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# A Tripartite Approach to Bridging the Gap Between Education and Industry Demands

In the hospitality industry, a continuous evolution is the norm, often outpacing the adaptability of educational systems. This ongoing transformation stems from several factors, including a shortage of highly qualified educators, the need for more effective talent development initiatives, and a historical emphasis on practical skills over the cultivation of professional and managerial capabilities. These factors collectively contribute to the industry's ever-changing landscape and the need for a more agile educational approach.

Recognizing this issue, the Hospitality Institute of Sanya (HIS) in China has implemented a tripartite approach to education and training that aims to bridge the gap and provide students with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to succeed in the hospitality industry, particularly in the booming region of Hainan where it is located.

## Sanya - China's Vibrant and Captivating Tourist Hotspot

Sanya, often referred to as "the Hawaii of China," has indeed established itself as a thriving tourist destination owing to its enticing tropical climate, picturesque beaches, and rich cultural heritage. The province of Hainan, where Sanya is located, has witnessed a remarkable surge in tourist arrivals in recent years, reflecting the region's growing popularity.

To put this into perspective, data indicates that Hainan has experienced a substantial year-on-year increase in the number of visitors, with a significant proportion of tourists hailing from various regions within China. Among these visitors, a considerable influx comprises leisure travelers seeking relaxation in Sanya's idyllic setting, while a growing number also includes participants in Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) events. This surge in tourism underscores the immense potential and appeal of Sanya as a premier destination within the broader landscape of tourism and hospitality in China.





# The Hospitality Institute of Sanya: A Solution to Industry Demands

The Hospitality Institute of Sanya is the first hospitality-oriented educational institute in the region, adjacent to the Haitang Bay Duty-free International Shopping Complex and surrounded by international luxury hotels. Founded in 2017, HIS has quickly gained recognition for its commitment to excellence and achieving academic accreditation in October 2018, as the sole vocational college in China to successfully meet these rigorous academic standards of EHL (formerly known as Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne).

Managed by the Beijing Hospitality Institute and with the support of the China Communications Construction Company (CCCC), HIS is dedicated to fostering partnerships abroad and meeting the anticipated growth of the country's hospitality industry.

Spanning an impressive 230,000 square meters, HIS boasts a diverse range of facilities. These include a practice reception area, a Western cuisine restaurant, a Chinese cuisine eatery, a cozy café, a wine tasting training room, and three fully equipped demonstration kitchens. Furthermore, HIS manages the La Fountain Hotel & Resort Sanya, in partnership with its proprietors. A property that features 284 hotel rooms along with 210 apartments.

HIS houses more than 1,500 students across three distinct departments: Hospitality Management, Tourism Management, and Economics & Administration. These academic pillars are meticulously designed to mold the next generation of hospitality trailblazers, equipped to meet the ever-evolving demands of the market.

The Notably, HIS has garnered a reputation for producing highly sought-after graduates, who are consistently in high demand by employers across the hospitality spectrum. Many alumni have successfully secured positions at prestigious hotels, resorts, and restaurants, while others have ventured boldly into entrepreneurship within the dynamic hospitality landscape. This track record underscores HIS's pivotal role in shaping the future of the hospitality industry in Hainan and beyond.





## The Tripartite Approach to Education and Training

HIS has implemented a tripartite approach to education and training, which consists of three main sections: Input, Learning by Doing, and Output. This approach aims to create a clear learning culture, provide a combination of theoretical and practical teachings, and offer internship opportunities for students.

### Input Section: Creating a Learning Culture

In the Input section, HIS focuses on creating a learning culture that helps students develop effective learning routines and habits. This includes strict adherence to dress code and etiquette standards, as well as the establishment of a monitoring team responsible for ensuring compliance. Additionally, HIS has partnered with EHL to tailor the curriculum to the Chinese context and provide students with a solid foundation in the industry.

### Learning by Doing Section: Practical Teaching and Internships

The Learning by Doing section emphasizes the completion of theoretical and practical courses, with approximately 60% of teachers and staff coming from the hospitality industry. The curriculum includes practical courses in baking, Western and Chinese cuisines, and students have the opportunity to sell their creations in the on-campus canteen. Furthermore, HIS operates an international four-star training hotel called La Fountain, which provides students with hands-on experience in all aspects of hotel operations.

