Developing an Internationalised Foundation Program:
XAIU iFP – A Descriptive Case Study

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DECLARATION

Statement of Originality

This dissertation contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to this copy of my dissertation, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

Robert T.W Rogers:
DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my loving mother Fleur and to the memory of my dad Rob. Without their unwavering support I would not have achieved the pinnacle of my academic dreams and I owe all that I have done with my education to them.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the practical issues related to internationalisation of programs at Xi’an International University (XAIU), a leading Chinese private higher education institute. The study is expected to be of particular interest to foreign universities considering partnerships with Chinese higher education institutes, especially in the establishment of international cooperation programs, like the XAIU foundation program in this study that is branded ‘iFP’. The problem initially focuses on what motivates XAIU toward internationalisation activities and then focuses on how iFP would be developed and implemented. The study is bound by time and place to establish limits on scope. The theory statement that binds the two study questions and their propositions is that “XAIU internationalisation activities are profit motivated”. The study’s rival theory produces a possible contrasting perspective of participants and stakeholders reality stated as “XAIU internationalisation activities may fail if too much emphasis is placed on profit”. A descriptive case study strategy provides the methodology for this study; a triangulation of methods of gathering evidence pursues validity and reliability; and the use of a logic model provides study direction. A general inductive analysis is used to produce four key findings within the arenas of Government Policy, Commercialisation, Human Resourcing and Internal Dynamics. Tracking the development and implementation of iFP provides a rich mix of influences that all contribute to the internal and external challenges that face the team tasked to take iFP to market. This study is expected to influence the debate on internationalisation because the discourse happens at ground level. As an example of its success, the practical implications of this study are that the development of iFP has already created some interest within the higher education industry with several consultancy-based enquiries.
Chapter 1 – An Introduction to the Study

1.1 The Topic

Jane Knight (2003a) defines internationalisation as “the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (p. 2).

1.1 The Topic of the Study

This qualitative study explores the motivations a Chinese private higher education institute has in implementing internationalisation activities within the mix of its traditional set of university activities. An overview of this case study is attached as Appendix 1 - XAIU iFP Case Study Overview. This discovery will focus on the establishment and development of a single key internationalisation activity, an international foundation program that uses the acronym as its brand – iFP (http://ifp.xaiu.edu.cn/). The first product under the iFP brand will be a joint business studies degree program with an internationalised curriculum named iFP (Business). As it is the first product in a planned expansion of iFP fields of study, for the continuation of this study it will simply be referred to as iFP. The study is bound by the unique context of the internal and external dynamics of a leading Chinese private higher education institute. The study encompasses the ontology and epistemology of social constructivism, and uses a descriptive single-case study strategy to guide the reader through the experience and discovery. The study is inevitably bound by time and with the aim of being to discover knowledge through the lens of social constructionism. The terms constructivism and social constructionism have been used interchangeably and are both referred to under the general term constructivism particularly by Charmaz (2006). Constructivism proposes that each individual mentally constructs the world of experience through cognitive processes while social constructionism has a social rather than an individual focus (Young and Colin, 2004).

The internationalisation of higher education is not new to China. During the latter half of the
19th century China had an established modern higher education system having adopted Western models and partnerships that included private higher education. After becoming a communist state in 1949, the introduction of the soviet model of higher education in 1952 dominated China’s higher education and development for the next 25 years leaving little scope for private higher education. During that period, state takeovers of the best private higher education institutes and closures of the remaining stalled the development of private higher education in China. In the so called post-Mao period, from 1978 on, with the implementation of the open door policy and market-driven economic reforms lead by new reformist leader Deng Xiaoping, China once again sought Western models in an attempt to internationalise its higher education. The promotion of private higher education in China was viewed by the Chinese government as an important vehicle to contribute to its economic reforms. It allows the higher education system to absorb the increase in demand from secondary school leavers wanting to gain access to higher education, while at the same time offering higher education better focussed on providing a trained labour force committed to socialist undertaking and construction. Although, within the review of literature section, the history of Chinese private higher education institute will be explored, this study is bound by the Chinese higher education policies introduced in the 1980s. To avoid a confusion of terms, the researcher defines university or higher education institute as: any Chinese higher education institution that, under the Regulations of the People’s Republic of China on Academic Degrees (2004) under Article 8 is a "degree-conferring entity".

XAIU (http://www.xaiu.edu.cn/) is termed a comprehensive higher education institute meaning it provides a complete and full curriculum with regard to all the disciplines via its 12 colleges. ‘Comprehensive’ is a term frequently used by Chinese higher education. The original idea for the comprehensive school, where secondary-school aged children of all backgrounds and abilities would be educated in a single school, goes back to the 1920s in the United Kingdom (Pring and Walford, 1996). Ninety eight percent of students live on-campus and course delivery uses an: on-campus, full-time attendance, face-to-face delivery model. Officially, XAIU is classified as a minban meaning civil or people operated education institute. The Chinese government prefers the use of the term minban to describe XAIU’s classification as a higher education provider rather than to use ‘private’ but Zha (2006) says "very often, people use the terms private and minban interchangeably” (p. 56). Therefore using minban or private is a preference of terminology and so for this study XAIU will be referred to as ‘private’. XAIU became a degree conferring entity in 2005 contributing to its legitimacy as one of China’s leading private higher education institutes.
XAIU grew out of two previous training institutes:

Shaanxi International Service Training School (1988-1999), renamed Xi’an International Vocational College (2000), then formally renamed Xi’an International University (2005)

XAIU is the flagship institute of a larger Chinese education group called Dada Education Investment Co. Ltd and is owned by its founder and Chairman of the Board of Directors, Mr Huang Teng. XAIU is located in Xi’an (refer to Chapter 1, Graphic 1), the capital city of the mid-western province of Shaanxi in China. Note that although the Shaanxi International Service Training School started in 1988, the founder did not work fulltime at the school until 1992 hence the recognition that the starting date for XAIU is 1992. On September 25th 2012, XAIU celebrated its 20th anniversary of operation.

Chapter 1, Graphic 1 – Xi’an and the Shaanxi Province

Although in English the designation given to XAIU is ‘university’, in Chinese the designation given is equivalent to ‘college’ - a subtle but important distinction. XAIU was able to establish and grow, primarily through the demand-absorption of secondary school leavers within the lower range of scores from the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE and also known as the gaokao). Demand absorption was the result of enrolment expansion policies via a number of Chinese educational reforms that first started in the mid 1980s. Major reforms
included: devolution from central to regional administration (decentralisation); the merging of public higher education institutes to improve efficiencies; the re-establishment of private higher education; the introduction of higher education tuition fees; enrolment expansion using policies to allow increasing access to higher education; and the '211' and '985' projects aimed at developing high-level, world-class Chinese higher education institutes. With the devolution of some of the central government’s administrative functions of higher education down to provincial level, the Shaanxi government created a very distinctive situation, known as the Shaanxi Model (Liang, 2003). This allowed the early propagation of several pure private higher education institutes created by individuals, and essentially able to function and operate like a business. XAIU is one of those institutions deriving income coming via investors, donors and tuition-paying students. Although at regulation level the Chinese government purport to support private higher education institutes, in practice very little financial support is available. Almost all demand-absorbers have commercialised purposes and many behave like for-profit institutions despite under Chinese law not being permitted to make profit. They can however, under an ambiguously worded section of regulation, deliver a “reasonable return” to investors and donors. This is according to the Regulations of Shaanxi Province on the Promotion of Private Education as adopted at the 15th Session of the Standing Committee of the 10th People’s Congress of Shaanxi Province on December 2nd, 2004.

1.2 The Problem

Prior to education reforms, the gross enrolment ratio for higher education in China was less than 4% of the cohort (for 18-22 year olds). Post-Mao, enrolment expansion policies aimed at keeping pace with the reform-driven social and economic conditions in China focussed on increasing access that was previously only for the elite, firstly to the mass of the population, and then finally towards universal higher education access. From 1998 to 2008, XAIU grew rapidly as a demand-absorbing private higher education institute. The student population peaked in 2008 with almost 40,000 fee paying students. That intake primarily consisted of students with lower range gaokao scores who, regardless of score, wanted access to higher education. Under a stratified system the government ranks higher education institutes into three tiers and controls access to those tiers by organising students into three bands of gaokao scores called batches. Furthermore, the government also controls where those students can attend higher education using an admission quota based on their domestic residence permit (known as the hukou). At the lowest end of student gaokao scores sit private higher education institutes. A year-on-year lowering of the gaokao score requirements at the third tier, to
absorb demand, has made private higher education the fastest growing sector of the higher education industry. In the last few years the Chinese higher education environment has changed in terms of competition, first with early interventions like:

- The government’s elite to mass to universal access policy means any student wanting to attend higher education can do so;
- The merging of previously less efficient public higher education institutes into more market focussed modernised institutions; and
- The development of independent higher education institutes. These were essentially hybrid independent institutes started by partnerships between Tier 1 higher education institutes and the private sector, and permitted to carry the name/brand of their supporting public higher education institute.

This was followed later by macro-activities:

- The government’s funding and support favouring public higher education institutes;
- An increasing number of foreign higher education institutes establishing a presence in China; and
- Since 2010, a shrinking pool of high school students sitting the gaokao examination.

The current result is that there is generally strong current competition for students within the higher education sector. Thus the competition for students for private higher education institutes is now exceptionally competitive. Recently, these market changes have seen the need for XAIU to develop areas of competitive advantage. How best to compete against other higher education providers? How to create a difference that results in sufficient enrolment numbers of fee paying students? Does XAIU need to develop its international dimension even further? Should internationalised activities be part of that new competitive difference and what kind of internationalised products would attract students? One strategy driving XAIU is to attempt to position itself as a world-class international higher education institute by implementing a number of internationalisation activities and cross-border education programs with an internationalised curriculum. XAIU’s current international foundation program, a three year joint delivery with Australian provider TAFE (Technical and Further Education) has, in the last few years, been failing to attract the expected number of students. Parents told XAIU in-house recruiters that by the end of three years of study they would expect the exit point (currently the TAFE NSW Diploma of Business program (NTIS Code: BSB50207/TAFE NSW Course Number: 17805) to be at least as high as other higher education institutes offering
similarly priced foundation programs. This study focuses on how XAIU went about re-thinking, creating, developing and implementing iFP to re-meet market demands. But that raises a problem that leads to the first study question – why are internationalisation activities so important to XAIU and secondly, how would XAIU go about establishing iFP? Reflecting on overall motivations for implementing internationalisation, Knight (2011) presented five myths, four of which are of particular interest and will form a starting point for this study in relation to XAIU and its motivations:

**Myth 1: foreign students as internationalisation agents** – a long-standing myth that more foreign students and teachers on campus will produce a more internationalised institutional culture and curriculum.

**Myth 2: international reputation as a proxy for quality** and rests on the belief that the more international a university is – in terms of students, faculty, curriculum, research agreements and network memberships – the better the university’s reputation.

**Myth 3: international institutional agreements** – it is often believed that the greater number of international agreements or network memberships a university has the more prestigious and attractive it is to other institutions and students.

**Myth 5: global branding** – relates to the assumption that the purpose of a university’s internationalisation efforts is to improve global brand or standing.

Hans de Wit (2011) supports the presence of these myths describing nine misconceptions (similar to Knight’s five) whereby internationalisation is regarded as synonymous with a specific programmatic or organisational strategy to promote internationalisation, in other words, where the means appear to have become the goal. Is that true for XAIU?

1.3 The Purpose of the Study and the Research Questions

Very little research has been done on Chinese private higher education and even less research has focussed on the creation, development and implementation of internationalisation activity. The purpose of this study is to investigate, inquire and discover how XAIU would go about establishing a key internationalisation activity, an internationalised curriculum as a basis for an international bachelor degree foundation program – iFP. A descriptive case study method is used as this can offer rich and revealing insights into the dynamics of a Chinese private higher education institute. This study is set in a practical workplace context and focuses on the development of a single internationalisation activity driven by the one of XAIU’s 12 colleges,
the College of International Cooperation (CiC). While the creation, development and implementation are organised and managed internally by CiC, a unique set of external dynamics exists that include China’s economy, its political system and government, and its culture. XAIU needs to consider the impact that those external forces, collectively referred to as PESTEL (political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal), will have on how iFP will develop and evolve. Typically descriptive studies start with a theory or proposition and at the conclusion of the observations the information gathered is compared to theory. This study attempts to address two main questions and will use the following graphical framework (refer to Chapter 1, Graphic 2). Note that this graphic is also attached as Appendix 2 – XAIU iFP Case Study Questions:

Chapter 1, Graphic 2 – XAIU iFP Case Study Questions, Propositions, Theory and Rival Theory

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1. Why are internationalisation activities so important to XAIU?
   a) Proposition 1. – Internationalisation activities at XAIU contribute to building
      XAIU’s reputation.
   b) Proposition 2. – A mix of internationalisation activities at XAIU are needed to meet
      a changing market.

