

PolyU Assists Guilin Institute of Tourism Develop its Diploma Programme

The School of Hotel and Tourism Management of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) recently completed the first phase of its involvement in a United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) project to upgrade the Guilin Institute of Tourism to university level. Situated in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the Guilin Institute of Tourism is the only higher education institute in Mainland China dedicated just to tourism studies, graduating around 3,000 students from 28 provinces each year.

According to the UNWTO, the assistance rendered ensures a long-term sustainability of tourism human resources development. Project Director Prof Haiyan Song, Chair Professor of Tourism of the School, noted that “for a Mainland institute to implement an international programme, it is a new model for China tourism education.” Prof Song further attributed the School’s selection for the project to its internationally recognised programmes with quality staff who understand the country and its language.

The project team’s first task was to conduct an environmental scan of the Institute and the local hospitality industry. The object, according to Prof Song, was “to find out what the students, the teachers and the industry people really wanted from graduates,” and devise a curriculum for a new Diploma in Hotel Management. With the environmental scan completed in March, the School conducted training on the PolyU campus, with Guilin teachers learning more about internationally recognised teaching and assessment methods and gaining deeper understanding of how to teach the new hospitality subjects. The overall aim is to establish the Diploma as an industry benchmark, which will help raise the whole standard of tourism education in Mainland China.

Over the next 18 months, the project team will work through accreditation and assessment issues, as well as supporting the Guilin academic staff, in order to ensure success of the programme.

PolyU’s School of Hotel and Tourism Management was ranked fourth among the world’s top hotel and tourism schools based on research and scholarship, according to a study published in the *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research* in August 2005. With more than 50 academic staff drawn from 17 countries, it is also the only training centre in Asia recognized by the Education and Training Network of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).



Prof Kaye Chon, Chair Professor and Director, School of Hotel and Tourism Management, conducted a training session in PolyU for teachers from Guilin Institute of Tourism

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