integration of theory and practice, work experience, seminars, case studies, and specialist insights. The programme outlines potential employment positions to help students prepare for their future careers.

Graduates in Business English have a diverse range of professional fields including:
- Management:
  - Personal assistant to Executive Director/Manager
- Specialist in business areas
  - Banking-finance: tellers, customer care staff
  - Import-export staff
  - Government agencies, sales, marketing, public relations
  - Corporate English trainers
  - Assisting business English instructors at English centres or vocational schools
  - Airline ground crew members, travel agents, tour guides, hotel receptionists and restaurant staff (additional role-specific certificates required.)
- Self-employed
  - Private English tutoring classes
  - Start-ups

Business courses such as Management, Microeconomics, Money and Banking, Principles of Accounting, and Public Relations are integrated with language skills training to prepare graduates for diverse business environments. The curriculum is updated based on stakeholder suggestions to meet the demands of the fast-changing business world. Recent alumni surveys show that over 67.74% of graduates find jobs within a year.

Key skills emphasised include problem-solving, communication, and teamwork, developed through group assignments, projects, and internships. Activities like debates and role plays further enhance these skills. A compulsory internship equips students with practical business skills and the ability to analyse real-case problems.

Graduates have positively evaluated the programme, with many stating they can apply theoretical and practical knowledge to address professional problems, evaluate outcomes, and apply business knowledge in professional practices.

Appraisal:

The promotion of employability – for instance through the integration of theory and practice, the internship and through the promotion of multidisciplinary competences and skills – runs as a common thread of the study programme through all its courses.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.6* Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

4. Academic environment and framework conditions

4.1 Faculty

<u>Structure and quantity of faculty in relation to curricular requirements</u>
The programme has 48 full-time teaching staff. They are under the supervision of FFL in terms of professional development and teaching practices.

Table 10 Academic staff's profile 2020-2022[20]

		School year				
		2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Lecturers with	**Doctorate Degree**	2	2	2	3	17
		7.14%	6.67%	7.41%	9.09%	35.42%
	Master's Degree	25	28	25	30	30
		89.29%	93.33%	92.59%	90.91%	62.50%
	Bachelor's Degree	1				1
		3.57%				2.08%
	Total	28	30	27	33	48
		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

(Source: Office of Human Resources- updated by December, 2022)

Below is the brief description of the plan of human resource development of the study programme:

Table 11 Plan of human resource development[21]

Years	Teaching staff	Master Lecturer	PhD Lecturer	Retirement
2017-2018	28	25	2	0
2018-2019	30	28	2	0
2019-2020	27	25	2	0
2020-2021	33	30	3	0
2021-2022	48	30	17	0

<u>Academic qualification of faculty</u>
All teaching staff must meet the following requirements:
- Hold at least a Master's Degree in TESOL and Applied Linguistics (for those teaching English language skills, translation, and linguistics) or a Master's Degree in Business Administration/Accounting and a Bachelor's Degree in English Linguistics (for those teaching Business English).
- Have at least three years of lecturing experience.
- Possess a good command of English.
- Hold a certificate in pedagogical profession.
- Publish a research paper annually, either domestically or internationally.
- Receive positive feedback (Good rating or above) from students in the full-time Regular Programme (for lecturers with less than three years of teaching experience) or from

---

[20] See self-evaluation report p. 38.
[21] See self-evaluation report p. 39.

students in the full-time Advanced Programme (for lecturers with more than three years of teaching experience).

Their responsibilities include teaching (at least 270 hours annually), developing final tests, contributing to the test bank, marking students' papers or projects, supervising theses and internship reports, providing academic counselling, compiling or developing materials, sharing insights on the programme, conducting research, reviewing proceedings and articles for the annual OpenTESOL conference, instructing students in research, and participating in meetings with the dean and the head of the Business English department.

There are two groups of lecturers: one for teaching language skills and the other for specialised Business courses. Despite their different backgrounds, all have extensive teaching experience and actively contribute to industry activities, such as consulting, hosting talk shows, and training staff. Business lecturers engage in consulting and mentoring, while FFL lecturers participate in community service and training activities for secondary/high school teachers and pupils.

Annual recruitment of teaching staff is crucial for meeting training, research, and community service needs. Candidates are selected through an in-depth interview by the Dean of FFL and the Academic Committee, followed by a demo lecture evaluation. Successful candidates are assigned courses for three semesters within an academic year, provided they publish a research paper annually.

In addition to full-time lecturers from FFL, the faculty invites lecturers from other faculties, such as Accounting and Auditing, Business Administration, and Finance and Banking, to teach courses in Principles of Accounting, Fundamental Marketing, Management, Microeconomics, Public Relations, and Banking Transactions. Visiting lecturers from other prestigious universities, who meet the same international graduation requirements, are also invited to join the programme.

Lecturers are required to attend professional workshops or seminars annually, publish papers locally and internationally, and review papers for specialised journals in Language Teaching and Business Management

Pedagogical / didactical qualification of faculty
All lecturers at HCMCOU must attend compulsory seminars dealing with teaching methodology on various delivery modes, assessment methods, and IT skills. Moreover, they must attend training in the design of course learning outcomes and curriculum development. Teaching demonstrations such as online teaching methods or how to use LMS in teaching are organised to boost effective teaching practice as well.

All teaching staff must have pedagogical credentials. They are required to present at domestic or international conferences, seminars, and workshops for professional development, enhancing their teaching and research capabilities. Local and international publications are prerequisites for lecturing at the Faculty of Advanced Study. Financial support is provided for transportation, accommodation, and registration fees for these events.

To ensure teaching quality, FFL conducts classroom observations each semester. The head of the Business English department and other lecturers participate, providing constructive

feedback. At the end of each term, the university surveys students for feedback on their lecturers' teaching activities. These findings are reported to the faculty, allowing lecturers to adjust their teaching methods and receive suggestions for improvement from the Dean and Head of Business English.

<u>Practical business experience of faculty</u>
All teaching staff are active industry relationships to stay updated on workplace changes and advise students on career choices. Most have industry experience in fields such as tourism, hospitality, banking, and logistics, which they integrate into their teaching and programme development.