2. How an internationalisation activity be developed in practice at XAIU and what actions
   would occur?
   a) Proposition 1. – Establishing a new internationalisation activity, like an
```
international foundation program has key internal challenges.

b) Proposition 2. – Establishing a new internationalisation activity, like an international foundation program, means working within key external constraints.

1.4 How Does the Researcher Fit into the Study?

For the past eight years, the researcher has been the TAFE Director of Studies at XAIU for a joint venture with TAFE South West Sydney Institute (TAFE SWSI) overseeing a three year program of study. The program involves the delivery of English in year one and two (delivered by XAIU) followed by the TAFE CertIV and Diploma of Business in year three. In terms of internationalisation activities, the XAIU/TAFE program would be defined as a cross-border delivery of an internationalised curriculum. In terms of The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) the XAIU/TAFE program would be defined as a commercial presence of a supplier in a consumer country. For most students the program acted as foundation program to prepare students for further higher education study. There was a successful start from 2004-08 but student numbers began to decline significantly from 2009 onwards. Despite management changes to marketing and program content to remedy the situation, student numbers continued to decline. A decision was made by XAIU senior management to create a new foundation program better suited to a market that had changed so much in the past eight years. The researcher gained permission from senior management to engage in a management research study to discover and hopefully remedy the declining student numbers.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

Research on internationalisation of higher education is primarily based on American and European experiences (Yang, 2002) and current research is anchored by writers like Knight, de Wit, Altbach, Scott and Brandenburg. In Asia, Mok and Yang have made great contributions to research on the globalisation, marketisation and internationalisation of higher education. Researchers who have focussed on Chinese higher education primarily have focussed on the 20 years between post-Mao and 2000 addressing, at a national level, the Chinese government’s privatisation and marketisation policies that allowed internationalisation opportunity to develop. Later studies on Chinese higher education have tended to take a macro perspective, again focussing on the dynamics and implications of higher education laws (often translated as regulations) and policies at a national level. Internationally, there are very few studies at higher education institute level and even fewer at the activity level within
institutions. In terms of focus on internationalisation in China at an institutional level, research is limited, and at activity level, non-existent. Despite radical and fundamental reform of the Chinese higher education system, very little is known about this outside China (Ryan, 2011). This study’s investigation is in China, within the key sector of higher education, at a Chinese private higher education institute, at an operational level. This is within the external context of a highly competitive Chinese higher education market: a government whose policies are beginning to show more favour to public higher education institutes; a shrinking student pool; and the internal context of entrepreneurial Chinese-style management that operates in an environment that allows the blurring of the line between non-profit and for-profit. The currency of this study is in the investigation on the implementation of an internationalisation activity under the pressure of a post-2010 shrinking pool of potential students. The exploration of the planning, dynamics and tactics involved will fill a significant gap in empirical research about internationalisation. This instructive approach has significant relevance because of the emphasis on managerial implications of the research project compared with theory (Maxwell and Shanahan, 1997, Bourner et al. 2001).

1.6 The Organisation of the Thesis

The purpose of the Chapter 1 - Introduction was twofold - to clearly explain the researcher’s approach, and to provide the reader with an outline of subsequent chapters. Chapter 2 of this study is a review of literature, divided into six sections, starting with the ‘big picture’ view of internationalisation and then drilling down to a structured analysis of XAIU. Chapter 3 addresses case study methodology and relies on Yin, Stake and Merriam to guide readers through this qualitative method. The chapter answers why this type of methodology was chosen over others and explains the rationale for a case study, and then addresses the case study’s design. Chapter 4 analyses and presents the study’s findings based on the two research questions, and relies on an analytic strategy of testing the theoretical propositions that have a chronological component, and a logic model against those questions. Under this strategy, the theoretical orientation guides the study analysis. Finally Chapter 5 draws conclusion from the findings and provides a synopsis of the study journey. An evaluation of the findings in light of the background reading follows by highlighting its key findings whilst exploring the theoretical and policy implications. Finally, recommendations for future studies will be expanded in discussion.
Chapter 2 – Context and Literature Review

2.1 Introduction – 'The Big Picture'

2.2 Internationalisation – Origins, Definition, Rationales, Benefits
  2.2.1 The Origins of Internationalisation of Higher Education
  2.2.2 Defining Internationalisation
  2.2.3 Rationales
    2.2.3.1 National/Sector Level
    2.2.3.2 Institutional Level
  2.2.4 Internationalisation Policies and Programs

2.3 Chinese Higher Education
  2.3.1 A Brief History of Chinese Private Higher Education
  2.3.2 Post-Mao Central Policies Shaping Chinese Higher Education
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2.4 Chinese Private Higher Education
  2.4.1 The Higher Education Tier System
  2.4.2 The National College Entrance Examination
  2.4.3 The Batch Admission Quota System

2.5 The For-Profit/Non-Profit Debate

2.6 The Current Commercial Situation Impacting on XAIU
  2.6.1 XAIU External Analysis
  2.6.2 XAIU Internal Analysis

*Internationalisation is changing the world of higher education, and globalisation is changing the world of internationalisation (Knight, 2008, p. 1)*

2.1 Introduction – the 'Big Picture'

Knight’s (2006) UNESCO paper describes several trends in higher education: commercialisation (the buying and selling of knowledge and the commodification of knowledge), privatisation (private ownership and/or funding), marketisation (allowing the market to determine supply and demand) and liberalisation (the removal of trade barriers and promotion of global knowledge exchange). In her 2006 paper, Knight goes on to say that a fifth trend – globalisation – is often pointed to as being the cause for the others. Scott (1998) refers to globalisation as “the growth of hybrid world cultures created by the mingling of global-brand culture and indigenous traditions” and that these global changes cannot be easily fended off by national governments (p. 122). Internationalisation is a term being used more and more to
discuss the international dimension of higher education and, more widely, post-secondary education (Knight, 2004). For the purpose of this study: postsecondary education, higher education, tertiary education, university education and third-level education will all come under the single term of higher education, an educational level that follows the completion of secondary school education. In addition, as XAIU is classed as a postsecondary [undergraduate] degree-conferring entity, for the purpose of this study, higher education refers to study towards an undergraduate degree or higher (and not: further, technical or vocational education even though as a comprehensive university, XAIU provides these postsecondary course options).

For completeness, this study's literature review on internationalisation will start with a top down approach and first review the international organisations, agencies and agreements that attempt to regulate, facilitate, supervise and liberalise international higher education activities. There is some lack of clarity within the literature regarding the roles that these organisations, agencies and agreements have in the international trade of higher education. This section attempts to clarify current thinking and starts with the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The WTO is an organisation established in 1995 to supervise and liberalise international trade. The WTO, under the Marrakech Agreement, replaced the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) established in 1948. Although the WTO is not a United Nations (UN) specialised agency, it is part of the UN ‘family’ and has maintained strong relations with the UN and its agencies since its establishment. The WTO-UN relations are governed by the "Arrangements for Effective Cooperation with other Intergovernmental Organisations-Relations between the WTO and the United Nations" introduced in November 1995. The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) is a trade agreement proposed, designed and administered by WTO that came into force in January 1995 as a result of the Uruguay Round negotiations. The agreement was created to extend the multilateral trading system to the service sector, in the same way that GATT provided such a system for merchandise trade: creating a credible and reliable system of international trade rules; ensuring fair and equitable treatment of all participants (non-discrimination); stimulating economic activity through guaranteed policy bindings; and promoting trade and development through progressive liberalisation. GATS consider education as a tradable service and define four ways that education services can be traded based on modes of supply:

1. **Consumption abroad** of service by consumers travelling to supplier country (e.g. students studying abroad);
2. **Cross border supply** of a service to consumer country without the supplier (e.g. open and distance education);

3. **Commercial presence** of a supplier in a consumer country (e.g. offshore foreign universities); and

4. **Presence of Natural Persons** from supplying country in consuming country (e.g. professors, researcher working outside of their home country).

Under GATS, **trade in educational services** is organised in five categories of service, based on the United Nations Provisional Central Product Classification (CPC): primary education, secondary education, **higher education**, adult education and other. The GATS definition of higher education covers higher education programmes leading to a university degree or equivalent as well as postsecondary technical and vocational education services. In an email to the researcher in response to GATS questions, Knight (personal communication, August 08, 2012) suggested that:

"GATS has stalled in subsequent negotiation rounds because of significant criticism and politics. While over 40 countries indicated that they would open up their markets to liberalised trade of education services according to all the conditions of GATS, the agreement had never been finalised. Although some people write as if it [GATS] is fully operational, it is not yet an endorsed legal agreement".

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) is a specialised agency of the UN and its purpose is to contribute to peace and security by promoting international collaboration through **education**, science, and culture. The main aims are to further universal respect for justice, the rule of law, and human rights plus the fundamental freedoms proclaimed under the UN Charter. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international economic organisation of 34 countries founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade. Again, Knight (personal communication, August 08, 2012) says “The OECD was much more friendly to GATS overall and the trade of higher education services [and] there is no official connection between OECD and GATS or between UNESCO and GATS”. In the same personal communication, Knight says that “In reality, GATS is a non-issue right now even though many still refer to it. One could say that it was a catalyst for much of the debate about the commercialisation of cross-border education”. The OECD defines cross-border education as those “situations where the teacher, student, programme, institution/provider or course materials cross national jurisdictional borders”.
(OECD, 2004; p. 19) and includes study abroad programs, branch campuses, and joint programs. Knight (2004) states there are basically two components evolving in the internationalisation of higher education: the first is internationalisation at home – activities that help students to develop international understanding and intercultural skills and the second is internationalisation abroad including all forms of education across borders: mobility of students and faculty and mobility of projects, programs and providers.

Regional and world trade agreements began to include education as a trade service and public and private education providers saw new commercial possibilities in cross-border education (Knight, 2007)

2.2 Internationalisation – Origins, Definition, Rationales, Benefits

Over the last two decades the concept of internationalisation of higher education has moved from the fringe of institutional interest to the very core (Brandenburg and de Wit, 2010, p. 241)

2.2.1 The Origins of the Internationalisation of Higher Education

Knight (2004) suggests that internationalisation has been “used for centuries” by political scientists and between governments (p. 9). In economics, internationalisation has been viewed as a process of increasing involvement of enterprises in international markets however there is no agreed definition of internationalisation. For the purpose of this study, Knight (2004, p. 5) says “internationalisation is a term used more and more to discuss the international dimension of higher education and more widely, postsecondary education”. This section of the study’s literature review explores the origins of internationalisation starting post WWII. During the first 20 years of post WWII, many national governments entered into cultural and academic agreements with other nations. Under these schemes the exchange of faculty and students was made possible with national grants, mainly for research cooperation, language studies and post-graduate training. The number of these agreements was small and the objectives more related to diplomacy than academic and cultural cooperation (Knight and de Wit, 1995). When we talk about contemporary internationalisation, the origins are firmly placed in the 1960s and 70s (Knight and de Wit, 1995) but really gained momentum in the 1980s. But as Brandenburg and de Wit (2010) note, “in the late 1970s up to the mid-1980s, activities that can be described as internationalisation were usually neither named that way nor carried prestige, [they] were isolated and unrelated” (p. 241). During this period,
developments like decolonisation of the developing world, expansion of higher education and the additional role of traditional universities as generators of human resources expressed internationalisation in the growing one-way mobility of students from South to North, that is, from developing countries to the industrialised nations. During the 1960s and 70s, the Soviet Republic and to a greater extent the United States of America and Western Europe saw developing countries as important regions for expanding their political and economic power and invested in developing aid programmes for universities. Those relationships were viewed as one-way: students flowing from South to North and funds, training and infrastructural support from North to South. These North-South relations dominated internationalisation strategies in higher education from 1950-1985. Internationalisation within the education sector as we know it developed in the early 1980s and 90s when the global context changed again. Those changes included: the strengthening of the European Community, the rise of Japan as an economic power, the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall and most significantly the globalisation of post-industrial capitalism. As an example, in the 1980s, Ronald Reagan, President of United States of America and Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister of Britain introduced and promoted political policies encouraging greater neo-liberalism into Anglo-America. At the end of the 1980s the so-called 'Washington Consensus' was formulated claiming to lead to global freedom, prosperity and economic growth through deregulation, liberalisation and privatisation. Underlying the market orientation of tertiary education is the ascendance, almost worldwide, of market capitalism and the principles of neo-liberal economics (Barnes and Barr, 1988). Altbach and Knight (2007) define this post-industrial globalisation as the economic, political and societal forces pushing 21st century higher education toward greater international involvement. Global capital has invested heavily in knowledge industries world-wide including higher education and advanced training reflecting the emergence of four key elements of the globalisation of education: the knowledge society, the rise of the service sector, the dependence on many societies on knowledge-based products and well educated labour for economic growth. Sappy (2005) notes a structural change to higher education is the commodity view of education, with education reconstituted from the pursuit of social knowledge and an ideal, to a value rooted in direct benefit to the consumer through enhanced performance. Sappy (2005) says the implications are that higher education institutions are drawn into the market, producing and selling knowledge as a commodity and places the consumer, as constructed by management and their perceptions of customer needs and wants, at the very centre of organisational focus and strategy. Deem (1998) defines this structural change as new managerialism: the application of techniques, values and practices derived from the commercial sector to publicly funded institutions. Managerialism has
constructed the student as ‘customer’, based on managerial perceptions of customer wants and needs and has been the catalyst for re-evaluation of academic labour’s value and performance (Sappey, 2005). Viewing it this way, the commoditisation of higher education is twofold—a university: becomes a site for the taking in of raw materials (students) and the application of transformative commodities (knowledge, experience and skills) and finally the creation of finished products (students with qualifications) ready for sale (to the employment market) – much akin to a factory production line.

*Globalisation is seen here as the root cause of changes taking place in higher education and can simply be defined as “… the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values, ideas … across borders […] and internationalisation of higher education is one of the ways a country responds to the impact of globalisation yet, at the same time respects the individuality of the nation” (Knight 1999, p. 14)*.

2.2.2 Defining Internationalisation

Scott (2005) says that “the distinction between internationalisation and globalisation, although suggestive, cannot be regarded as categorical. They overlap, and are intertwined in all kinds of ways” (p. 14). Teichler (2004) supports Scott’s view of the “intertwining” of globalisation and internationalisation saying that one is substituted for the other and the term internationalisation “tends to be used for any supra-regional phenomenon related to higher education and/or anything on a global scale related to higher education characterised by market and competition” (p. 23). Altbach and Teichler (2001) argue that the internationalisation in higher education is an inevitable result of the globalised and knowledge-based economy of the 21st century. Globalisation is the context of economic and academic trends that are part of the reality of the 21st century and internationalisation includes the policies and practices undertaken by academic systems and institutions – and even individuals – to cope with the global academic environment (Altbach and Knight, 2007). Starting in the 1980’s a new nomenclature emerged to support internationalisation and de Wit (2002) provided a comprehensive and useful overview on the development and use of the terms internationalisation, international education and others that evolved as internationalisation evolved in the past 20 years. Knight (2004) suggested that internationalisation has come into common usage in the field of education only in the past few years. She frames internationalisation in two streams (home and abroad) and at three levels (institutional, sectoral and national). Defining internationalisation is not a simple task. Hans de Wit (2002)
acknowledged that internationalisation is an important issue in the development of higher education, but said that “it is still a phenomenon with a lot of question marks regarding its historical dimension; its meaning, concept and strategic aspects; its relationship to developments in society and higher education in general” (p. 215). Bartell (2003), also, noted that internationalisation is “far from a clearly defined and understood concept” (p. 45). Knight (2004) suggested that internationalisation “means different things to different people and thus is used in a variety of ways”, resulting in a great deal of confusion about its meaning (p. 5). Altbach (2002) said that although internationalisation was a major trend in higher education, it was widely misunderstood.