## Output Section: Developing Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes

The Output section focuses on the development of skills, knowledge, vision, and attitudes among students. The goal is to produce graduates with quality skills, certain knowledge, a broad international vision, and positive attitudes (SKVA portraits). Students gain theoretical knowledge in the classroom, improve their practical abilities through hands-on courses and internships, and participate in various international events and activities to broaden their vision. The ultimate aim is to equip graduates with the necessary skills and attitudes to meet the demands of the hospitality industry.

## HIS and EHL Partnership: A Recipe for Success

The partnership between EHL and the Hospitality Institute of Sanya served several key objectives.

It addresses the pressing demand within the Sanya hospitality industry by providing a dedicated educational institution in the region. This not only caters to the local talent pool but also extends its reach to attract students from neighboring provinces such as Hainan, Guangdong, and Guangxi.

The institute plays a pivotal role in supplying the skilled workforce needed for the ambitious pipeline of 20 hotels across China, spearheaded by CCCC.

This investment in education goes beyond academic pursuits; it represents a commitment to nurturing and empowering the next generation of Chinese talents. HIS actively supports this mission by offering scholarships to students facing financial constraints, thus opening doors to promising opportunities in the dynamic field of hospitality.





EHL provided essential guidance and expertise to HIS throughout the development process.

## Campus Development: Creating an Optimal Learning Environment

EHL has supported HIS in the architectural design of the campus, ensuring that the facilities meet the highest standards. Recommendations were made for classrooms, hotel rooms, reception areas, restaurants, bars, and kitchen spaces to enhance the learning experience for students. Attention was also given to infrastructure and equipment requirements to maximize efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

## Faculty Training: Empowering Educators

Recognizing the importance of well-trained faculty, EHL provided coaching to HIS faculty members to ensure the delivery of high-quality education. The Qualified Learning Facilitator's (QLF) Program, developed by EHL, equipped faculty with the necessary knowledge and competencies in pedagogy, andragogy, and epistemology. This training helped faculty shift from traditional teaching methods to facilitation, promoting student engagement and learning.

## Curriculum Design: Balancing Theory and Practice

EHL played a crucial role in the design of HIS's curriculum. The curriculum was carefully crafted to balance theoretical and practical components, ensuring that graduates are equipped with the skills and knowledge required by the industry. Business case studies and industry needs were taken into consideration, prioritizing the employability of graduates and the long-term success of the institution.

## Academic Audits: Ensuring Quality and Continuous Improvement

To maintain high standards, EHL conducted yearly academic audits of HIS. These audits evaluated the implementation of standards, assessed the achievement of defined targets, and provided constructive feedback for continuous improvement. By measuring key performance indicators and identifying areas for enhancement, HIS was able to continually refine its programs and deliver quality education.



# The Impact of the HIS-EHL Partnership

The partnership between HIS and EHL has had a significant impact on the institution, its faculty, and its students. Through the tripartite approach to education and the guidance provided by EHL, HIS has strengthened its connection with the hospitality industry, enhanced faculty facilitating experience, and enabled students to gain valuable hospitality knowledge and critical thinking skills.

HIS has become the first hospitality vocational education and training university in the region, offering a range of programs that cater to different aspects of the industry. The institution has received recognition from education authorities, the hotel industry, similar institutions, and students and parents alike. Teachers and students at HIS have garnered numerous awards, further highlighting the institution's commitment to excellence.

The Hospitality Institute of Sanya's tripartite approach to education and training, in partnership with the EHL, is a testament to the institution's dedication to bridging the gap between education and industry demands. By creating a clear learning culture, providing practical teachings and internships, and developing the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes among students, HIS is preparing graduates to meet the demands of the ever-evolving hospitality industry. With the support and guidance of EHL, HIS is well-positioned to continue producing talented professionals and contributing to the growth of the hospitality sector in China.

Source: [A hierarchical model for talent cultivation in hospitality programmes: The case of the Hospitality Institute of Sanya](#)

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