Language lecturers, with extensive community service and international training experience, incorporate technology and interactive techniques like role play, theatre, think-pair-share, group presentations, and project-based learning into their classrooms.

Business lecturers from other faculties, with industry experience in areas like logistics and marketing, enhance their teaching with role play, project-based learning, presentations, talk shows, and field trips.

<u>Internal cooperation</u>
At the SAS and the respective faculties, the teaching staff is involved in the review of the curriculum. This takes place every two years. For this process, they also invite external experts, for instance from the industries or alumni working in the field of the discipline to share their feedback about new trends. Within the two years of curriculum implementation, lecturers are allowed to make minor changes to the contents. Lecturers who teach the same subject coordinate the course contents and the examination. Moreover, they can cooperate in terms of research and community service as well.

Before each semester, the faculty holds a formal meeting with full-time and visiting lecturers to introduce up-to-date regulations and encourage discussions for module improvement and new course development. The faculty also regularly organises conferences, workshops, and training programmes for professional development.

Internships are supervised by two lecturers: one for language use and one for content delivery. Interns select topics and outline reports under the supervision of Business lecturers, then proceed with writing under the supervision of language lecturers.

Lecturers collaborate across faculties. Language lecturers from the programme join teaching practices for business students in international linkage programmes with universities such as Flinders University (Australia), Bond University (Australia), and Rouen University (France). In return, business lecturers from the Faculties of Finance and Banking, Business Administration, and Accounting and Auditing teach programme students majoring in Business English. Both groups observe each other's classes to learn and provide feedback.

Business lecturers help develop course syllabi in line with the programme curriculum, while language lecturers assist in developing syllabi for ESP business students.

<u>Student support by the faculty</u>

The SAS offers student support in form of academic advisory from teachers who are in charge of a class in the advanced programmes. The academic advisors support students in their learning process. In addition to face-to-face meetings, students can discuss their study challenges with the academic advisors via email and LMS messages. The academic advisors schedule regular class appointments in each semester. Lecturers of courses also provide academic support related to their expertise. Students can share their problems in class or afterwards. The common practice is that students exchange emails/posts with their lecturers.

SAS supports students in three main areas:
1. **General Management**: Academic assistants are available to help students. The SAS office is open from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday, for academic inquiries. Students can also call during these hours or check the SAS website[22] for the reception schedule.
2. **Programme Issues**: Form lecturers and academic counsellors manage groups of classes. Form lecturers meet students each term to address issues, share new regulations, and inform about extra activities. Academic counsellors advise on course selection, programme direction, and the possibility of pursuing a second degree. Students can contact them via email, phone, or social media after class hours. Besides, senior student tutors also provide effective peer support.
3. **Course Support by lecturers**: Students can contact course lecturers for assistance. Lecturers are available in person as per the published calendar and can also be reached via email or phone. Lecturers contact information is provided in their CVs and course outlines. Annually, HCMCOU Office of Student Affairs (OSA) reports to the Board of Presidents and Deans on the counselling and support provided by academic counsellors.

Appraisal:

The structure and number of the faculty correspond to the programme requirements and ensure that the students reach the intended qualification objectives. The faculty's composition, consisting of full-time and part-time (visiting) lecturers, guarantees that both the academic standards and the requirements of professional practice are fully satisfied.

As they teach at advanced programmes, the lecturers must meet certain requirements regarding their academic qualifications, for instance having a master's degree from a foreign university. HCMCOU monitors the qualifications of the faculty members by means of an established procedure and also offers opportunities for further qualification of the faculty members.

HCMCOU determines the requirements for pedagogical and didactical qualification of the faculty and verifies the qualifications of the faculty members by means of an established procedure. Through seminars and trainings, HCMCOU familiarises assessors with existing testing and examination methods. All lecturers receive support in developing their own skills in this field. Specific measures for the further qualification of the faculty members are implemented.

---

[22] Liên hệ (ou.edu.vn) (last access on August 15.08.2024).

The practical business experience of the faculty corresponds to the requirement of the programme to integrate theory and practice. Some lecturers have a background from the business world.

The panel appreciates how faculty members cooperate. They cooperate with each other for the purpose of curriculum development in regular meetings Besides that, cross-faculty cooperation is also frequent for organising conferences and seminars.

The comprehensive student support system ensures that students receive help with general management, programme issues, and course support. It is offered on a regular basis and serves to help students study successfully. Academic assistants, form lecturers, and academic counsellors are readily available for academic inquiries and course-related advice. The faculty's approachability is demonstrated by their availability outside specified office hours, and students can also contact them via email or phone. Lecturers are accessible for guidance and additionally, senior student tutors provide effective peer support. The students are "fully content" with the support they receive.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.1 Faculty					
4.1.1* Structure and quantity of faculty in relation to curricular requirements (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.2* Academic qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.3* Pedagogical / didactical qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.4 Practical business experience of faculty			X		
4.1.5* Internal cooperation (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.6* Student support by the faculty (Asterisk Criterion)		X			
4.1.7(*) Student support in distance learning (only relevant and an Asterisk Criterion for blended-learning/distance learning programmes)					X

4.2 Programme management

<u>Programme Director</u>
The School of Advanced Studies (SAS) is led by a Dean who is appointed by HCMCOU President. The Dean receives assistance from Vice Dean, the individual Heads of the advanced programmes and seven administrative staff. The Dean is responsible for the general school management, administration, operation, student and staff research and support.

Each of the advanced programmes has a Head or the Programme Director who is assigned by the Dean of the Faculty of the related majors. The Programme Director oversees the programme design, implementation, revision and update of the advanced programme curriculum as well as the quality assurance and improvements. He/she has the support from the lecturers and the administrative unit and coordinates the activities of staff in the faculty as well those of the University offices to ensure the programmes run smoothly. The main duty

relates to assigning the lecturers with courses to teach; organising student services as seminars, internship, or field trips; providing research support for undergraduate students; requiring lecturers to write or compile study materials; providing staff professional development; assuring test bank compiling for course final examinations and collaborating with industry.

This programme has two Programme Directors, one for advanced programmes and one for business English.