The purpose of trying to provide a comprehensive definition for internationalisation is to avoid confusion and misunderstanding that develops as the concept develops. As most scholars agree that the 1980s was the ignition point of what we know as the internationalisation of higher education, so this period provides an excellent starting point for a timeline on the development of a definition of internationalisation. In the late-1980s, internationalisation was commonly defined at the institutional level and in terms of a certain set of activities. Arum and van de Water (1992) typify the thinking of that time proposing that internationalisation referred to “the multiple activities, programs and services that fall within international studies, international educational exchange and technical cooperation (p. 202)”. Knight (1994) defined internationalisation as the “process of integrating international/intercultural dimensions into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution (p. 7)”. Van der Wende (1997) identified the limitations of previous definitions and proposed a broader definition to include the external environment suggesting internationalisation is “any systematic effort aimed at making higher education responsive to the requirements and challenges related to the globalisation of societies, economy and labour markets (p. 18)”. De Wit (2002) concluded that a more focused definition of internationalisation was needed if it is to be understood and treated with the importance that it deserves and that a working definition in combination with a conceptual framework for internationalisation of higher education is relevant.

Knight (2003a) proposed the following working definition for internationalisation at the three levels as:

“the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (p. 2).
An analysis of the current literature on internationalisation concludes that this is the most common definition and so will be employed to anchor this study. Knight doesn't see any conflict between her 1994 and 2003 definition stating new working definitions address the realities of today's context and the number and diversity of educational providers that have different interests and approaches. What has been discovered from this analysis is that the definition of internationalisation needs to change and evolve as the dynamics of globalisation and the external environment change. Knight (2008) acknowledges the need for constant updating of the definition of internationalisation of higher education because the “international dimension of higher education has been steadily increasing in importance, scope and complexity” (p. 3). Scott (1998) says the old neo-imperial internationalisation is still “dysfunctionally dominated by the West” (p. 124). Mok (2007) agrees believing it’s time to move “beyond the Anglo-Saxon paradigms” of internationalisation and instead develop systems and standards that could preserve and promote rich national cultural heritage in China (p. 446). Current XAIU Vice President of International Affairs and former President of Xian International Studies University, Du Ruiqing has had an extensive international academic career starting with being one of the ‘Gang of Nine’ post-graduate students who studied at the University of Sydney immediately following the conclusion of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. From a Chinese perspective he understands the internationalisation of higher education as “the interaction of educational systems and practices across national, economic and cultural boundaries - an interaction that is gaining momentum along with the rapid, global growth of the knowledge-based economy”. His definition shows clear linkages between the western and Chinese understanding of internationalisation.

2.2.3 Rationales

In the late 1980s changes occurred: internationalisation was invented and carried on, ever increasing its importance. New components were added to its multidimensional body in the past two decades, moving from a simple exchange of students to the big business of recruitment, and from activities impacting on a small elite group to a mass phenomenon (Brandenburg and de Wit, 2011). De Wit describes this process as the “mainstreaming of internationalisation” (De Wit, 2011)

This section describes emerging evidence to support the theory that the motivations for internationalisation are based on commercial objectives. De Wit (2002) says “rationales can be described as motivations for integrating an international dimension into higher education.
They address the “why” of internationalisation. Different rationales imply different means and ends to internationalisation (p. 84)”. Scott (1992) identifies seven imperatives for global education. Knight and de Wit (1995) identify two groups of rationales: economic and political and cultural and educational. Blumenthal et al (1996) say internationalisation policy can have political, economic, educational, cultural or academic, scientific and technological dimensions. In later studies Knight (1997) separates the original two groups of rationale into four: political, economic social-cultural and academic and provides a set of overall motivations for each rationale (refer to Chapter 2, Graphic 1). This study's particular focus is on the economic and academic rationale and motivations highlighted in bold.

Chapter 2, Graphic 1 – Rationales Driving Internationalisation at National and Institutional Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Four Rationales</th>
<th>Overall Motivations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Social/Cultural</td>
<td>1. National cultural identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Intercultural understanding</td>
<td>3. Citizenship development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Social and community development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Political</td>
<td>1. Foreign policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Technical assistance</td>
<td>4. Peace and mutual understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Economic</td>
<td>1. Economic growth and competitiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Labour market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Financial incentives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Academic</td>
<td>1. International dimension to research and teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Extension of academic horizon</td>
<td>3. Institution building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Profile and status</td>
<td>5. Enhancement of quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. International academic standards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted by the researcher from Knight (2004, p. 23).

Zha (2003) agrees with Knight’s four rationales but explores his own conceptual framework of the four. More recent research has identified changes in rationale both within and between these four groups (Knight, 2004). She argues that a new category recognising the current importance of branding and reputation should be considered because providers are trying to create an international reputation and name brand for their own institution or network/consortium that places themselves in more competitive positions. For the purpose of this study branding and reputation are integrated into the four existing types of rationale. For greater depth of understanding on how internationalisation continues to be an evolving process, another way of understanding Chapter 2, Graphic 1 would be to analyse those four traditional rationales as level specific depending on that level’s motivations. From the new
perspective of two levels: national (sectoral) and institutional, Knight (2004) identifies five emerging important rationales at each level driving internationalisation at postsecondary level (refer to Chapter 2, Graphic 2). Altbach and Knight (2007) argue these two levels are becoming increasingly important and those two levels will be addressed next. This study’s particular focus is at institutional level and the emerging rationales are highlighted in bold.

Chapter 2, Graphic 2 – Rationales Driving Internationalisation – Emerging Importance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two Levels</th>
<th>Emerging Rationales At Each Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. National</td>
<td>1. Human resource development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sectoral)</td>
<td>2. Strategic alliances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Commercial Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Nation Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Social/cultural development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Institutional</td>
<td>1. International branding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Income generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Student and staff development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Strategic alliances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Knowledge production</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted by the researcher from Knight (2004, p. 23).

2.2.3.1 National/Sector Level

Knight (2004) says an increasing emphasis on the knowledge economy; demographic shifts, labour force mobility and an increased trade in services are all factors that are driving nations to place more importance on developing and recruiting human capital through international education initiatives. Global competition for highly skilled manpower is becoming a strong pull factor for international student circulation (de Wit, 2011). With a shift from alliances traditionally based on cultural exchange to alliances based on economic purposes, countries are trying to achieve develop stronger economic and political strategic alliances through the internationalisation of postsecondary education. The development of new international and regional trade agreements are providing regulations designed to reduce barriers in trade and to increase the commercial relevance of international cross-border trade in education. Knight (2003b) says the issues of trade and commercialisation of higher education will eventually be critical elements that define and contrast national approaches to the role and purpose of higher education. Where some countries like the United States, Great Britain and Australia export education, there are other countries that are interested in importing education programs and institutions for nation building. China is an example of using this type of emerging rationale with several well-known United States (e.g. New York University) and
United Kingdom (e.g. University of Liverpool) higher education institutes having branch campuses in the wider Shanghai district. Knight (2004) believes that social and cultural rationales, especially those that relate to the promotion of intercultural understanding and national cultural identity are significant but still do not carry the same weight when compared to economic and political based rationales.

2.2.3.2 Institutional Level

Knight (2004) says there are many factors that influence the institutional-level rationales ranging from mission, student population, faculty profile, geographic location, funding sources, level of resourcing and orientation to local, regional, national and international interests. There is has been an overall drive for institutions to achieve a strong worldwide reputation as an institution of international high-quality (however high-quality may be defined) in an attempt to raise brand awareness so as to better compete domestically and internationally. The mobility of the labour market and the increase in cultural diversity of communities and the workplace require that both students and staff have an increased understanding and demonstrated skills to work and live in a culturally different environment. De Wit (2011) says for top receiving countries, skilled migration is becoming an increasingly important rationale. There is evidence that more institutions are looking at internationalisation activities as a way to generate alternative sources of income. This represents a shift in paradigms of internationalisation from cooperation to competition (Van der Wende, 2001). There is an emphasis on competition between universities for students, research income and academic research 'stars'. This competition has also served to stress the extent to which higher education can be described as operating under quasi-market conditions (Le Grand and Bartlett, 1993). Public non-profit higher education institutes face the squeeze of new managerialism with decreased public funding and private for-profit higher education institutes facing the corporate objectives of generating income – both resulting in the larger question about their economic rationale to commercialise and commoditise education using the cross-border delivery of education programs and services. Currie et al. (2003) believe “recently initiated programs gaining revenue from international students should not be considered a form of internationalisation but a part of the university's neo-liberal globalisation agenda” (p. 11). Commercialisation has important implication for the diversification and differentiation of higher education institutes and providers (Knight, 2006). The number of bilateral and multilateral educational agreements has increased exponentially but it is often the case that most institutions cannot support a large number of these agreements and so most are inactive.
and mainly paper-based. The rationale for developing these strategic alliances is a means to achieving academic, scientific, economic, technological and/or cultural objectives. De Wit (2010) questions whether these rationales are truly objectives of internationalisation or merely prerequisites adding that strategic alliances are not an end in themselves but rather a means for institutions to improve their profiles and increase their knowledge production. Knight (2004) says "the production and distribution of knowledge should not be minimised" and this is evident in the way that institutions and national governments are making the international dimension of research and knowledge production a primary rationale for internationalisation of higher education (p. 28). Rationales driving internationalisation vary from institution to institution, from government to government, from stakeholder to stakeholder and from nation to nation. What needs to be noted is that differing and competing rationales contribute to both the complexity of the international dimension of education and the substantial contributions that internationalisation makes (Knight, 2004). The dual role of internationalisation in furthering both cooperation and competition among countries is a new reality of our more globalised world (Knight, 2010).

Observation suggests that Altbach and Knight have significantly contributed to post-90s globalisation/internationalisation research as it relates to higher education and their 2007 article The Internationalisation of Higher Education: Motivations and Reality, has become a primary source of reference used by academics, industry leaders and students. As a conclusion to this section on origins, definitions and rationales, an analysis of their 2007 article is warranted. Altbach and Knight (2007) argue that global interdependence has resulted in internationalisation interdependence. In their four major areas of focus for increasing academic mobility they explain that transformative inter-cultural experiences now rarely dictate policy and program initiatives. Instead, profit-making, access and demand absorption and traditional internationalisation are the four motivating factors in the general internationalisation of higher education and are minimal in regard to the original motives (cultural understanding and transfer of cultural notions) for internationalisation. Internationalisation of higher education is being fundamentally changed in reaction to and support of the competition agenda and market orientation (de Wit, 2011). In their article, Altbach and Knight contend that prestige, competitiveness and strategic alliances are now the goals of profit-driven institutions – both public and private. Altbach and Knight contend that North-based higher education providers are currently participating in an academic colonisation that seeks to expand their academic influence to developing nations. Altbach and Knight's (2007) article highlights the Middle East, Asia Pacific, Africa and Latin America and that
naturally internationalisation activities accompany this colonisation. This colonisation is not traditionally based but focuses on productivity and skill exchange for the purpose of expanding prestige and recognition in order to remain competitive with other industrialised nation’s academic institutions. Scott (1998) and De Wit (2002) argue that the imperatives of the market are now driving internationalisation trends worldwide. Universities and academic systems seek to make themselves attractive to overseas students and to build links with universities in other countries to enhance their global reach. This often means teaching in English in addition to the national language, developing the means to market higher education programs effectively, treating knowledge as an intellectual property and therefore as a commodity for exchange. This is because economic, political, and social contexts require higher education institutes, being the producers of knowledge, to make intellectual property central to their operations, and so adopt the strategies of profit-driven corporations. Brandenburg and de Wit (2010) say that gradually the ‘why’ and ‘what’ have been taken over by the ‘how’ and instruments of internationalisation have become the main objective: more exchange, more degree mobility, and more recruitment.

2.2.4 Internationalisation Policies and Programs

Knight (2004) proposes that previous definitions of internationalisation strategies and strategic approach have been subsumed into current national/sector definition of internationalisation. It was therefore necessary to broaden the old notion of organisational strategies beyond the institutional level to the national or sector level. Mok (2007) refers to Knight’s 2004 framework arguing that close scrutiny must be given to the analysis of the interactions between the bottom-up (institutional) approach and a top-down (national/sector) approach. Knight (2004) says that the terms policies and programs have been introduced at the three levels to reflect current thinking, especially regarding the growth in the commercially-orientated aspects of internationalisation. The following graphic, Chapter 2, Graphic 3 shows the new framework of policies and programs at all three levels proposed by Knight (2004) and in the article interchanges the terms internationalisation ‘program’ and internationalisation ‘activity to mean the same. This study’s particular focus is at an institutional level and the overall policy and implementation strategy together with current XAIU programs are highlighted in bold.
Chapter 2, Graphic 3 – Policies and Programs at all Three Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>Education and other national-level policies relating to the international dimension of higher education; other policy sectors include: cultural, scientific, immigration, trade, employment and culture</td>
<td>National or sub-regional programs that promote or facilitate the international dimension of postsecondary education can be provided by different government departments or non-government organisations; example of programs include: academic mobility programs, international research initiatives and student recruitment programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector</td>
<td>Policies related to the purpose, functions, funding and regulation of postsecondary education</td>
<td>Programs offered by and for the education sector specifically; can be provided by any level of government or by public or private organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>Policies driven by the XAIU Vice President of International Affairs that address specific aspects of internationalisation and/or policies that serve to integrate and sustain the international dimension into the primary mission and functions of XAIU</td>
<td>Programs such as those identified in: Appendix 3 – XAIU Internationalisation Strategies and Activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted by the researcher from Knight (2004, p. 17).

Using Knight’s 2004 framework of policies at three levels and the identification of XAIU’s current internationalisation strategies, programs and activities this study will explore why there is a need to develop and have internationalisation activities like iFP how XAIU would go about developing and implementing iFP ready for launch in September 2012. The following pathway guides the researcher:

All three level internationalisation policies and programs → Institutional level policies → XAIU Strategies (refer to Appendix 3 – XAIU Internationalisation Strategies and Activities) → XAIU’s current Academic Programs (refer to Appendix 3) → Joint/Double-Degree foundation-structured programs (in the case of iFP) + Internationalised curricula → iFP

At the same time, in terms of internationalisation capacity and capability, there needs to be a situational analysis in terms of XAIU’s internal factors, their strengths and weaknesses, described and guided by Knight’s (2004) organisation strategies: governance, operations, services and human resources. This will be balanced by analysing XAIU’s external factors, their opportunities and threats, guided by a PESTEL Aguilar (1967) based analysis of six factors (political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal). This situational analysis will be further explored in Section 2.6 of this chapter.
2.3 Chinese Higher Education

The changing landscape of international higher education as a consequence of the globalisation of our societies and economies is manifest in many ways: increasing competition for international students and academics; growth of cross-border delivery of programmes; and emergence of international for-profit providers in higher education; the changing position of countries like India and China in the world economy; and in the higher education arena (de Wit, 2010, p. 10)

The context of this study focuses on XAIU as a Chinese private higher education institute. For completeness, this section of Chapter two provides a brief history of Chinese higher education with more focus on how Chinese private higher education has developed in the post-Mao era.

2.3.1 A Brief History of Chinese Private Higher Education

The modern private school system did not appear until 1840. This is the year that is normally used in history to mark the beginning of the modern era of Chinese development. At the time China was defeated in the Opium Wars (1839-42) and began its journey of being colonised by the West (Borthwick, 1983). Various colonisation activities followed with education modernisation being one of the most important efforts, and during this education reform movement, private education played a dominant role (Xu, 2002). The founding of a Republic of China in 1912 eroded the feudal system of the previous two thousand years in China but many traditional Chinese attitudes still prevailed including traditional Confucian ethical codes which were in direct opposition to those of the modernisation theorists who from 1915 to 1919 led a campaign called the New Cultural Movement. By 1917, 80% of the total university student population were from [private] missionary universities (China National Institute of Educational Science Research, 1995). By 1949, 93 of the 223 universities over which the communist government took control were private universities (Lin, 1999). Because of nationalisation and the adoption of the Soviet model in the early 1950s, all private institutions of higher education were closed down, transformed, or merged with public ones by 1956. Mao (1957) said “our educational policy must enable everyone who receives an education to develop morally, intellectually and physically and become a worker with both socialist consciousness and culture” (p. 44). The idea was to link education directly to economic development and a system focused on the direct contribution to science and technology and the preparation of skills for industrialisation and national defence. As a result, the education system was
transformed from a universal education system to an elite education system with the latter paying more attention to higher education and less to basic education, more to science and engineering and less to social sciences and the humanities, and more to vocational training and less to general education. Under this model, higher education research was marginalised by the greater priority of a productive workforce. This policy was later addressed by the “211” and “985” projects, discussed in the next section. Private industries and schools were regarded as the manifestation of Western capitalism, which was in the direct opposition to communism (Wang and Hu, 1999) and private higher education completely disappeared between 1952 and 1982.

2.3.2 Post-Mao Central Policies Shaping Chinese Higher Education

All the laws, regulations, orders and notices in this section directly and/or indirectly impact on how XAIU has developed to date.

Mao Zedong died in September 1976 and the Cultural Revolution ended a month later with the arrest of the Gang of Four. Following that, the less radical faction of the Communist Party of China (CPC) rose to power under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping. The reform period began with a major national conference in 1978 which abandoned the Cultural Revolution’s ideologies and adopted modernisation of the country as the main goal, including educational development (Hayhoe, 1996). The Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee in 1978 decided on a new package of national development policies known as “reform and open” strategies. At the plenum, Deng Xiaoping announced the official launch of the Four Modernisations, formally marking the beginning of the Chinese reform era. Under the modernisation program, higher education was to be the cornerstone for training and research driven by demand to improve the capability of training scientists and engineers. In the process of reform, the CPC further liberated its thinking and started the creation of a socialist market economy – described by Deng as a “socialist economy with Chinese characteristics” and by 1992 the CPC had rephrased Deng’s earlier description as a “socialist market economy with Chinese characteristics”. Deng died in 1997. Education’s role in national development was no longer ideological; instead education had the important function of meeting the skill requirements of a developing socialist market economy and is portrayed as the strategic foundation for national development (Tsang, 1996). For private higher education a timeline of key central and provincial laws, policies, regulations and orders that commenced in 1982 initially provided rationale for existence and later for legitimacy for degree conferring Chinese
higher education institutes, both public and private, including XAIU. In chronological order, those key central and provincial laws, regulations, decisions, orders, guidelines plans and policies are:

- In 1982 the National Peoples’ Congress (NPC) promulgated a new Constitution of the Peoples’ Republic of China (PRC), with the 19th article stipulating that “the state encourages collective economic organisations, governmental enterprises and other social groups to initiate and administer various kinds of legal educational activities”. There is no separation of powers under the Chinese system of rule and the CPC, under the powerful authority of the Politbureau Standing Committee of the CPC, ultimately determine, create and decide over all laws and decisions of the country. This process is often referred to as democratic centralism. The National Peoples’ Congress (essentially the house of representatives), the Central Peoples’ Government (being the executive) and the Peoples’ Liberation Army (encompassing all defence forces) are all functioning organs of the CPC.

- The Decision on Educational Reform (1985) targeted providing a well-proportioned rationally tiered higher education system, with efficiency, quality and equity improvements as the goals. Devolution (decentralisation) of financial and administrative powers to provinces was suggested.

- Guidelines for Development and the Reform of China’s Education System (1993) outlined further reform identifying higher education being linked to China’s competitive position in the world. Devolution of higher education continued through a number of policies and a policy introducing the application of student tuition fees was also included in this set of guidelines.

- Project 211 (1995) was developed. Project 211 was a project involving higher education institutes initiated in 1995 by the Ministry of Education (MOE) of the People’s Republic of China, with the intent of raising the research standards of high-level higher education institutes and cultivating strategies for socio-economic development. All these universities within Project 211 are Tier 1 public higher education institutes.

- The Regulation on Education Run by Social Forces (1997) defines private schools as those run by “businesses and governmental organisations, social groups and other social organisations and individuals, using non-government educational financial resources, to provide schooling and other forms of education to the society” (Lin, 1999).

- The Action Plan for Vitalising Education in the 21st Century (1998) announced the targeting of higher education enrolment expansion [massification], further decentralisation of higher
education, institutional autonomy and commercialisation of higher education. Scott (1995) used the term massification in the context of higher education systems to describe the rapid increase in student enrolment in the latter part of the twentieth century. Trow (1973) provided a typology to the term massification and coined the terms elite, mass and universal higher education corresponding to a country’s Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), with elite representing a national enrolment ratio of up to 15%, mass representing a ratio of up to 50%, and universal a ratio in excess of 50%. “The strength of the nation is based on education, which is the responsibility of every individual” (Jiang Zemin, 1999). In order to spur on the weak domestic economy, ease up unemployment pressure and meet increasing demand for higher education scale, the Chinese government (the State) decided to rapidly expand the higher education sector (Ngok, 2007). The massive scale of expansion has been the subject of debate as critics have argued that the immediate motivation for expansion was to boost Chinese domestic consumption as, since the 1997 Asian Economic Crisis, it had been slow. After many other attempts to revive the national economy proved unsatisfactory, decision makers hoped that the expected large-scale consumption and investment in higher education by households would stimulate domestic economic development (Plafker, 1999).

- In the same year the Higher Education Law of the PRC (1998) was enacted and emphasised further autonomy, marketisation and commercialisation. Private higher education is formally recognised and proper systems and mechanisms would be worked out to monitor qualifications and academic standards of Chinese private higher education institutes.

- Also in 1998, the MOE established Project 985 with the intent of creating a group of “world class” higher education institutes in science, technology innovation and research in order to be internationally competitive. Realising the reality that higher education in China had missed opportunities for development, and to compete globally, the Chinese government was determined to concentrate its limited resources in order to identify a few top higher education institutes and boost their research profile and academic standards (Mok and Chan, 2008).

- The Law of the People's Republic of China on the Promotion of Privately-run Schools (2003) puts all the speculation, innuendo, and rhetoric about the status, position, function and purpose of private education, including private higher education, to rest. It defined private (minban) education as educational services provided in educational institutions that are run by corporations, public enterprises, social organisations, social groups, or individuals through nongovernmental expenditure. This was definitely necessary if the government was going to use private higher education as the primary demand-absorber of its enrolment.
expansion policies that started in 1998. Usually private education comes into play when there is either an absolute shortage of education such that not everybody has access to schooling, or a demand for education alternatives that the existing system cannot satisfy (James, 1995).

- At the very same time as the privately-run schools law, the Regulations of the People’s Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools (2003) is put into effect and addresses the increasing number of agreements between Chinese and non-Chinese education institutions who have established and are running educational institutions within the territory of China to recruit Chinese citizens to study. This law requires that all foreign institutions or companies collaborate with a local provider and therefore only joint venture (JV) agreements are permitted and must finally be approved by the Ministry of Education. The University of Ningbo/University of Nottingham and the Xi’an Jiao Tong University/University of Liverpool branch campuses are the most frequently cited examples of the most developed versions of these collaborations. Recently the central government stopped granting operating permission for these JV agreements citing issues of legitimacy and quality control in some of the foreign partnership arrangements.

- Some very powerful provincial administrations have ignored central government guidelines and allowed cooperations to establish and run – some successfully and others not so. On March 29, 2012 the Ministry of Education issued Notice of Strengthening of the Standardised Administration of Joint Educational Programs on its website urging relevant schools to strictly follow the Regulations of the People’s Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools and not to run any foundation programs for bachelor or master degrees under the name of Chinese-foreign jointly run schools. This warning did not stop the Pudong District government of Shanghai from starting a jointly-run higher education institute with New York University (NYU) in 2012 and is an example of how very powerful and influential districts can flaunt their power to ignore central government directives.

### 2.3.3 Provincial Private Higher Education Laws established through Devolution

The Outline of China’s National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020) is the “2020 Blueprint” that sets the strategic goals to be attained by 2020: to modernise education; shape a learning society; and turn China into a country rich in human resources. Section III (over six chapters) is dedicated to education system reforms but
surprisingly still continues to support that higher education institutes should serve the countries economic and social development through science and technology. Chapter 15 addresses the reform and improvement of the educational administration system and Section 45 of Chapter 15 states the government "will focus on the [continuing] transformation of government functions and decentralisation". Although transparent enough, Mok (2002) questions the government's intentions saying that despite various policies of decentralisation, Chinese higher education institutes still face a tough state whose role as a regulator and overall coordinator has been strengthened rather than weakened.

- *Regulations of Shaanxi Province on the Promotion of Private Education* (2004), demonstrates decentralisation in action and reflects the intent of the 2003 state law "in combination of the actual situations in Shaanxi Province". XAIU is administered by the Shaanxi provincial government via their Department of Education.
- *Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Academic Degrees* (2004), establishes higher education degree qualifications and how the newly established "degree conferring entities" will be regulated, administered and monitored. XAIU became a degree conferring entity for undergraduate degrees in 2005.
- The Shaanxi Provincial Government released *Opinion on Further Support and Standardise Private Higher Education by the People’s Government of Shaanxi Province* (2011) which is based on the 2010 national outline and emphasises provisioning, building and strengthening private higher education in the Shaanxi province.

Although every law, regulation and policy addressed above has some element of impact on the evolution of XAIU Vice President of International Affairs, Du Ruiqing believes there are five key Chinese government initiatives that have shaped what XAIU is today:

1. *Guidelines for Development and the Reform of China's Education System* (1993);
2. *Regulation on Education Run by Social Forces* (1997);
3. *Higher Education Law of the PRC* (1998);
4. *Law of the People's Republic of China on the Promotion of Privately-run Schools* (2003); and
In official Chinese documents, minban like XAIU are categorised as "non-state" higher education institutions in contrast to regular "state" higher education institutions. In the West, minban would typically be classified as 'private' but the nature of minban are quite different from the Western concept of 'private' primarily in the way they are organised, governed and financed. With this clarified and as noted previously in Chapter 1 this study uses the term private to describe non-state higher education institutes like XAIU. In the English language, all Chinese degree conferring higher education institutes romanise their Chinese name and then end in "university". However, in the Chinese language, Chinese state universities are known by the term da xue (university) and independent and private universities are known by the term xue yuan (college). Some say this is to maintain the separation of status between state higher education institutes and independent/private higher education institutes. At the time of writing this study, there are no independent or private ‘da xue’ – only ‘xue yuan’. The Chinese government restricts private higher institutes to college level (Yan, 2005) and Cai and Yan (2009) say that according to Chinese academic standards, private higher education institutes are categorised as non-university, reflecting the tension between official recognition and institutional preference. XAIU’s official Chinese name is Xi'an Wai Shi Xue Yuan. Private higher education does not exist in a vacuum and comprehensive private higher education institutes’ deliver a national curriculum as set by State Ministry of Education and provincial Department of Education. For Chinese higher education, a dual-stream of privatisation has occurred. On one side, as part of early devolution policies there is the increased privatisation of the public sector and on the side the expanding private sector. Starting in 1999, a new “hybrid mixture” (Cai and Yuan, 2009) of private autonomous institutions that are affiliated to public universities but independent of them emerged and are commonly known as independent institutions (duli xueyuan). This created another class of higher education institute making the total three: state, independent (hybrid of state and non-state) and non-state (private).

2.4.1 The Higher Education Tier System

*The Ministry of Education sorts higher education institutes into three stratified tiers based on a series of criteria. Movement between tiers is almost impossible however movement within a tier is plausible.*
The Decision on Educational Reform (1985) targeted providing a “well-proportioned rationally tiered higher education system” and so under this system and within the context of this study there are three classes of higher education institute (defined earlier as degree conferring entities) – State (gongban), Independent (duli xueyuan) and Private (minban) occupying three tiers (Cai and Yan, 2009). Typically, the make up of the tiers is as follows:

- Tier 1 universities are national key public (the higher education institutes included in both the 211 and 985 project initiatives. It should be noted that even at this level, Tier 1 higher education institutes are stratified within the tier based on quality and reputation. Under several ranking systems, the top Tier 1 being well-known universities like: Peking (Beijing) University, Tsinghua University and Fudan University.
- Tier 2 universities are general comprehensive public higher education institutes, the very top independent higher education institutes and under some circumstance some private universities. Again, it should be noted that at this level, Tier 2 universities are stratified within the tier based on quality and reputation and independent higher education institutes occupy the lower end of the tier; and
- Tier 3 universities are predominantly made up of private higher education institutes. Again, it should be noted that even at this level, Tier 3 universities are stratified within the tier based on quality and reputation.

2.4.2 The National College Entrance Examination

Typically the student pool for recruitment purposes is made up of students mostly aged 18-22, who have sat the annual National College Entrance Examination (the gaokao) in the first week of July each year. Students start their compulsory schooling between the ages of 5-7 and the system from primary school to the end of secondary school in China consists of 12 years in total – seven years of primary school, two years of middle school and three years of high school. The gaokao is an admission criteria based on academic considerations and was restored to the Chinese education system in 1977 after being abandoned during the Cultural Revolution. During the revolution Mao had implemented admissions to the very few remaining state higher education institutes based on political criteria like family background, political loyalty and work performance. The post-Mao gaokao exam, in most provinces including the Shaanxi province, totals 750 marks. The typical 750 mark gaokao (known as the ‘3+2’ Examination System) is made up of five separate exams: Mathematics, Chinese and English exams worth 150 marks each and a choice of one of two comprehensive 300 mark exams: one from in Liberal Arts
(Politics, History and Geography) and one from Science (Biology, Physics and Chemistry). Some provinces and municipalities have experimented with other formats but because those formats, outside of their own provincial jurisdiction are not recognised, the ‘3+2’ system remains the benchmark measure for higher education entrance in China. The results of the exams are published around two weeks after the exam is sat. For the general population of students looking for access the higher education their results determine the tier of higher education institute they can gain admission to for the purpose of studying toward a bachelor degree. For the Shaanxi Province from 2010-2012 the minimum gaokao admission scores to gain access to bachelor-level study are shown in the graphic below (refer to Chapter 2, Graphic 4):

Chapter 2, Graphic 4 – Framework mapping Shaanxi NCEE scores to access to bachelor-level higher education and batch intake timing – 2010-12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shaanxi NCEE Tier Cut-Off Scores</th>
<th>Bachelor Degree</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Batch Intake</td>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>550</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>600</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>600</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Bachelor</td>
<td></td>
<td>600</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Access</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note that although this study’s context focuses on “degree conferring entities” the information for the Associate Bachelor’s acceptable band of gaokao score and a potential band that indicates where the universal access policies may push some higher education institutes to draw students from is included for completeness. As an example, “a great number of colleges have dramatically lowered their admission criteria in order to enrol more students. Some vocational institutions went as far as to set an entry threshold as low as 150/750 points, which is the equivalent of 20% in the 100-mark system” (Liu, 2012).