<u>Process organisation and administrative support for students and faculty</u>
The administrative support offered to students and faculty members is located on three levels. At the University level, the administrative offices, academic support offices and the faculty provide relevant support to both students and faculty members such as library, infrastructure maintenance, finance, employment. The SAS is the main administrative support provider to both advanced programme students and SAS members and helps to proceed the support associated with the university level.

In addition to the academic and administrative services, students can obtain assistance from the following: Library, Online information system website for students, student email system, learning management system (LMS) for students and staff, career orientation, student services such as financial loan, career orientation, and health services.

At the faculty level, the Programme Director and the faculty members meet at least once a month to review the programme operation. The faculty members of the programme receive mainly administrative support from the faculty and academic support from the Programme Director and Academic Board. The faculty members are well informed of the purposes of the programme and any improvement strategies that the programme is pursuing so that, in turn, they could provide support to students if needed. In addition to that, they can discuss with the Programme Director and Head of the Academic board issues related to the learning and teaching activities or request for improvements or more support from the faculty and from the University offices. They also receive support from the admin staff, as they help with handout photos, introduce the faculty to classes, give faculty members the student list or other paperwork, contracts or exchange with the faculty members about issues arising from the classroom, or help solve the classroom facility issues.

At the class level, the class monitors and the form teacher in charge of each class/academic counsellor will help guarantee that students have the support needed. Each class has a chief class monitor and a vice monitor elected by the students every year. The monitors act as representatives of students, and they are the main contacts with the faculty and the teacher in charge. The teacher in charge is assigned to support students during their whole time of study both academically and administratively.

At the beginning of the study programme, students have an orientation section not only about the objectives of the programme but also about the HCMCOU regulations and all the support students can have and how they obtain the service from the University offices and from the faculty. Information is very handy in the student handbook, and on the website of the respective faculty or from the faculty members.

During the Covid-19 closure, as all courses have been provided online. Technical support is available for students in case they have difficulties with their online classes. All administrative

services are provided online, and students can submit all documents or requirements electronically for students' convenience.

Furthermore, lecturers and students take part in the decision-making process which affects their areas of activity. School members can freely discuss with the Programme Director issues related to their courses and their teaching and learning concerns. Students are involved in the decision-making process by participating in student liaison committees and attending joint meetings with the Deans. At least twice a year, there is a dialog section between students and the President, together with the Dean of the faculty, and the directors of University offices so that students can show their feedback on the service they obtain from the University and from the faculty and take part in the decision-making process that could affect positively their study activities and their interest. In addition, HCMCOU also conducts surveys of the graduates regarding their satisfaction with the service from the HCMCOU and from the faculty.

Appraisal:

As confirmed during the interviews with the programme management as well as with the teachers and administration staff, the Programme Directors and the Heads of the Academic Board coordinate the processes of all participants in the study programmes and ensure that the study programmes run smoothly.

The SAS and its administrative staff support all faculty members and students in the organisation of the study programme. The SAS ensures that sufficient administrative staff is available. Decision-making processes, authority, and responsibilities are clearly defined. Teachers and students are included in the decision-making processes where their areas of work are involved.

The opportunities of electronic service-support are used and supplement personal one-to-one counselling. The HEI offers the administrative staff opportunities for continuous professional development.

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.2	Programme management					
4.2.1*	Programme Director (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.2.2	Process organisation and administrative support for students and faculty			X		

4.3   Cooperation and partnerships

<u>Cooperation with HEIs and other academic institutions or networks</u>
Since 2019, SAS has partnership with an Australian university for a Bachelor of Languages joint-training programme (two years in Vietnam and one year in Australia). This collaboration enhances the quality of the programme's modules, courses, and overall structure, continuously improving students' academic knowledge and professional skills. Students can transfer to Flinders University (Australia) for English language specialisation (credit transfers between the two programmes are approved). The joint Bachelor programmes in English between HCMCOU

and Flinders University offers students opportunities to study abroad and have international experience.

The faculty receives support from an educational organisation for teachers' professional development and educational resources, giving students access to extensive learning materials to boost their language skills.

In 2022, an MoU was signed with a learning resource provider, diversifying and updating teaching and learning resources for lecturers and students.

Furthermore, lecturer exchanges are conducted. In 2016, a visiting lecturer coordinated a teaching visit, enriching students' understanding of American Literature on the Vietnam War. This provided lecturers with opportunities to learn, discuss, and share teaching experiences, gaining deeper insights into integrating culture and language in teaching. Language lecturers from the programme join teaching practices for business students in international linkage programmes with universities such as Flinders University (Australia), Bond University (Australia), and Rouen University (France).

Cooperation with business enterprises and other organisations
SAS signed an MoU with Simple English Language Centre to provide hands-on practicum for the students. They can experience roles in sales, marketing, academic consultation, copywriting, and teacher recruitment. Through a thirty-hour workplace experience, students gain insights into the world of work and apply skills like teamwork, critical thinking, and independent thinking acquired in the programme.

The faculty has also MoUs with various enterprises since 2018, offering students knowledge in both English and business, such as
- IELTS Worksmart joint venture company (2018),
- Key Limited Company (2018),
- Manulife Vietnam (2019),
- Universal Tour (2019),
- Sao Viet Trading and Office supply management company (2019),
- Smart Train company (2019),
- TN Key Skills (2020),
- Unimates Education Limited Company (2020),
- L-Tech Vietnam (2020), and
- Mega LifeSciences Vietnam (2021).

These partnerships open up internship and job opportunities in hospitality, tourism, IT, education, sales and marketing, human resources, and administration.

Appraisal:

The scope and nature of cooperation with other universities or other academic institutions and networks relevant for the programmes are in place and monitored by the SAS and HCMCOU. The agreements forming the basis of the cooperation are documented. SAS and FFL actively pursue partnerships that shall develop the conception and implementation of the study programme. All such activities contribute to the development of the students' qualification and skills.