Referring to Chapter 2, Table 4, over the three years (2010-12) Tier 1 and 2 higher education institute ‘bands’ (from/to) have stayed relatively stable and it is only Tier 3 whose band has altered significantly. Tier 3 bachelors (liberal arts) standards of intake dropping from 400 in 2010 to 377 in 2012 and bachelors (science) standards of intake dropping from 400 in 2012 to 331 in 2012 and even bigger standards drops for Associate Degree standards. Anecdotally, this indicates three major issues in play: 1) the government’s universal access policies using Tier 3 higher education institutes to absorb demand, 2) the government protecting education standards for Tier 1 and 2 higher education institutes using new student intakes and 3) a
general shift in the government wanting to encourage more science and technology study by keeping entrance requirements lower across all three tiers compared to the liberal arts option.

2.4.3 The Batch Admission Quota System

Each higher education institute is bound by the Ministry of Education with regard to both: the quality of students able to be recruited (based on the tier system) and the quantity of students able to be recruited (based on the batch admission quota).

Higher education institutes in China need to be a participating member of the National Colleges and Universities Admission System (NCUAS) administered by the Ministry of Education in order to recruit students via the National College Entrance Examination system (the gaokao). Each higher education institute is given a fixed admission quota for students coming from different provinces other than the province in which the higher education is located. Most of the quota is assigned to students coming from the home province where a higher education institute is located. "Regional discrimination is prominent when universities choose their new students. The chance for a local [Shanghai] candidate to be accepted by Shanghai’s Fudan University is 274 times greater than that of his Shandong counterparts and 288 times greater than that of applicants from Inner Mongolia" (Global Times, 2012). Students, based on their gaokao scores are classified into batches (first, second and third) for higher education institute recruitment timing purposes (refer back to Chapter 2, Graphic 4). First batch intake is normally immediately after gaokao scores in mid July, second batch a week later and third batch near the end of July/beginning of August of each year.

In reality, the very top students have already been identified prior to gaokao and take up full-scholarship offers from top higher education institutes around Asia and around the world. For the remainder, each higher education institute is bound by the Ministry of Education with regard to both: 1) the quality of students they are able to recruit (based on the tier awarded to the higher education institute) and the quantity of students able to be recruited (based on the batch admission quota). Generally speaking private higher education institutes begin to recruit new students in the wake of general comprehensive public higher education institutes, let alone in competition with key universities (Li and Morgan, 2008). Although in theory, higher ranked batch students could apply to lower tier universities - it doesn't happen as gaining access to the most prestigious university possible is perceived as the goal of this system for Chinese students. As stated, the system of recruitment allows universities to seek
students from outside of their province of origin but quotas are placed on universities to ensure sufficient local student supply for local universities. The higher the tier of university, the greater that university has access to prime demographic areas within China but of course the higher the level of intra-province protection. In the Shaanxi Province there are 45 degree conferring entities: Six elite universities ('211' and/or '985' project initiatives), five military universities, twenty six general comprehensive public universities and eight private universities (all of which are degree conferring entities). For the purposes of recruitment XAIU is a Tier 3 university but in some less developed provinces is permitted, by the Shaanxi Provincial Education Committee, to promote itself as a Tier 2 university. This is a commercial decision determined by the recruitment department of XAIU and based on their internal recruitment strategy. At XAIU, the recruitment department begin their recruitment cycle in April of each year to prepare for the student intake in September of the same year. XAIU, being a Tier 3 university (a demand-absorber) impacts on the type of students (based on their gaokao results and the admission quota) it can attract to its programs and this will be discussed in more detail in this chapter in section 2.6.

2.5 The For-Profit/Non-Profit Debate

Knight (2002) says “the term internationalisation is now expanded to include a vast array of cross border activities, and this is leading to a rather unfortunate, but perhaps necessary, use of the labels ‘for-profit internationalization’ and ‘non-profit internationalization’ (p. 3)”. Knight (2006) says on one side there is definite blurring of the boundary between public and private institutions as many public universities find it necessary to seek private financing and charge tuition or service fees and on the other side, in many countries private higher education institutes are eligible for public funds and engage in social non-profit activities.

Officially in China, regardless of speculation or inference, there are only two types of higher education institution: 1) public non-profit and 2) private non-profit – with independent higher education institutes falling in to one or the other. Zha (2006) says being a minban has non-profit implications. Those working in privately-owned institutions tend to label their institutions as minban instead of private for the sake of ‘survival’ for the former term has non-profit implications and “in a society like China’s where there is a considerable asymmetry of information between providers and consumers of educational services, consumers tend to have greater trust in non-profit organisations” (Zha, 2006, p. 58). Non-profit private higher education institutes at State level “shall enjoy preferential taxation policy formulated by the
state” and “the State encourages financial institutions to support the development of privately-run schools by means of credit” and “shall give preferential treatment in accordance with the regulations on the use of land” (from Articles 46, 47 and 48 respectively of the Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Promotion of Privately-run Schools (2003)). A hypothetical for-profit Chinese private higher education institute would have to forego those tax and preferential policy directives. In China, one critical challenge is that private higher education still has not been clearly defined despite the numerous legislative and regulatory efforts by the Chinese government over the years (Cai and Yan, 2009). As a result, many private higher education institutes resort to different business models in some aspects of their practice, and relations between private higher education institutes are characterised by competition rather than collaboration. Cai and Yan (2009) therefore conclude that the Chinese private higher education institutes’ environment is different from public higher education institutes. Private higher education in China is not a complementary twin of public higher education but should be seen as a necessary supplement to public provision (Li and Morgan, 2008). Based on the post-Mao neo-liberal policies it is believed that “necessary supplement” refers to the function of private higher education as demand-absorber. Levy (2009) creates a typology of private higher education institutions: elite/semi-elite, religious/cultural and non-elite/demand-absorbing and says that Chinese private higher education institutes are mainly in the last group - as is the case for the great majority of countries. Whether private higher education institutions are non-profit or for-profit organisations generally speaking they are easily influenced by government policy and other social dynamics (Yan and Wu 2005).

On one hand the government really needed private demand-absorbers to absorb earlier massification policies and to provide a buffer while the government optimised public higher education with devolution, institutional mergers and the development of independent institutions - and on the other hand knew that private higher education institutes wouldn’t have any incentive to start and grow if they couldn’t make profit. The majority of founders or managers of private higher education institutes pursue profit especially given that, although the state gives relief via tax and preferential policies, it does not provide direct financial support and therefore income/revenue is based solely on attracting tuition-paying students. Early in the paradigm of private higher education in China, given the issue of lack of opportunity to access to public higher education, many high-income families were willing and able to pay full-fee tuition (Li and Morgan, 2008). The 2003 law primarily provides a framework that clarifies the rights and interests of private education and reduces the legal inequalities between private and public institutions – but goes a little further. It also includes a
sufficiently ambiguous Article 51 stating that after all costs have been considered “the fund providers [the investors] may obtain a reasonable amount of requital from the cash surplus of the school” and at provincial level under the 2004 regulations under Article 10 “the investors of private-run schools can obtain reasonable returns from their investment according to law”. Most studies refer to this policy as “reasonable return” and infer it means profit. However, this ambiguity puts private higher education institutes in a difficult position with many institution presidents afraid of being trapped by the undefined notion of profit making (Lin et al. 2005). If Chinese private higher education institutes are motivated by profit, are their programs, including internationalised programs like iFP, motivated by profit?

2.6 The Current Commercial Situation Impacting on XAIU

This section provides a overview of XAIU’s commercial situation, in terms of internationalisation capacity and capability, by using a SWOT situational analysis (the period of SWOT observation was an academic quarter-year from September 2011 to November 2011) of XAIU’s internal “forces”, their strengths and weaknesses, defined and guided by Knight’s (2004) organisation strategies: governance, operations, services and human resources and this will be balanced by analysing XAIU’s external factors, their opportunities and threats, guided by a PESTEL-based analysis of six factors (political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal).

XAIU is a private higher education institute first established in 1992 by entrepreneur the founder Huang Teng (aka the founder). Today, XAIU is a comprehensive private higher education institute with 12 colleges spread over three campuses. It has 1700 teachers and administrators and a student population of more than 30,000. XAIU is one of the very few private degree conferring entities in China but does not receive any of the direct financial support public higher education institutes enjoy from the Chinese government. All income/revenue is gained through full-fee tuition and because of the lack of public-sector support cannot offset student tuition fees with government fee subsidies. XAIU is however able to set tuition fees for programs based on what it believes the market will bear. XAIU then creates courses based not only on traditional fields of study but also on market demand (both from students and industry). What little academic research being done at XAIU is not eligible for State research funding and as a result, meaningful cross-border inter-university academic research exchange is non-existent.
XAIU External Analysis (using PESTEL)

Chapter 2, Graphic 5 – XAIU SWOT Framework – PESTEL and Knight


Opportunities:

- The Chinese government is committed to the continuing development of higher education in China in order to develop a workforce that is capable of contributing to the economic and social development targets of the country. This will ensure continuing income opportunities for private higher education providers into the near future.
- The Chinese government continue with their enrolment expansion plans moving from elite to mass quickly and now developing policies to ensure the shift from mass to universal access (access to over 50% of the student cohort). These policies provide that all Chinese students who want and can afford access to higher education can gain it.
- Over the past decade the Chinese government has produced a number of laws and regulations supporting the legitimisation, development and growth of private higher education.
- The rigid state-controlled higher education system often produces graduates who are not well prepared for a global economic environment and are unsuitable for many overseas-based enterprises in China. “Younger [Chinese] workers just don’t think analytically enough, despite being intelligent and earnest” (Rein, 2010). There are opportunities for XAIU as a private higher education provider to improve on some aspects of state delivery.
- Many foreign universities, particularly from the United States, Great Britain and Australia, want to develop meaningful partnerships that lead to working relationships with Chinese
higher education institutes.

**Threats:**

- In 2012 the Chinese economy fell to its lowest growth rate in 13 years which has in part been attributed to a shrinking working population. In 2012 the working population fell by 3.6% and is predicted to continue this trend for the next 15 years (Yoshioka, 2013). To meet industry labour demands, long-term adjustments include signs that the three-decade old one-child policy will be relaxed and short-term adjustments include building greater efficiencies into higher education which then supports universal access to higher education.

- Government higher education institutes, after 20 years of funded mergers, independent institution development, devolution, infrastructure investment, fee-subsidy availability and large research funds, are in the very best competitive position they have been since the implementation of the new package of national development policies known as "reform and open" strategies in 1978.

- A growing range and variety of higher education providers including public, independent, private and JV all increase the total number of competitors in the higher education sector. This is particularly true of the independent schools that stand as a protective barrier between Tier 1 state universities and Tier 3 private higher education institutes.

- From 2010 onwards there have been significant withdrawals of Australian university involvement in China, preferring to attract students for internal enrolment to Australia. The University of Sydney has begun using scores from China’s national college entrance exam (the gaokao) during admissions in a bid to attract more Chinese students to study in Australia (Wang, 2012). Quality standards and regulations have created significant reputational risk for universities running offshore programs in China.

- The governments’ stratifying of higher education providers into Tiers and the admission quota system are major barriers to private higher education increasing the quality and quantity of students.

- There are a range of government laws and regulations supporting and committing to the development of private higher education in 'words' but very little in terms of 'action'. As an example, in 1981, the state established a higher educational examination system for the self-taught. Examinees are not limited by age or record of previous schooling and the system, widely referred to as 'self-study', is one of the three approaches to addressing adult higher education in China. It assumes students enrolling in this stream of study have the capacity for self-learning, the motivation to work towards national level higher
education examinations and the ability to seek out whatever additional tuition or support they may need within their own communities. The system relies on state and provincial governments, nominated public and private higher education providers to support these students and most students attend higher education institutes for the experience and pay self-study based fees. XAIU was one of these nominated schools until 2006 upon which the government support was removed (in favour of only state higher education institutes having this nomination in the future) resulting XAIU to lose almost one third of its student population and forcing it to seek other ways to gain back that financial loss in 2007.

- XAIU, as a private higher education institute, is easily influenced and therefore very vulnerable to changing government higher education policies and social-economic circumstances.

- A growing number of private higher education institutes are developing local and foreign partnerships in order to offer compelling competitive programs (which include internationalisation programs).

- The Chinese government determines who can operate authorised foreign JV higher education programs in China using the Certificate of Approval for Operation of Chinese-foreign Cooperatively Run Educational Projects in the Peoples’ Republic of China. Applications are made to central government through an application process via provincial government recommendations in March and September of every year. In 2011, “more than 70% of the applications for joint Sino-foreign university programmes presented by China’s provinces and cities were rejected” and “the low quality of proposed foreign education and unreasonable agreements between the two sides were the main reasons for rejection” (Sharma, 2012).

- There is very little collaboration and cooperation between private higher education institutes which results in a lack of sector cohesion and association in terms of possible collective negotiations with the state for support.

- From 2008, the overall pool of students to recruit from has been shrinking on average by 10% per year. “The sharp decline in the number of Chinese high school students taking the national college entrance examination since 2008 is certain to harm the country’s economic development in the long run” (Liu, 2012). There are several reasons for this including:
  
  - Students opting out of the gaokao completely and instead studying under Chinese-based international foundation programs (normally Chinese high school/private company JVs) with the view to direct access to foreign studies. “The growing demand for overseas college education has led to fewer students taking the national college entrance
examination in China" (Li, 2012);

- Students completing gaokao and leaving for abroad directly. “Chinese universities should take the rising number of students studying abroad as a warning” (Global Times, 2012);

- Students (and their parents) deciding to opt out of higher education and instead start work directly on finishing secondary school. The main reasons include increasing cost of higher education the costs and time to gain those qualifications, weighed against opportunity cost, especially in a competitive labour market. “Young students and their parents are beginning to reflect on the value of university and the equalisation of opportunity” (Global Times, 2012); and “even students who are lucky enough to make it to university are not guaranteed a good job four years down the road” (Xinhua, 2012); and

- The one-child policy which has contributed to an overall population contraction. “The drop in the number of test-takers, as a result of the ‘one-child policy’, is a serious warning for the country, with public concern that center on fears that colleges won’t have enough students in the coming years” (Liu, 2012).

- Universal access to higher education may lead to universities (particularly Tier 3 demand absorbers) accepting students, for commercial purposes they would not normally have accepted in the past. Issues of quality of input (the poor general abilities of students entering higher education) are widely documented, for example, Liu, (2012) concludes that the main side effect of the shrinking college-age population is the deterioration of the quality of college students.

- For demand-absorbers, low quality input balances against the need to remain viable and therefore may result in operating cost cutting that then result in poor quality teaching standards (throughput), lack of qualification recognition (output) and fewer future work opportunities for graduates (outcome). There is the growing call to improve and assure the quality of higher education in China, evident in the “2020 Blueprint” (Zha, 2012)

- Not all foreign qualifications are automatically recognised and students who gain foreign qualifications (either in China or abroad) must have the qualification recognised and ratified by the Chinese government via a central government body called the Chinese Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange. Lack of ‘official’ recognition can impact on employer attitudes to unrecognised foreign qualifications resulting in lower job opportunities for those students graduating from international programs either in China or returning from abroad.
2.6.2 XAIU Internal Analysis (Organisation Strategies)

**Strengths:**

- The founder is a National Peoples’ Congress Deputy and has developed strong relationships with central and provincial government leaders and officials.
- The founder has a number of close family members and friends working in senior positions within the university structure which within the Chinese culture is acceptable and possibly advantageous. Cultural researchers have proposed that Chinese culture is characterised by collectivism, an orientation that prioritises collectivities over the individual (Triandis, 2001; Brewer & Chen, 2007). Not only are the norms for family relationships highly valued, the family is also taken as a template for relationships in other domains of life like professional or business relationships (Yang, 1992).
- Most XAIU Vice-Presidents are ex-Shaanxi province public university Presidents and Vice-Presidents and bring with them: experience, knowledge and their own set of government and professional relationships.