Regarding business partnership, the panel considers the scope and nature of cooperation plausible and sufficient. The agreements forming the basis of the cooperation are documented. Again, SAS and FFL actively pursue cooperation to develop the conception and implementation of the study programme. All such activities contribute to the development of the students' qualification and skills. In case that other organisations conduct parts of the study programme, the HEI ensures that the quality standards are met.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.3 Cooperation and partnerships					
4.3.1(*) Cooperation with HEIs and other academic institutions or networks (Asterisk Criterion for cooperation programmes)			X		
4.3.2(*) Cooperation with business enterprises and other organisations (Asterisk Criterion for educational and vocational programmes, franchise programmes)			X		

4.4 Facilities and equipment

<u>Quantity, quality, media and IT equipment of teaching and group rooms</u>
The visitation took place online via the video conferencing tool *ZOOM* so that the panel members were not able to visit the facilities in person. The University provided photographs and videos introducing the campus surroundings and facilities.

For advanced programmes, HCMCOU has centralised the teaching and learning on Vo Van Tan campus that offers an auditorium, modern conference room, foreign language lab room, library, medical clinic, or bookshop. Hence, the SAS offers its classes at the Vo Van Tan campus which is close to the HCMCOU headquarters and the business district of the city. The Vo Van Tam campus has 43 classrooms in different sizes and three computer laboratories. It includes:

- The HCMCOU portal provides access to the HCMCOU website and EDUSOFT/EDUWEB for information.
- Licensed software for SAS students includes MS Office, SPSS, Matlab, MS SQL Server, and Turnitin.
- Free high-speed Wi-Fi is available across campus, allowing students to work with their own laptops.
- Email accounts are provided to each student upon enrolment.
- The LMS platform is used for learning, teaching, and course management. Nearly all students use it to access course outlines, materials, and online activities.

All classrooms are equipped with projectors, whiteboards, speakers, microphones, and air conditioning. Disabled students have a barrier-free access to classrooms. They are built on a small scale, equipped with movable tables and chairs, which can assist flexible physical set-ups for different study groups, enhancing the interaction between learners and lecturers.

Digital screens provide information for students. Staff is alternatively on shift, ensuring support for lecturers and students daily from 7.00 am to 8.00 pm.

<u>Access to literature</u>
Located at Vo Van Tan campus, the central library is open seven days a week, from 7:30 am to 8:00 pm on weekdays and Saturdays, and from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm on Sundays. It houses over 12,730 books, six databases, 28 e-journals, 15 printed journals, and 1,190 dissertations in Vietnamese and English languages. The databases are shared with the library of Viet Nam National Universities Ho Chi Minh City, VNUHCM University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Hanoi Law University, VNUHCM University of Science, Industrial University of HCMC, HCMC University of Foreign Languages and Information Technology, An Giang University to provide a varied and up-to-date references for students and lecturers.

The central library is equipped with 162 computers, photocopiers, and printers. There are also six group study rooms across other campuses. Students can access online services via the library website, and ca. 83% of students are satisfied with the library services.[23]

The digital library, developed in 2002, is frequently updated and archives databases of theses, journals, and registration databases like ProQuest and SpringerLink, Vietnam Law, SAGE, Emerald and STINET of HCMDST. It also provides inter-library loan services and shares databases with above mentioned universities, offering diverse reference sources. For the programme, there are 15,550 specialised books, four databases, ten specialised journals, and 252 dissertations available for free.

The librarians offer students support for accessing the online and offline library on the spot or via contacting emails. Students may request additional training sections onsite to help them to find electronic documents which are necessary for their research and learning.

The Bachelor of Arts in English programme offers 5,550 specialised books, four databases (including two e-journals: Sage and HCMOUJS, one e-book: IG Publishing, and one dissertation/thesis database), ten hard-copy specialised journals, and 252 dissertations, all available for free.

Appraisal:

Albeit the panel members were not present at UMP in person, they were provided with photographs and videos showing the campus, the library, the faculty, and the equipment. The panel members had the opportunity to talk to representatives from the library and the quality assurance department during the online conference.

HCMCOU's media and IT facilities of the teaching rooms meet the standards required for the programme, even considering that the SAS combines students from different Faculties under its roof. The panel thinks that the rooms are properly equipped providing access to the internet free of charge. A sufficient number of group rooms is available. Barrier-free access is given for students with physical impairments.

---

[23] See self-evaluation report p. 47.

The opening hours of the library take students' needs sufficiently into account. The library offers an online access so that students' needs can be met without being dependent on time and space. Access to the literature and journals as well as to digital media (e.g. electronic media, databases) is ensured. The literature expressly required for the study programme is available in the library and also kept up to date.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.4 Facilities and equipment					
4.4.1* Quantity, quality, media and IT equipment of teaching and group rooms (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.4.2* Access to literature (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

4.5 Additional services

<u>Career counselling and placement service</u>
HCMCOU Office of Student Affairs (OSA)[24] has a section (Job Placement Centre, JPC) in charge of career counselling and placement service for students at the whole University with various activities such as organising job fairs, acting as a head-hunter agency for industry, or job orientation. The SAS cooperates with the OSA and the JPC regarding issues related to career counselling, start-up activities and the orientation session for the new students of the advanced programmes. Additionally, FFL organises events, seminars, workshops, and job fairs, supporting student entrepreneurship and employability.

The career counselling has been the focus of the JPC, which is to introduce career-oriented works, internships, career counselling, job placement for alumni and potential undergraduates via monthly emails, the University's website, and social media.

The Office has organised many events, workshops, seminars, Part-time Job Fairs and Job Fairs for students and alumni such as coordinating the organisation of extracurricular activities, interacting with industrial organisations, supporting start-up business for students, promoting student employability. The Centre also coordinates with professional experts, scholars, lecturers to provide students training courses in terms of personality formation, professional ethics, and soft skills. Students are offered many guidance and advice in looking for a job, namely making a profile, writing a job application, handling situations in interviews, and communicating with employers. In addition, career counselling and placement services are offered to the students and graduates regularly and on a long-time basis thanks to the electronic job portals (CV online) on the University website connecting representatives from business enterprises and students.