- Because XAIU is a family-owned business it has a relatively flat management structure allowing dynamic changes to happen quickly in order to remain competitive.
- A lot of return of investment was used to develop XAIU’s infrastructure and as a result, XAIU’s main campus (the south campus) is the equivalent of a small modern city with hotels, restaurants, medical centre, student accommodation, supermarkets and banking facilities.
- Students are the primary source of income and 98%, no matter their origin, live full-time on the campus and so create revenue streams additional to student fees. Examples are: accommodation (4/6/8 students per dormitory room depending on their budget), three campus canteens for all mealtimes, laundry services, shower facilities, hot water fees, internet access, driving lessons and hospital services.
- XAIU is one of only a very few private higher education institutes in the Shaanxi province that is a degree conferring entity.
- During the period of observation, 28 foreign universities and community colleges visited XAIU with a view to establishing some type of relationship with XAIU. The vast majority of those universities were from the United States with the remainder from Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and the Asia region (Japan, Korea, Malaysia and Singapore). Typically the relationship sought was in the form of study abroad programs, these visiting university interested in having XAIU students, all other things being equal, attending their
institutions to continue their higher education.

- XAIU has a Certificate of Approval for Operation of Chinese-foreign Cooperatively Run Educational Projects in the Peoples’ Republic of China for its current XAIU/TAFE SWSI JV to legally operate an educational program delivering a higher educational diploma program in international business studies. The certificate is determined by the Ministry of Education of the Peoples’ Republic of China, approved by Department of Education of the Shaanxi province and expires in 2017. This type of certificate is very difficult to procure currently and many other schools, unable to attain these types of approvals, take the risk and run JVs illegally without it. As a TAFE Advanced Diploma of Business is still embedded into iFP, the iFP program can technically operate under the current certificate of approval.

- A new joint delivery program branded iFP has been designed and will commence in September 2012 aimed at superseding the XAIU/TAFE SWSI project. XAIU has or has had a number of internationalisation activities. A table to illustrate XAIU’s internationalisation academic programs and research activities has been constructed using two main internationalisation strategies: academic program and research and scholarly collaboration and in more detail an indication of internationalisation activities (refer Appendix 3 – XAIU Internationalisation Strategies and Activities).

Weaknesses:

- A new certificate of approval for iFP would be very difficult to obtain given current provincial and central government policy of higher education JVs, particularly at the lower end. Embedding the TAFE qualification into iFP technically allows iFP to operate.

- Because the certificate of approval is for a TAFE qualification, XAIU cannot formally advertise the existence of iFP within the Shaanxi provincial government’s official publication of approved higher education JVs. This then impacts on program credibility which in turn affects the type and number of students attracted to iFP. XAIU can of course advertise the iFP using other market-driven sources of promotion.

- XAIU has a relatively flat management structure and the school tends to be micro-managed by the founder. Sole proprietors like the founder, tend to find it hard to delegate authority and responsibility. As XAIU grows it progressively fails to function at optimal levels. Using Lewin’s (1939) leadership style typology the founder could be categorised as using an authoritarian style of leadership. In this style of leadership the founder provides clear expectations for what needs to be done, when it should be done, and how it should be done. There is also a clear division between the leader and follower and authoritarian
leaders tend to make decisions independently with little or no input from the rest of the group. This leads to younger capable managers being unwilling to take responsibility or make suggestions for fear of not gaining support from senior managers and subordinates.

- The faculties and departments at XAIU appear not to be willing to accept new ideas or make any kind of changes unless directed by the owner of XAIU. This insular style of management inclines to discourage an inter-faculty/department spirit of integration and collaboration stated to be necessary to address Knight's (2003a) internationalisation definition.

- **Labour-related issues**
  - Reasonable return is in part achieved by controlling the largest cost - labour salaries, incentives and benefits, which are lower than public universities. This often results in issues of low productivity and motivation.
  - Salary packages for foreigners have not kept up with other competitors and therefore it is becoming difficult to attract suitable experienced and skilled foreigner talent to match against current and proposed programs.
  - Recently XAIU has been using foreign internship/exchange students and recent foreign graduates to fill that foreign-expert teaching 'gap' which has resulted in issues of quality of preparation and delivery. “Ever since the huge expansion of Chinese higher education enrolment started in 1999, concerns over and criticism of deteriorating quality in teaching and learning have been heard” (Zha, 2012)
  - XAIU has a local teaching ‘gap’ that is typical of private higher education. In general, it has the young (fresh graduates) who are willing but not able – and the old (normally retired from public universities) who are able but not willing. The situation may also have an adverse impact on the quality of teaching. The private sector has been important in supporting the overall expansion in higher education but there is increasing anxiety about the ability of the sector to deliver appropriate quality in the light of problems in attracting suitably qualified teachers and students (Lin, 2005).
  - Many of the current teaching and administrative staff are from public universities. They have little or no experience with market driven forces that drive private higher education and so are slow or unwilling to adapt to the XAIU’s competitive environment.
  - Because XAIU is a demand absorber it tends to attract students who would not normally gain access to public universities. This results in issues of student quality/ability.
  - For the two reasons above, XAIU has a does not have a good reputation in the market - both from other schools and from prospective students and parents.
- The XAIU/TAFE SWSI project is the only full-time internationalisation joint delivery program XAIU has.
- The XAIU/TAFE SWSI project student recruitment numbers over the last three years has been reducing to a point where continuation of the program is tenuous.
Chapter 3 – The Case Study Methodology

3.1 Qualitative Study

From Chapter 1: This qualitative study explores the motivations that a Chinese private higher education institute has in implementing internationalisation activities within the mix of its traditional set of university activities. This discovery will focus on the development and establishing of a single key internationalisation activity, an international foundation program that uses the acronym as its brand – iFP. The study is bound by the unique context of the internal and external dynamics of a leading Chinese private higher education institute. This study has the ontology and epistemology of social constructivism and uses a descriptive single-case study strategy to guide the reader through the experience and discovery. The study is inevitably bound by time and with the aim of being to discover knowledge through the lens of social constructionism.

3.1 Qualitative Study

Polkinghorne (2005) describes qualitative research as “an umbrella term under which a variety of research methods that use languaged data are clustered” (p. 137). Creswell (1998) proposed that the multiple approaches could be organised under five different traditions: biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and finally the approach that this study uses - the case study. Polkinghorne (2005) says the modernist phase of social science research methods based on qualitative data can be identified with the publication of Glaser and Strauss’ The Discovery of Grounded Theory. Like many other case study practitioners and researchers, industry professionals and students around the world, this case study strategy
integrates thoughts and ideas about how best to take advantage of the qualitative research approach. In order to present a robust and unique study design, two much-quoted textbooks of Robert K. Yin: *Case Study Research – Designs and Methods* and *Applications of Case Study Research* were accessed for guidance. Robert Yin, Robert Stake and Sharan Merriam’s names constantly recur in the field of case study research and are relied on to anchor this case study methodology. These three abovementioned authors have very distinctive approaches: Robert Yin, whose background as a consultant in policy research has influenced his approach as a methodologist; Robert Stake wanting to represent the complexity and personal experience of the phenomenon of program evaluation, offered his view of case study as a highly interpretive endeavour; and Sharan Merriam for her research on case study applications in education (Brown, 2008). Qualitative case study research is supported by the by rigour of Yin, informed and enriched by the creative interpretation of Stake, and guided by the pragmatic approach of Merriam (Brown, 2008).

3.2 An Introduction to the Case Study Research Method

After considering a range of research strategies, a descriptive case study method was selected to provide the rich insights into the management dynamics of a Chinese private higher education institute through the lens of an internationalisation activity – the foundation program iFP. A case could be an individual, a group, a school, a community (Merriam, 1998). Creswell’s (2002) position is that a case can include “a program, events, or activities” (p. 485) whereas Merriam (1998) reinforces and adds to the proposition that a case study design is employed to gain in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved. The interest is thus in process rather than purely outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation (p. 19). Similarly, Stake (2000) suggests the “case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied” (p. 435). It is generally agreed that case studies aid the researcher in asking “how” and “why” questions but there are several noted differences in how researchers define case study. There are some researchers’ who think of a case study as the object to be studied (Stake, 2000) and some who define a case study as a process of investigation (Creswell, 2002). Creswell goes on to define a case study as “an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g., an activity, event, process, or individuals) based on extensive data collection” (p. 485). Merriam (1988) defines a case study as “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single entity, phenomenon or social unit. Stake (2000) defines case study as the study of a “bounded system” (p. 436). For
the purposes of this study the researcher will use the Yin's (2009, p. 18) two-stage operational
definition of case study research that encompasses much of Stake and Merriam's stances:

“A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in
depth and within its real life context - especially when the boundaries between
phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.”

Applying this case study's criteria to Yin's (2009) definition proceeds thus:

An empirical inquiry \(\rightarrow\) academic research.
... that investigates \(\rightarrow\) using a triangulation of three key sources of evidence: open-ended interviews, participant observations and documentation and archival records.
... a contemporary phenomenon \(\rightarrow\) iFP as an internationalisation activity within XAIU.
... within its real life context \(\rightarrow\) at XAIU, a private higher education institute operating in a socialist country but being influenced by globalisation and commercialisation.
... the boundaries \(\rightarrow\) time: for the school year September 2011 through to the end of September 2012, place: within the Shaanxi province in China, inside a degree conferring private higher education institute, limits: observing the dynamics of a single department – the College of International Cooperation (CiC) that has assigned a team to develop a new internationalisation activity – the foundation program branded iFP.

A common theme within case study methodology is that “the case is a bounded system”
(Merriam, 2002, p. 178). This suggests that “a case study is a good approach when the researcher has clearly identifiable cases with boundaries and seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of the cases or a comparison of several cases” (Cresswell, 2007, p. 74) but such understanding occurs within specified contextual conditions - because they were highly pertinent to the phenomenon of study (Yin and Davis, 2007). In the second stage of Yin's (2009) definition, because the phenomenon and the context are not always distinguishable in real-life situations, data collection and data analysis strategies focus the definition to:

“The case study [empirical] inquiry copes with a distinctive situation in which there are
many variables. Any particular result relies upon multiple sources of evidence, with
data requiring triangulation. Another result may benefit from the prior development of
theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis (p. 18).”
This study is set in a real workplace context and focuses on the development of a single internationalisation activity driven by the one of XAIU’s 12 colleges, the College of International Cooperation (CiC). Yin (2009) comments that case studies are used in many situations to increase our knowledge of individual, group, organisational, social, political or related phenomena. The flexible nature of case study research means a case study can span research paradigms of both a quantitative and qualitative nature – despite its strong association with qualitative research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events including organisational and managerial processes, school performance and international relations. At XAIU the creation, development and implementation of managerial processes are organised and managed internally by CiC. However, decisions are made within a context of external forces that include China the country, and China the economy. This context provides a unique set of external dynamics that form a major part of this study. This study’s external context was addressed in Chapter 2 as a SWOT analysis, using the PESTAL framework as guidance for that external component (the Opportunities and Threats). Of the five major research methods, the case study method is often preferred when a “how” or “why” question is being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has little or no control. Yin (2012) identifies three variations of case study: exploratory, explanatory and descriptive according to purpose and the use of any of these variations need not be mutually exclusive. Descriptive case-studies should start with theoretical propositions or theory to guide the development of study questions, selecting the case, refining the case study design and helping to define the relevant data to be collected. Yin (2009) emphasises that these propositions should by no means be considered with the formality of grand theory in social science but mainly suggest a simple set of relationships such as “a [hypothetical] story about why acts, events, structures, and thoughts occur” (Sutton and Staw, 1995). The researcher needs to speculate, based on the literature and any other earlier evidence, what they expect the findings of the research to be. The data collection and analysis can then be structured in order to support or refute the research propositions. The structure of this descriptive case study supports the following development framework (for a graphic representation, please refer to Appendix 2 – XAIU iFP Case Study Questions):

XAIU iFP case study → Case study research questions → Case study propositions → General theory → Rival theory
A descriptive case study can describe a sequence of events or underlying mechanisms in detail and then is investigated in its natural setting. Yin (2009) says descriptive case studies contribute to research questions that focus on “what is happening or has happened” but then that may lead to other questions. Such studies can describe, explore or explain, he notes. While Yin (2012) identifies the three types of case study research, the boundaries are not mutually exclusive. A case study can therefore be both descriptive and explanatory. This can be evidenced with this study’s second research question:

“How an internationalisation activity would be developed in practice at XAIU?”

Although the study is descriptive in nature, the question starts with “how” but that “how” can then lead to a typical “what” question.

“How an internationalisation activity would be developed in practice at XAIU and what actions would occur?”

This case study utilises a logic model to depict the theoretical assumptions and linkages between the iFP program elements and hypothesised intermediate and long-term outcomes. A logic model was developed as part of the design protocol and additionally serves to provide a framework to answer the ‘what’ component of the study question above. Appendix 4 – XAIU iFP Case Study Logic Model shows the constructed iFP logic model for this study. Details of the development and use of logic models is found at section 3.4.1 of this chapter. A key concern in any research study is to incorporate appropriate mechanisms that assure the researcher and reader of the quality of the research, its process, and its findings. The assumptions and characteristics of qualitative naturalistic inquiry as a research paradigm suggest a set of criteria for establishing quality and this study will incorporate Guba (1981, pp. 79-80) and Lincoln and Guba’s (1985, pp. 289-331) criteria for trustworthiness and those issues will be addressed in detail in section 3.3.5 of this chapter. After an introduction to case study methodology, the next procedure in this chapter is case study design.

3.3 Design and Quality of Design

Research design is much more than a work plan. Its main purpose is to help to avoid the situation in which the evidence does not address the initial work questions. Yin (2009) puts research design in plain language saying it is “a logical plan for getting from here to there”,

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where here may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered and there is some set of conclusions about these questions (p. 26). Between “here” and “there” are a number of major steps, including the collection and analysis of relevant data. For case studies, five steps of a research design are considered as especially important (Yin, 2009) and will be addressed below:

1. a study’s questions;
2. its propositions, if any;
3. its unit of analysis;
4. the logic linking the data to the propositions; and
5. the criteria for interpreting findings.

3.3.1 Case Study Questions, Theoretical Propositions (Theory) and Rival Theory

The graphic above is also attached as Appendix 2 – iFP Case Study Questions

The Case Study Questions:

1. Why are internationalisation activities so important to XAIU?
   a) Proposition 1. Internationalisation activities at XAIU contribute to building XAIU’s reputation
b) Proposition 2. A mix of internationalisation activities at XAIU are needed to meet a changing market

2. How an internationalisation activity would be developed in practice at XAIU and what actions would occur?

a) Proposition 1. Establishing a new internationalisation activity, like an international foundation program has key internal challenges

b) Proposition 2. Establishing a new internationalisation activity, like an international foundation program, means working within key external constraints

Theory Statement: XAIU internationalisation activities are profit motivated.

Rival Theory Statement: XAIU internationalisation activities may fail if too much emphasis is placed on profit.

Each proposition directs attention to something that should be examined within the scope of study. Yin (2009) argues that "how" and "why" questions do not point to what should be studied. It is only when the researcher is forced to state propositions that they can discover where to look for relevant evidence as propositions can direct attention, limit scope, and suggest possible links between phenomena.

3.3.2 Units of Analysis

The units of analysis are related to the fundamental problem of defining what the 'case' is in a case study. Normally the unit of analysis depends on the research questions and Yin (2009) says a unit of analysis could be: individuals, small groups, organisations, partnerships or communities, relationships, decisions, or projects. A virtue of the case study method is the ability to continue to redefine the case after collecting early data. It is important at this stage to ensure that sufficient clarity and a logical pathway have been established between the phenomenon and the unit of analysis in order to navigate through the case study process.

In this study: the phenomenon is ifP as a internationalisation activity with XAIU; the case is CIC (the CIC oversee all internationalisation activities within XAIU); the focus is the development of an internationalisation activity within the CIC - the foundation program ifP; and the units of analysis are the key players in the CIC management team
tasked with developing and implementing iFP, the processes (internal and external) and supplemented by other stakeholders in the development and implementation of iFP.

As case studies provide the means to understand and explain a phenomenon through the participants who experience it, this study reconstructs the development and implementation of iFP and presents it as a program (a product) ready to be taken to the market in June 2012. This is the month, close to the end of iFP’s development pathway, where XAIU’s recruitment department need to develop iFP marketing collateral to prepare student recruitment agents.

The case study will be constructed by examining documents, having open-ended interviews with key people who were instrumental in iFP’s development, and recording observations made during the time frame of the study. At this point, having developed a logical pathway to help determine the ‘case’, the general characteristics of research design serve as a strong foundation to make a decision on the specific design for this case study. Yin (2009) proposes this matrix of basic designs for case studies and from that the researcher has chosen a single case study with three embedded units of analysis for his design:

Chapter 3, Graphic 1 – XAIU iFP Case Study Design

![XAIU iFP Case Study Design
Single Case Study with Embedded Units of Analysis](image)

Source: Adapted by the researcher from Yin (2009) p. 46.

Note from Yin’s matrix that the dashed line represents the blurred boundary between the case and its context. The structure of this case study will be a single-case study design with embedded (multiple units of analysis).
3.3.3 The Role of Theory in Case Study Research Design

Research design links the data to be collected and the conclusions to be drawn into to the initial questions of the study. This also provides a conceptual framework and action plan for getting from which questions to ask to produce conclusions. Having addressed the five steps in section 3.2 should then lead to the construction of a preliminary theory related to the topic of study. As mentioned in section 3.1 the researcher is not being asked to be a masterful theoretician, and the simple goal is to have a sufficient blueprint for study – and this requires theoretical propositions. For this reason, theory development as part of the design phase and prior to data collection is essential in constructing case studies. The theory statement this case study proposes is that:

“XAIU internationalisation activities are profit motivated”.

This statement comes from a grander concept forwarded by economists that a major goal of an economy is the maximisation of growth and therefore profit. Adam Smith (1776) in the Wealth of Nations explained why the profit motive was an intrinsic enabler of the efficient utilisation of an economy’s resources toward society’s overall benefit. Profit motive is the concept in economics that refers to individuals being provided incentive to relinquish something (e.g. capital, expertise, labour) for deployment to a productive purpose. Simplified, this means that profit motivates entrepreneurs to expect to receive something that is worth more than their investment before they are willing to invest and in most cases means that their venture expects to earn a profit. In economist Milton Friedman’s much referenced article for The New York Times Magazine, he was quoted saying the only “responsibility of business is to increase its profits”. Then, it is not a difficult link to make between profit motivated organisations contributing to a country’s goal of economic growth. Johnston and Edelstein (1993) said the dominant argument for internationalising higher education is that it will ensure the nation’s economic competitiveness. Yin (2009) says an important aspect of evaluations is the role of the rival theory, and although an important part of the case study’s analytic strategy, should be considered in the design stage. A rival theory is a theory different from the original theory that explains the results of the case study better. In the development of this case study the following rival theory statement was proposed:

“XAIU internationalisation activities may fail if too much emphasis is placed on profit”.
This rival theory relates to the possibility of such a single-minded drive for profit could result in XAIU reducing input costs into its programs resulting in lower quality output. Driving profit should be a goal that focuses on expanding revenues while delivering cost efficiencies rather than only reducing input costs. However, given the current context of the study, reducing costs to satisfy investor expectations may be the only option and there are serious implications for a strategy of reducing costs to maintain profits including: a reducing of XAIU’s ability to take on new opportunities and further develop existing initiatives, leaving the organisation more vulnerable to wage demands from the remaining key personnel, a lowering of overall staffing morale and the possible subsequent loss of a pool of XAIU’s most talented employees – all impacting on reputation. Yin (2009) says that if you don’t think about an alternative theory that might explain what you are seeing, evaluation won’t work.

3.4 Preparing and Collecting Evidence – The Timeframe

This study uses three sources of evidence in three overlapping sequential stages its duration. Stage one and two convenient span a full year of XAIU operation (September 2011 to September 2012). The study relies heavily on secondary data during the first stage of the study (from September 2011 to March 2012). External and internal documents and archived records were used together with a SWOT analysis and logic model to form a robust foundation for the study. In stage 2 (from March 2012 to September 2012), during the normal course of the researcher’s work as XAIU’s international projects consultant, he attended meetings between XAIU and visiting international higher education institutes and at the same time the write-up of the study to date commenced. Write-up and review continued from October 2012 through to Chinese New Year (January 2013). In the final stage (for the month of March 2013) primary research was compiled using key interviews and a re-use of qualitative data from meetings notes. The final interviews provided much needed clarity to the strategy and policy issues raised by the study.

3.4.1 Preparing to Collect Case Study Evidence

Between the completion of the design and the start of data collection, ethical issues regarding the overall protection of human subjects is addressed, and in this case study, was achieved through the University of Newcastle's ethics approval process. The ethics approval requirement is a robust and comprehensive process that complies with the provisions contained within the Australian National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research
and the requirements within the University of Newcastle relating to human research. A formal University of Newcastle Certificate of Approval was issued for this study prior to any research being conducted and the approval number for research conducted is H-2013-0030. A Case Study Protocol (CSP) is a set of guidelines that can be used to structure and govern a case research project (Yin, 2009) and contains not only the instrument for research, but also procedures and general rules to be followed using the instrument. An illustrative example of a case study protocol should include: an overview of the study project, field procedures, case study questions posed to the investigator and a guide for the case study report. At the heart of the protocol for this study is a set of substantive questions that reflect the researcher’s line of inquiry and are reminders about information that needs to be collected and why. The protocol is a way of increasing the reliability of case study research and is intended to guide the investigator in carrying out the data collection. In this study two key guiding documents were developed in combination to create the study case study protocol: the XAIU iFP Case Study Overview (refer to Appendix 1); and the XAIU iFP Logic Model (refer to Appendix 4). A logic model can underpin a case study design by depicting the chronological chain of evidence progressing from inputs and activities (the causes) to short-term and long-term outcomes (the effects). As such, the logic model constructed for this case study provides a clear organisational framework for forming the case study protocol, for comparing externally-collected data with interview findings, and ultimately for conducting the data analysis. This case study utilises its logic model to depict the theoretical assumptions and linkages between iFP program elements and hypothesised intermediate and long-term outcomes. Appendix 4 shows the constructed iFP logic model for this study. In this case study, the logic model was also used as a tool during the design phase of the research to conceptualise and guide evaluation strategies by providing a comprehensive framework for data collection and analysis. As previously discussed, data collection is triangulated through three sources: open-ended interviews, participant observation and archive materials and documents. The actual data analysis will use a general inductive analysis method to guide analysis and the purpose of the logic model is, while gathering evidence, to ensure the study remains within its stated boundary and context. The general inductive analysis will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4 section 4.1.2 of this study. The primary reason for choosing a logic model is because it can depict assumptions about the resources needed to support program activities, and can produce outputs from those activities needed to then realise the intended outcomes of a program (Wholey, 1994; United Way of America, 1996). These assumptions are often referred to as program theory (Bickman, 1990; Weiss, 1997). In this case, the iFP case study questions, propositions, theory and rival theory statements for this study’s program theory. That is, in
In this study, the logic model assumptions (i.e. propositions) become the study's theory and describe the program components and rationale, the process by which the program is intended to work, and the expected outcomes of the program. The logic model is constructed at organisational level and encompasses the key elements of the program theory and provides a system-level map, which identifies the interrelationships of the iFP program elements, and the internal and external factors that might influence the hypothesised outcomes. Logic models date back to the 1970s. The first publication that used the term 'logic model' is usually cited as *Evaluation: Promise and Performance* by Joseph S. Wholey (1979). Today, many variations and types of logic models exist and the logic model used in this case study has been adapted from the Cooperative Extension of the University of Wisconsin (http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande) and was originally developed by the university in response to the GPRA (Government Performance and Results Act, 1993) initiative.

### 3.4.2 Collecting Case Study Evidence

Yin (2009) says case study evidence can come in many sources and outlines six key sources of evidence and in this study four of the six will be used by the researcher:

1. **Documentation** is relevant to this study and will include: administrative documents, journal and professional articles, and international, national, provincial and internal news appearing in the mass media (that includes the internet, magazines and newspapers). This source of evidence, together with the study's SWOT analysis and the formation of a study logic model will serve as the first stage of evidence gathering;

2. **Archival records** will be accessed including public-use files and XAIU organisational records. Most organisational records related to internationalisation activities within XAIU are written in English and any in Chinese will be translated. This second phase of evidence gathering, together with documentation will form the foundation of secondary data;

3. **Open-ended interviews** form the third and final stage of evidence gathering and will be conducted near the end of the study with key players within the CiC business unit and team members assigned to develop and implement the iFP program. Interviews will be unstructured in style and in English. These kinds of interviews can offer rich and extensive data and the flexible format allows participants to relax and feel comfortable in order to reveal how they construct their reality and how they think about situations;
4. **Participant Observation** is a special mode of observation made possible within the normal course of work duties by the researcher’s dual roles as Director of Studies for the XAIU/TAFE project and XAIU’s International Projects consultant. There will be a re-use of meeting notes near the end of the study.

It is important that these sources be developed and mastered independently to ensure that each source is properly used. Not all sources will be relevant or carry the same weighting. Yin (2009) suggests the benefits from these sources of evidence can be maximised if these three principles are followed:

1. **The use multiple sources of evidence** and triangulation to achieve a convergence of evidence. Patten (2002) discusses four types of triangulation: of data sources, among different evaluators, of perspectives of the same data, and of methods – for establishing credibility. Credibility, which refers to the confidence one can have in the truth of the findings, can be established by various methods including triangulation. Triangulation, defined by Cresswell and Miller (2000), is a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study. For this case study, the researcher uses three sources of evidence: open-ended interviews, participant observations and documentation and archival records to achieve triangulation;

2. **A case study database** was created that is separate from this final report and contains: case study notes, case study documents, tabular materials and narratives; and

3. **Maintenance of the chain of evidence** using a logic model was used to increase the reliability of the information of this case study. The iFP logic model provides useful linkages between initial study questions and case study procedure this was highlighted in section 3.4.1, the case study protocol section of this chapter of the study.

These three principles ensure that quality control during the data collection process make the process of collecting evidence for this study as explicit as possible so that the final key findings and the data that has been collected address the concerns of validity and reliability of the analysis.
3.5 Analysis of Case Study Evidence

For analysis this case study will use the following linear guide:

Case study → Evidence analysis → Analysis Strategy: Relying on theoretical propositions → Analysis Technique: use of the iFP logic model developed at ... → Organisational-level to provide a framework for data to be collected → A general inductive analysis of the data collected with then be carried out

There is no particular moment when data analysis begins and it is a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations (Stake, 1995). Data analysis consists of examining, categorising, tabulating, testing or otherwise recombining evidence, to draw empirical based conclusions – key findings in the case of this study. Yin (2009) says the analysis of evidence is one of the least developed and most difficult aspects of doing case studies and most important is to have a general analytic strategy, defining priorities on what to analyse and why. All empirical research has a story to tell as it has a beginning, middle and end. An analytic strategy is a researcher's guide to crafting the story - only rarely will the data do the crafting for the researcher. Yin (2009) suggests four data analysis strategies for case study research:

1. *Relying on theoretical propositions.* This is Yin’s most preferred strategy and follows the original theoretical propositions that led to this case study. Merriam (1998) says qualitative case studies in education are often framed with concepts, models and theories. This case study is based on theoretical propositions which in turn reflect a set of research questions, a theory and rival theory. The literature review and the iFP logic model help to shape data collection by focussing attention on certain data and ignoring others. Yin (2009) says that theoretical propositions stemming from “how” and “why” questions are extremely useful in guiding case study analysis using this strategy. This analysis strategy was chosen by the researcher as the preferred option for this case study; other options included:

2. *Developing a case description* requires developing a descriptive framework for organising the case study, the analysis being organised on the basis of a description of the general characteristics and relations of the phenomenon in question. Yin (2009) says this strategy is less preferable than relying on theoretical propositions but is an alternative that is available as a contingency to the first strategy.
3. Although using both qualitative and quantitative data is sometimes attractive to students it is not a strategy preferred in this study.

4. Examining rival explanations tries to define and test rival explanations and generally works with all of the previous three strategies though it is not a strategy in this study.

Now a data analysis strategy has been chosen there are five specific analytic techniques to be used as part of and along with the strategy. These are intended to help focus on the most relevant data and address the issues of internal and external validity raised in the limitations to this study, addressed in detail section 3.7. Yin (2012) says that as part of design, a case study evaluation should involve theorising and “most commonly, theorising will take the form of a logic model” (p. 171). As addressed in section 3.4.1 of this chapter, an iFP logic model was used to guide analysis and actually data analysis will be achieved using a general inductive analysis approach (see Chapter 4). The five techniques are listed below for completeness by the researcher. The first four techniques can be either single or multiple-case studies and the fifth developed is for multiple-case studies only:

1. **Pattern matching** is comparing empirically based patterns with predicted ones and if the patterns coincide, the results can strengthen the internal validity of the case study. Yin (2009) states there are three types of pattern matching: nonequivalent dependant variables as a pattern; rival explanations as patterns; and simpler patterns.

2. **Explanation building** is a special kind of pattern matching and analyses case study data by building an explanation about the case and identifying a set of potential causal links that are similar to the independent variables in the use of rival explanations. Building explanation is the result of a series of iterations: making an initial theoretical statement → comparing findings of an initial case against that statement → revising the statement → comparing other details of the case again the revision → comparing the revisions to the facts of second, third or more cases → repeating the process if needed.

3. **Time series analysis** has the objective of examining relevant “how” and “why” questions about the relationship and changes of events over time by indentifying theoretically proposed sequences of an event (before the investigation starts) that are expected to lead to a certain outcome. The time series analysis can follow intricate patterns and the more intricate and precise the pattern, the firmer the foundation for conclusions of the case study. Yin (2009) identifies three types of time series: simple time series, complex time series and chronologies.
4. *Logic models* stipulate a complex chain of events over time. Events are staged in repeated cause-effect-cause-effect pattern, the idea being to match empirically observed events to theoretically predicted events. There are four types of logic models: individual-level logic model, *firm or organisational-level logic model*, an alternative configuration for an organisational-level logic model and program-level logic model.

5. *Cross-case synthesis* requires at lease two cases and treats each case as a separate study. The creation of word tables is required in order to display data from each case according to some uniform framework that then requires an examination of the word tables for cross-case patterns. The technique relies strongly on argumentative interpretation and not numeric properties.

3.6 Reporting

Reporting a case study means bringing its results and findings to closure (Yin, 2009). The report should not only communicate the findings of the study but also be the main source of information for the reader to be able to judge the quality of the study. This case study is higher education based and focuses on issues driven by the commercialisation of higher education, particularly its delivery programs. The study’s underlying issues form part of most national governments’ policies on the development and export of higher education. Yin (2009) argues that among the written forms of case studies there are at least four important varieties: *the classic single case*, the multiple-case version of the classic single case, the single/multiple case study without the traditional narrative, and the dedicated multiple-case variety with no separate chapters or sections devoted to individual cases. This study will use the *classic single case written form* which involves using a single narrative to describe and analyse the case. The narrative will be augmented with graphs, pictorial displays and tables where appropriate to support the narrative. Within these general written forms are several options for the compositional structuring of case study reports and Yin (2009) suggests six and they are reviewed in terms of relevance to this *descriptive* single-case study. Note that the researcher chose a combination of two of the six compositional structures: 1) a standard linear-analytic structure for the overall framework of the report and 2) for some aspects of the reporting, chronological structures built into the literature review and iFP logic model:

1. *Linear-Analytic Structures* are the standard approach for composing business research reports and most advantageous when research colleagues or a dissertation