SAS has annual plans for career orientation and internships, sending students to businesses and corporations under lecturer supervision. Students must write a report as a programme exit requirement. A 2022 survey rated student satisfaction with these activities between 4.00 and 4.68 on a 5-point scale.[25]

---

[24] See: http://en.ou.edu.vn/pages/view/162/Office%20of%20Student%20Affairs-Home (last accessed April 18, 2024).
[25] See self-evaluation report p. 49.

Alumni Activities

HCMCOU Alumni Association[26] is the main communication channel with the graduates of HCMCOU. It comprises graduates of all levels of study from undergraduate to graduate levels. It has been established to facilitate connections between alumni and Universities. It also helps collect feedback from the graduates and provides a forum to form new friendships and business relationships among graduates. The Office of Student Affairs (OSA) and SAS also provide pictures, materials, and information about the activities of alumni regularly on their websites.

The SAS founded its Alumni Club on November 9, 2020, intending to develop an alumni network and to share information between alumni and current students. Alumni can hold seminars or talks to share their working experience with the current students. As of 2023, there were 765 active alumni members in the SAS' Alumni Club.

Appraisal:

Career counselling and placement services are offered to the students and graduates to promote their employability through OSA, JPC and FFL. The HEI provides sufficient resources. Career counselling and placement services are offered to the students and graduates on an individual basis. Activities, such as job fairs, are planned on a long-time basis, performed regularly, and are actively marketed. Students have access to the HEI-wide corporate network thanks to the electronic job portals. The HEI brings its graduates in contact with representatives from business enterprises at regular events.

The measures set up by the University and the SAS to connect alumni through their Alumni Network or SAS Alumni Club are positive. The SAS actively integrates alumni in activities for students.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.5 Additional services					
4.5.1 Career counselling and placement service		X			
4.5.2 Alumni Activities			X		

4.6 Financing of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)

HCMCOU is a public, self-funded University. As of 2022, students of the advanced programmes at the SAS paid the tuition fees in the amount of about 1,500 USD for their study programme. The tuition is supposed to increase each year (less than 10 %) following the government guidance. HCMCOU Office of Finance and Accounting manages all the financial and accounting issues. They propose the tuition based on the actual expenses of the previous programmes together with the including inflation, the anticipated increases in student numbers for the following academic year mentioned in HCMCOU Enrolment and financial plan and other approved plans of expenditures on infrastructure.

---

[26] http://alumni.ou.edu.vn/, last access February 2, 2022.

The tuition fee contributes the largest share of the total amount of revenues according to HCMCOU financial plan and report. HCMCOU also receives government educational grants but mainly for research projects or infrastructure maintenance. Every year, before the next school year, HCMCOU allocates expenditures for staff salary, training and support aids, stationery, funds for the upgrade, expansion of the library and labs to purchase computers and equipment, software and equipment for classrooms, LMS system, distribute scholarships and reserve funds. The HCMCOU yearly fund distribution will be approved by the University Board and then presented for the approval of HCMCOU staff via the HCMCOU employee meeting by the end of each school year.

The expenditures of all activities in HCMCOU are regulated by the Internal Expenditure Regulations which are under the umbrella of the State financial regulations. That way of management and the sound financial conditions of HCMCOU assure that the study programmes are always stable, sustainable, and sufficiently funded.

Scholarships are available for advanced programmes' students. The amount is higher than that for students at regular programmes because the tuition fee of the advanced programmes is higher than that of regular programmes.

Appraisal:

The income related to the programmes ensures that each cohort of students starting within the accreditation period can complete the study programme.

|	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.6* Financing of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

5.   Quality assurance and documentation

5.1 Quality assurance and quality development with respect to contents, processes and outcomes

HCMCOU has a framework for quality assurance that is applied for the institution and faculties at programme levels. HCMCOU has established the Quality Assurance Office. The Quality Assurance Office oversees working with leaders and people in charge of quality in faculties, offices and centers to improve the internal quality assurance system of HCMCOU. The primary functions of the Quality Assurance Office are to

1. develop and implement quality assurance systems and procedures for HCMCOU activities.
2. monitor the implementation of quality assurance procedures and processes institution-wide.
3. provide information and analysis necessary for decision making at the institution and division level.
4. advise the institution on quality proposals, policies, and strategic plans

Table 12 HCMOU quality assurance system
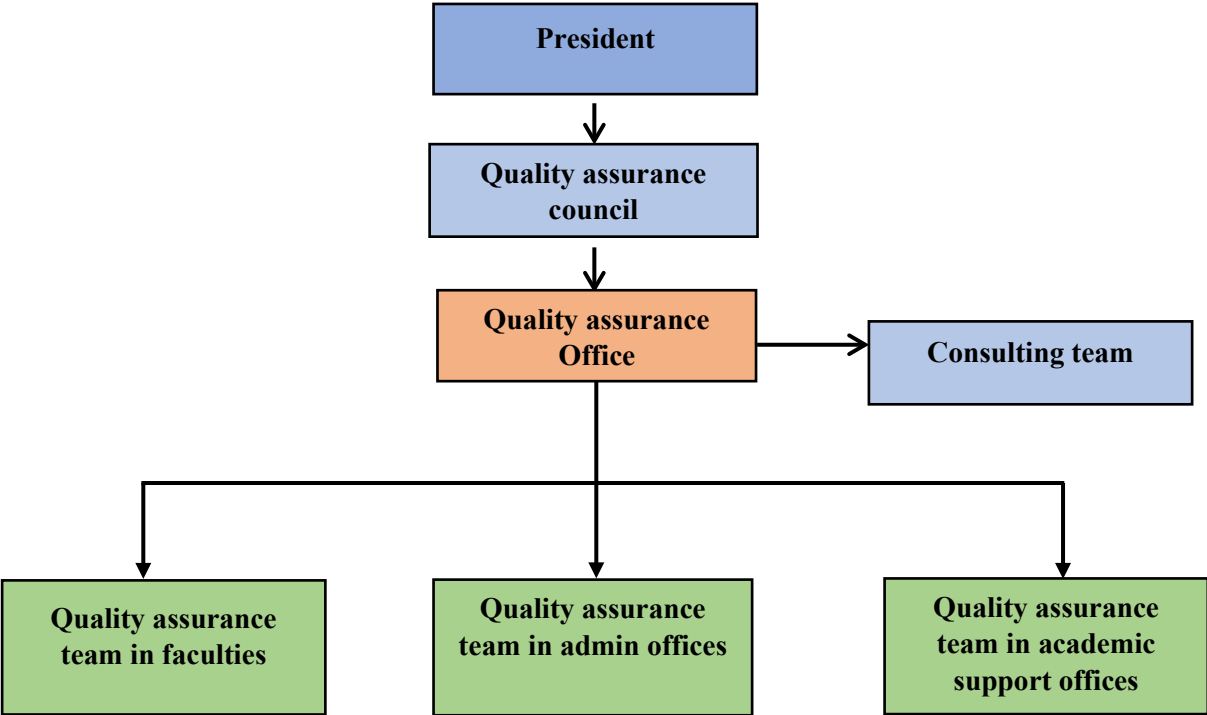
The SAS monitors the academic activities of the advanced programmes. It is responsible for its own quality assurance procedures. It oversees all the academic activities generally to ensure that programmes meet their objectives. The main tasks include deciding which specific standards the educational programmes or service must meet by benchmarking with the MOET requirements, determining the extent of quality control actions, and conducting surveys collecting data from the stakeholders' feedback to evaluate the outcomes against the objectives of the programme for improvement. These are usually internal processes that are conducted on a regular basis. By facilitating a positive, self-critical organisational culture and

a supportive environment, the faculties engage all lecturers and administrative staff to contribute to the continuing development and maintenance of standards.

Table 13 Programme quality assurance system
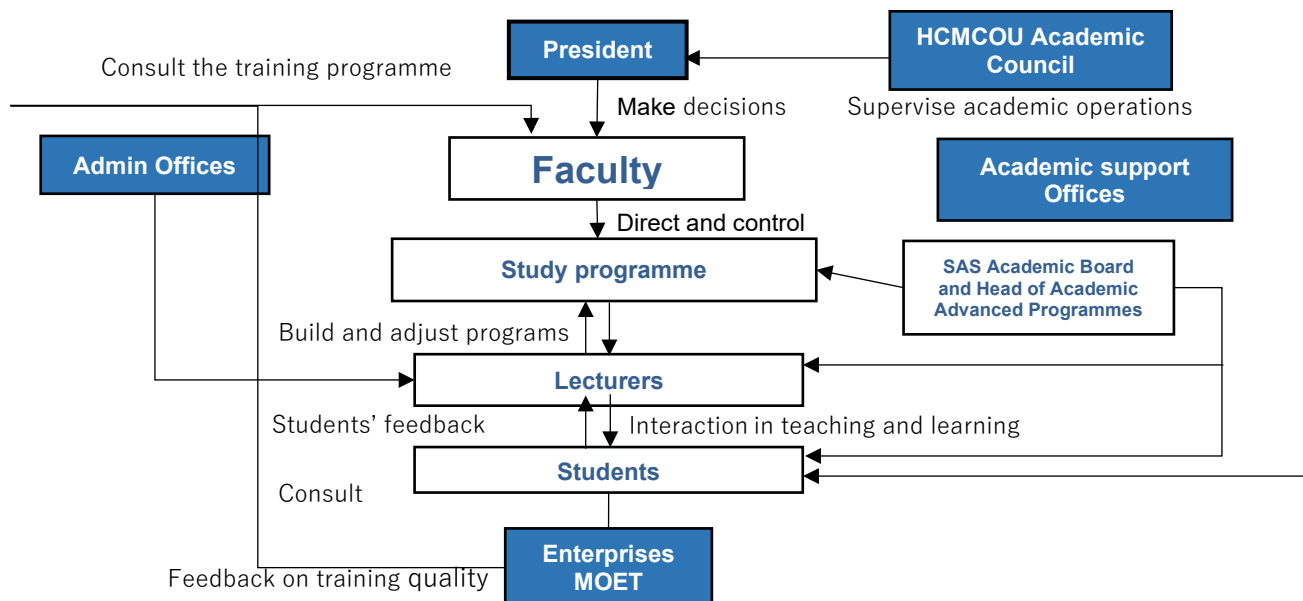
The procedures of academic quality assurance take place at course, programme and the faculty levels. This involves two overarching processes: the development of new curricula and the on-going management of the existing programmes. The SAS Academic Board maintains the academic integrity of the programmes and ensures that their quality enhances. The SAS Academic board plays a key part in the wide range of activities related to the courses and programme development: planning new curricula, modifying the course, and the existing programme every two years to ensure the curriculum of a programme or a course remains current. For all study programme development and review, besides MOET requirements, HCMCOU Academic affairs Office has the regulations/procedures/documents guiding how the programmes are designed and regularly reviewed.

Table 14 Process of collecting feedback from stakeholders
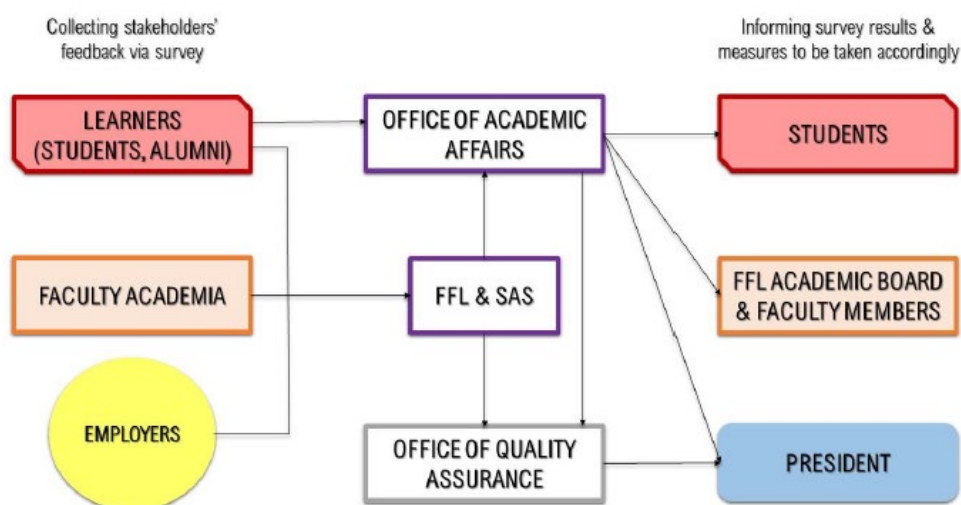
5.2 Instruments of quality assurance

Evaluation by students
To assure the smooth implementation of the programmes and to have data for the Advanced programmes' improvement, the SAS maintains a monitoring and feedback system both quantitatively and qualitatively regularly and on demands. There are three types of student survey by questionnaires: The Academic Office undertakes course survey at the end of the terms, programme survey when students are graduated and programme impact survey when students have graduated for one year.

For students, the questionnaire for the course survey consists of 21 questions, using the five-point Likert scale. There are three questions related to the course introduction, six relate to the teaching methods, three related to the teaching content, five related to the teacher's attitudes and four related to the course assessments. Another question is concerned with the number of credits that students took during the semester and a second one asks for the actual workload regarding the hours students spent with self-study, preparation for assignments, mid-term exams and the final paper. For the SAS advanced programmes, the Student Union and the Youth Communist Party shall discuss the study workload with students in a meeting each term.

The results of the course evaluation are sent to lecturers and the Programme Directors, to supervise the teaching quality. In critical cases (the result is rated under average), the Programme Director will discuss with the lecturers and suggests for certain modification and improvements in teaching and learning with a view to better level of student satisfaction. Student feedback on the curriculum will be taken into consideration in the yearly meeting of the faculty and Academic Board.

In addition, the University encourages students to give feedback and comments during term-time, not just at the end of the module/course. The Legal affairs Office is available to receive students' feedback and comments. This Office is also in charge of inspecting, supervising the performing objectives, plans, programmes, educational methods, educational regulations, working regulations, and other conditions to assure the necessary conditions to maintain the quality teaching and learning.

Evaluation by faculty
There are two types of evaluation by the faculty. First, related to teaching facilities, at the beginning of the term, faculty members fill the questionnaire assessing whether the current teaching facilities could ensure teaching activities. In addition, the faculty also takes part into the evaluation of the programmes so that their feedback can help review and develop the new curriculum, the programme quality is enhanced and modified to the demand of the stakeholders. In detail, every four years, the faculty members give feedback on the programme they are teaching.

Moreover, there is a meeting per month, where the faculty members can discuss issues related to teaching and learning activities. Lecturers are invited to express their voice whether a section be retained or removed or the related academic issues at the meeting to review the curriculum, at meetings before the term or meetings for the development strategies. Upon the frank, open and collegial support, the courses have been adjusted/ innovated according to the changes and demand of graduate employability, and ultimately the curriculum is renewed.

Such meetings ensure the transparency and collegiality for the betterment of quality in general, benefits of the students, teaching and learning within the faculties.

<u>External evaluation by alumni, employers and third parties</u>
Alumni's comments are collected via questionnaires right after their graduation and one year after graduation. First, the questionnaire for newly graduate students has 35 questions, using the five Likert scale, seeks their feedback on the whole programme, teaching methods, the extra activities and skill building, administration and the overall satisfaction towards the programme.

Second, another questionnaire for alumni graduated from the University one year ago investigates their employment situation, such as income, time for the first job, and the suitability between the training areas and their employment. Information from this survey gives an understanding of the employability and competitiveness of former students, which partly reflects the quality and effectiveness of our programme in preparing students for their future career. The results will be documented and used as references to adjust educational activities and programmes for current students.

As for employers, on a periodical basis, meetings and requests for feedback are also sent to enterprises and organisations for comments on their employees (alumni) performance. This source of information is useful and critical to make necessary attempts in innovating the existing curriculum, structure, content, modes of teaching and learning, testing and assessment as well as other student learning support.

5.3   Programme documentation

<u>Programme description</u>
The programmes' content is documented both in print and in digital forms. Information about the objectives and the content of the programme, its structure and the admission requirements can be accessed on the website of the HCMCOU. These contents are frequently updated and amended, if needed, in accordance with the new regulations.

Every new student is given a student ID and an account of the student information system. This website provides students a variety of information such as study results and examination dates. It also allows students to online register courses, pay study fee and do other procedures such as: printing tuition receipts, accessing behaviour point systems, registering their residences.

When a new student enrolls, he or she is given an email address. Through this email account, curriculum, schedule, examination scheme, exam regulations, and other relevant notifications will be communicated during the academic year. In association with the email account, LMS account is the effective channel where outline courses and relevant learning materials in digital form are available for referencing and downloading.

The SAS' website[27] displays relevant information about the study programmes, their content and structure, and contact information. Student can access their individual information as their

---

[27] See: http://en.ou.edu.vn/pages/view/185/School-of-Advanced-Study-Introduce (last accessed April 18, 2024)

courses results (their progress, failed and passed, course and programme completion), their tuition records, the timetable of the courses and exams through their personal account at Eduweb, a portal that students have account given at the beginning of the programmes. For management information system of the programme, they will rely on Edusoft. They also can directly ask the faculty staff via phone or email or come to the faculty.

Information on the support available to students such as academic support, counselling, office hours of faculty members can also be found at the website of the faculty. Most of the faculty events such as opening the new programme or graduation or any memorandum signing ceremony, extra activities can be found on the HCMCOU website which is edited by the Communication Section and on press as well.

Brochures, leaflets, handbooks, and guidelines are available for personal use. Upon passing the entrance examination and being admitted to the study programme, each student receives a Student's Handbook with information about SAS, staff contacts, course coordinators, and guidance for successful course achievements during the orientation session.

Course outlines are provided in the first session, detailing the course description, credit hours, aims and objectives, schedules, textbooks, further readings, teaching and learning modes, assessments, and learning guides on the LMS system. Examination schedules, rules, and final assignments are also available to ensure students are well-prepared. Information on scholarships, seminars, thesis defense sessions, and student activities can be found on the HCMCOU website.

Information on activities during the academic year
HCMCOU actively maintains press relations and network communication. Information related to the quality assurance for learning and teaching of the institution is open to public at HCMCOU website. The University keeps students and staff well informed of the University strategic plans, yearly planning scheme, budget distribution and HCMCOU expenditures at HCMCOU employee annual meeting, where the annual report, a summary of the activities of the academic year, and the plan of the next year will be presented for consensus.

Information about student support, including academic support, counselling, and office hours, is available on the SAS website. Details of SAS events, such as the launch of new programmes, graduations, MOU signing ceremonies, and extra-curricular activities, can be found on the HCMCOU website, Facebook page, in the press, and in monthly newsletters published by OSAC.

Appraisal:

A quality assurance and development procedure, which systematically and continuously monitors and develops the quality of the programme with respect to its contents, processes, and outcomes, has been set up. It takes into account the evaluation results and the analysis on student workload, success rate, and graduate employment as well as the profile of the student population. Review of the study programme takes place every two years and includes different stakeholders. Faculty members and students participate in the respective committees to plan and assess the quality assurance and development procedures. Responsibilities are clearly defined.

Evaluation by the students is carried out on a regular basis and in accordance with a prescribed procedure. While the outcomes are communicated to the students and provide input for the quality development process, the panel **recommends** actively involving students in discussions of their feedback and to work with students to develop measures to address these issues.

Quality control by the faculty is carried out on a regular basis and in accordance with a prescribed procedure; the outcomes are communicated and provide input for the quality development process.

An external evaluation is carried out on a regular basis and in accordance with a prescribed procedure. While the outcomes are communicated and provide input for the quality development process, the panel **recommends** sharing the results more systematically with the alumni and to include them in developing the measures to address any concerns.

The study programme's content, curriculum and examination scheme have been suitably documented and published (e.g. course plan and exam regulations). The panel acknowledges that the website is in the process of updating and therefore the panel had not initial assess to the new website. The panel **recommends** showing all current/updated information on the new website. This also includes updated module descriptions (in English) should be published and available.

The HEI regularly publishes current news and information – both quantitative and qualitative – about the study programme.

	Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
5.1* Quality assurance and quality development with respect to contents, processes and outcomes (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
5.2 Instruments of quality assurance					
5.2.1 Evaluation by students			X		
5.2.2 Evaluation by faculty			X		
5.2.3 External evaluation by alumni, employers and third parties			X		
5.3 Programme documentation					
5.3.1* Programme description (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
5.3.2 Information on activities during the academic year			X		

Quality profile

HEI: Ho Chi Minh City Open University, Vietnam

Bachelor programme: Bachelor of Arts in English (B.A.)

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
1	**Objectives**					
1.1*	Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
1.2*	International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
1.3	Positioning of the study programme					
1.3.1	Positioning of the study programme in the educational market			X		
1.3.2	Positioning of the study programme on the job market for graduates ("Employability")			X		
1.3.3	Positioning of the study programme within the HEI's overall strategic concept			X		
2	**Admission**					
2.1*	Admission requirements (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
2.2	Counselling for prospective students			X		
2.3*	Selection procedure (if relevant)			X		
2.4(*)	Professional experience (if relevant; Asterisk Criterion for master programmes that require professional experience)					X
2.5*	Ensuring foreign language proficiency (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
2.6*	Transparency and documentation of admission procedure and decision (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3	**Contents, structure and didactical concept**					
3.1	Contents					
3.1.1*	Logic and conceptual coherence (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.2*	Rationale for degree and programme name (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.3*	Integration of theory and practice (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.4	Interdisciplinary thinking			X		
3.1.5	Ethical aspects			X		
3.1.6*	Methods and scientific practice (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.1.7*	Examination and final thesis (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.2	Structure					
3.2.1*	Modular structure of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
3.2.2*	Study and exam regulations (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.2.3*	Feasibility of study workload (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.2.4	Equality of opportunity			X		
3.3	**Didactical concept**					
3.3.1*	Logic and plausibility of the didactical concept (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.3.2*	Course materials (Asterisk Criterion)				**Condition**	
3.3.3	Guest lecturers			X		
3.3.4	Lecturing tutors			X		
3.4	**Internationality**					
3.4.1*	International contents and intercultural aspects (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.4.2	Internationality of the student body				X	
3.4.3	Internationality of faculty			X		
3.4.4	Foreign language contents			X		
3.5*	Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
3.6*	Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.	**Academic environment and framework conditions**					
4.1	**Faculty**					
4.1.1*	Structure and quantity of faculty in relation to curricular requirements (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.2*	Academic qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.3*	Pedagogical / didactical qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.4	Practical business experience of faculty			X		
4.1.5*	Internal cooperation (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.1.6*	Student support by the faculty (Asterisk Criterion)		X			
4.1.7(*)	Student support in distance learning (only relevant and an Asterisk Criterion for blended-learning/distance learning programmes)					X
4.2	**Programme management**					
4.2.1*	Programme Director (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.2.2	Process organisation and administrative support for students and faculty			X		
4.3	**Cooperation and partnerships**					
4.3.1(*)	Cooperation with HEIs and other academic institutions or networks (Asterisk Criterion for cooperation programmes)			X		

		Exceptional	Exceeds quality requirements	Meets quality requirements	Does not meet quality requirements	n.r.
4.3.2(*)	Cooperation with business enterprises and other organisations (Asterisk Criterion for educational and vocational programmes, franchise programmes)			X		
4.4	Facilities and equipment					
4.4.1*	Quantity, quality, media and IT equipment of teaching and group rooms (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.4.2*	Access to literature (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
4.5	Additional services					
4.5.1	Career counselling and placement service		X			
4.5.2	Alumni Activities			X		
4.6*	Financing of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
5	**Quality assurance and documentation**					
5.1*	Quality assurance and quality development with respect to contents, processes and outcomes (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
5.2	Instruments of quality assurance					
5.2.1	Evaluation by students			X		
5.2.2	Evaluation by faculty			X		
5.2.3	External evaluation by alumni, employers and third parties			X		
5.3	Programme documentation					
5.3.1*	Programme description (Asterisk Criterion)			X		
5.3.2	Information on activities during the academic year			X		