committee comprise the main audience of the case study (Yin 2009). The researcher has used a linear-analytic study for this study and the format is described and explained in Chapter 1, section 1.6 – The Organisation of the Dissertation of this study.

2. **Comparative Structures** repeat the same case study a number of times from different points of view comparing alternative descriptions or explanations of the same case.

3. **Chronological Structures** present case study evidence in chronological order and the sequence of chapters might follow phases of the case history. One must be careful not to weight one phase more than the other. Yin (2009) suggests drafting the case study backwards and then back to the normal sequence for the final version. This case study contains chronological structures that are built into the iFP logic model.

4. **Theory-Building Structures** is where each new section of the report will show a new part of the theory being presented and is more relevant to explanatory and exploratory case studies as both are concerned with theory-building.

5. **Suspense Structures** invert the linear-analytic structure so the outcome or conclusion is presented initially and the remainder of the report will then develop the explanation. This approach is relevant mainly to explanatory case studies.

6. **Unsequenced Structures** are ones in which the sequence of sections or chapters assumes no particular importance and is often sufficient for descriptive case studies. Descriptive studies of organisations exhibit this characteristic as separate sections cover an organisation’s history, labour structures, products or services, hierarchical structures and financial status and the particular order they are presented in is not critical – an therefore regarded as unsequenced.

This study has the following reporting structure:

Case study → Reporting → Classic single case written narrative form → Primary: Linear-analytic reporting structure + Secondary: Chronological structure

3.7 Limitations of Case Study Research – Judging the Quality of Research Design

Merriam (1998) says the special features of case study research that provide the rationale for its selection also present certain limitations in its usage. Although rich, thick description and analysis of a phenomenon may be desired, a researcher may not have the time or money to devote to such an undertaking. And assuming time is available to produce a worthy case study, the product may be too lengthy, too detailed, or too involved for educators to read and
use (p. 29). In section 3.2 of this chapter, Yin (2009) introduced four traditional prejudices against the case study method: a lack of rigour over case study research; providing little basis for generalisation; often they take too long; and where studies aim to establish a causal relationship. Similar to Yin’s four prejudices, Flyvbjerg (2006) says that the problems with the conventional wisdom about case-study research can be summarised in five misunderstandings or oversimplifications about the nature of such research (p. 221):

**Misunderstanding 1**: General, theoretical (context-independent) knowledge is more valuable than concrete, practical (context-dependent) knowledge.

**Misunderstanding 2**: One cannot generalise on the basis of an individual case; therefore, the case study cannot contribute to scientific development.

**Misunderstanding 3**: The case study is most useful for generating hypotheses; that is, in the first stage of a total research process, whereas other methods are more suitable for hypotheses testing and theory building.

**Misunderstanding 4**: The case study contains a bias toward verification, that is, a tendency to confirm the researcher’s preconceived notions.

**Misunderstanding 5**: It is often difficult to summarise and develop general propositions and theories on the basis of specific case studies.

In this section the general limitations of rigour and generalisation will be addressed. A lack of rigour in case study research was suggested as a key limitation of the case study methodology. As a result of criticisms of case study strategy validity, many researchers have developed their own concepts of validity and have often generated or adopted what they consider to be more appropriate terms such as: quality, rigour and trustworthiness (Seale, 1999; Lincoln and Guba, 1985) or alternatively: trustworthiness, worthy, relevant, plausible, confirmable, credible or representative (Guba and Lincoln, 1989; Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). Qualitative researchers, who frame their studies in an interpretive paradigm, think in terms of trustworthiness as opposed to the conventional positivistic criteria of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Guba and Lincoln (1994) suggest that four criteria (to parallel quantitative rigour) be considered in establishing the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings: credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability), and confirmability (objectivity). Internal validity is of concern when causal relations are examined. The second common limitation identified by both Yin and Flyvbjerg is that case studies provide little basis for generalisation. Case studies have been criticised for lacking the grounds for
generalisation (Stake, 2000; Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) explained that the purpose of case studies is in “analytical generalisation” to expand theory and not in statistical generalisation. Stake (1995) also argued that with case studies researchers make “naturalistic generalisations,” which are different from deductive generalisations based on statistical analysis. Stake added that naturalistic generalisations develop by recognising similarities of objects and issues within a context and “by sensing the natural covariations of happenings” (Stake, 2000, p. 22). An additional limitation related to generalisations noted by Guba and Lincoln (1981, p. 377) is that “case studies can oversimplify or exaggerate a situation, leading the reader to erroneous conclusions about the actual state of affairs”. They warn, readers may think that case studies are accounts of the whole: “That is, they tend to masquerade as a whole when in fact they are but a part – a slice of life”.

Merriam (1998) says that qualitative case studies are limited by the sensitivity and integrity of the investigator. The researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. In this case study the researcher needs to be careful not to develop a tendency towards ad hoc theorising. That is, in place of finding a scientific explanation to the phenomena the researcher needs to avoid finding commonsense explanations for it. Because of the researcher’s intimate knowledge of the case and the units of analysis there could be a presumption that commonsense intuitive explanations are scientific. It could begin to feel that the researcher thinks they know everything about the case, but in reality a major part of the reality of the key stakeholders in the study are hidden from observation. Because these explanations are unable to be verified, issues of reliability are raised. The researcher is aware that within the study there is enough scope for errors to occur due to inaccurate observation, incorrect inferences, errors in the reporting, memory failure and unconscious omissions of facts, a tendency to over-dramatise facts and describe what is more imaginary than real. Under those conditions the validity of the data collected and the inferences drawn is questionable. Guba and Lincoln (1981) refer to as “unusual problems of ethics. An unethical case writer could so select from among available data that virtually anything he wished could be illustrated” (p. 378).

There are a few specific limitations, ethical considerations and issues within this study that need to be reported and openly addressed in this section. This is in order to be upfront about the study and further assure the reader of the reliability of the research and its findings. First, the University of Newcastle, apart from the conditional restrictions of its Expedited Ethical Review, put no special requirements on this study but a Safety Clearance for Research Project.
Involving Overseas Work was required even though the researcher was not actually overseas. This resulted in some confusion but once clarified meant the Certificate of Approval – H-2013-0030 could be issued. Second, at XAIU potential conflicts that could have emerged while conducting the study were managed by XAIU appointing a study sponsor, Du Ruiqing, XAIU Vice President of International Affairs. Given his position, experience and level of authority, the researcher had a supportive senior staff member to raise any research related issues for the duration of the study. Fortunately there were no conflicts that had potential to derail this study.

In addition, there are potential areas of conflict. First of them is the employment relationship between the researcher, XAIU and TAFE SWSI. The researcher is a contractor to TAFE SWSI having been contracted by a third party agency to act on behalf of TAFE SWSI in the capacity of an offshore program Director of Studies at XAIU. This is an ongoing contract now in its eighth year. This third party arrangement means the researcher is not an employee of TAFE SWSI. The researcher is also not an employee of XAIU and is only hosted by XAIU during the delivery of the TAFE SWSI offshore joint venture at XAIU. Second, TAFE SWSI programs will in the future be embedded into the final year (Year 3) of the new iFP structure. For that to occur XAIU needed to disclose all of iFP’s Year 1 and Year 2 course structures, curriculum and lesson plans to ensure that enough academic information was provided enabling TAFE SWSI to approve articulation from the end of Year 2 courses to the start of TAFE SWSI courses in Year 3. Given that higher education foundation courses in China are highly competitive, XAIU asked TAFE SWSI to ensure confidentiality of that information to which TAFE SWSI agreed. Third, all of the people involved in iFP’s development were internally sourced and no external consultancy was sought, which could be determined as a limitation. The new iFP program was proposed by Du Ruiqing who then set about appointing a team of internationally experienced XAIU senior staff to develop the iFP program. At the initial meeting, agreements regarding leadership, sponsorship, resourcing, reporting and time frame were made. Fourth is access to data (people and documents). A signed Organisation Consent Form is an integral component of the University of Newcastle's ethics approval process. One section of the signed form states that XAIU agrees to allow the researcher access to data but the researcher notes that there were possible restrictions to internal documents specifically of a financial nature. This is understandable given the competitive environment XAIU operates in. The Chinese government (both at national and provincial level) is endeavouring to become more transparent having established specific websites and databases to ensure public access to laws, regulations and policies. This meant access to external data was readily available and
already translated. Given the small number of key interviews the researcher did not feel access to people was restricted. A very open interview protocol was used, all interviewees were volunteers and free to withdraw, end or restrict their interview and/or interview content at any time (refer to Appendix 5 - XAIU iFP Interview Protocol and Schedule). The final area of possible conflict was XAIU placing limitations on the reporting of findings. Although the Organisation Consent Form stated that XAIU granted permission to the researcher to identify XAIU in their research related publications, this permission could potentially be vetoed by XAIU as findings emerged. Therefore, before write-up, the researcher met with the study’s XAIU sponsor Du Ruiqing to discuss the findings. Although the findings were revealing given the private family ownership and management of XAIU and potentially commercially sensitive given the strategic positioning of iFP within the higher education market, Du felt that nothing within the findings would damage the reputation or potential earnings of XAIU. At the conclusion of the briefing, Du confirmed that no restriction would be placed on the future publication of the study’s findings.
Chapter 4 – Analysis and Findings

4.1 Analysis Overview

4.1.1 Qualitative Analysis

4.1.2 A General Inductive Analysis Approach

4.2 The Findings

4.2.1 Key Finding 1 – Government Policies

4.2.2 Key Finding 2 – Commercialisation

4.2.3 Key Finding 3 – iFP Human Resourcing (refer to the iFP HR table)

4.2.4 Key Finding 4 – XAIU Internal Dynamics

4.3 The Quality of this Study

From Chapter 1, section 1.6: Chapter 4 first starts with an introduction to case study analysis and then moves to explain the development and features of the general inductive analysis. Following that, the studies findings based on the two research questions will rely on three approaches to construct the overall analytic strategy: the testing the theoretical propositions, a logic model and a general inductive analysis will be the tools employed in the strategy to arrive at key findings. The key findings and the subcategories that construct the key findings will then be discussed in detail.

4.1 Analysis Overview

Appendix 1 – the XAIU iFP Case Study Overview provides the ‘big picture’ of the study and more importantly where this chapter of the study fits into the overall framework under the data analysis/coding section indicated in that graphic. In this research project the qualitative data analysis section follows a traditional framework and Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that framework consists of three general phases performed in this order:

- Cleaning and organising the data for analysis (Data Preparation);
- Describing the data (can be known as Descriptive Statistics);
- Testing hypotheses and models (Inferential Statistics) – addressed in Chapter 5.

Data preparation for this study involved: checking and logging the data in; checking the data for accuracy; entering the data into the computer; transforming the data; and developing and documenting a database structure integrating the various measures. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the basic features of the data and then general inductive analysis
highlighted the four key categories that form the basis of the study's findings. In this study, the use of inferential statistics refers to process of making predictions or inferences about Chinese higher education internationalised programs from observations made while studying the development of iFP at XAIU. At the conclusion of the study's discovery process an analysis of the results could lead to inferential generalisations and transferability. This happens at the stage when the original questions and the study's propositions are compared to the study's findings. Therefore in this study, the researcher uses descriptive statistics to describe what key themes are going on in the data collected. Then, inferential statistics processes are used to draw generalisations from the findings within the iFP case study at XAIU to more general conditions within the private higher education and higher education industry sectors in China. Future opportunities from potential generalisations are discussed in section 5.5.

4.1.1 Qualitative Analysis

In this study there were three major sources of qualitative data: unstructured interviews, participant observations, and external and internal documents over the period of a year. At the conclusion of the data gathering process the three key sources were converted to text ready for analysis. Patton (2002) says “Qualitative analysis transforms data into findings. No formula exists for that transformation. Direction can and will be offered, but the final destination remains unique for each inquirer, known only when and if arrived at” (p. 432). Data analysis is determined by both the research objectives (deductive) and multiple readings and interpretations of the raw data (inductive) and therefore the findings are derived from both the research objectives outlined by this case study and findings arising directly from the analysis of the raw data. Qualitative data collection has been described as a method of discovery by noticing (and coding), collecting (and sorting) and thinking (making sense, looking for patterns and relationships and making general discoveries about the phenomena) about interesting things within the boundary and context of a study and takes the form of narrative, with themes and concepts as the analytical device. In this way the process of discovery used in this study has not been linear but circular and reflects following study characteristics:

- **Iterative and Progressive**: The process of discovery is iterative and progressive because it is a cycle that keeps repeating. For example, when working through the iFP study the researcher noticed new things appearing in the data and then started to collect and think about these new things.
Recursive: The process of discovery is recursive because one part can call you back to a previous part. For example, while collecting data for the iFP study the researcher continuously referred back to data already collected.

Holographic: Referring to a scientific term as an analogy in that every part of the hologram contains the whole picture. In terms of this study it means that each step in the process of discovery contains the entire process.

In this study, qualitative data analysis occurred concurrently with data collection in order for the researcher to generate an emerging clarity about the research questions, which in turn guided the unstructured interview questions asked during the period of the study. This iterative process of data collection and analysis eventually led to a saturation point in the data collection where no new categories or themes emerged. This signalled that data collection was complete. In text analysis, grounded theorists refer to the point at which no new themes are being identified as theoretical saturation (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

4.1.2 A General Inductive Analysis Approach

There is a wide range of literature documenting the underlying assumptions and procedures associated with analysing qualitative data. Many of these are associated with specific qualitative analysis approaches that include: grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), phenomenology (van Manen, 1990), discourse analysis (Potter and Wetherall, 1994) and narrative analysis (Leiblich, 1998). However some analytic approaches are more general and not categorised within any of the specific traditions of qualitative research (Ezzy, 2002). Thomas (2006) found that many researchers unfamiliar with any of the traditional approaches to qualitative analysis wished to have a straightforward set of procedures to follow without having to learn the technical language associated with many of the traditional approaches. A considerable number of authors reporting analyses of qualitative data in journal articles describe a strategy labelled as a general inductive approach. Chapter 4, Graphic 1 below shows a comparison between traditional approaches and the general inductive approach and how the researcher used the general inductive approach to arrive at four key findings.
Thomas’ 2006 article was used as a guide for the researcher towards discovering more about the general inductive approach to qualitative data analysis. For this purpose, the inductive approach proved to be a robust systematic procedure that allowed the analysing of qualitative data where the analysis was guided by specific objectives – research theory and rival theory together with the iFP logic model. The evaluation requirements fit the purposes for using an inductive approach which are: to condense extensive and varied raw text data into a brief summary format; to establish clear links between the research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data; and finally to develop a model or theory about the underlying structure of experiences or processes which are evident in and emerge from the raw data. In many circumstances, the relationship between a theoretical perspective and certain messages involves both inductive and deductive approaches. Abrahamson (1983) indicates that an inductive approach begins with the researchers immersing themselves in the documents in order to identify the dimensions or themes that seem meaningful to the producers of each message. In a deductive approach, researchers use some categorical scheme suggested by a theoretical perspective and the documents provide a means for assessing the hypothesis. An overview of this study indicates how both deductive and inductive approaches are used to discover and interpret content (refer to Appendix 1 – the XAIU iFP Case Study Overview). Inductive approaches are used to aid the understanding of meaning in complex data through the development of summary themes or categories from the raw data (“data reduction”).

These approaches are evident in many qualitative data analyses. Thomas (2006) says “some have described their approach explicitly as inductive while others use the approach without giving it an explicit label” (p. 239). The primary mode of analysis is the development of categories out of the raw data collected and then placed into a framework that captures the
most important themes. Thomas in his article makes no clear difference between theme and category and some clarification of the development of the terms are necessary. Today, social scientists still talk about the linkage between themes and their expressions but use different terms to do so. They talk about “categories” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), Lincoln and Guba (1985) referred to expressions as “units” (p. 345), Krippendorf (1980) as “thematic units” and Strauss and Corbin (1990) called them “concepts”. For clarity and in line with Thomas' article, this study uses the terms category and theme to mean the same. Inevitably, the findings for this study were shaped by assumptions and experiences whilst conducting the research and carrying out the data analyses. In order for the findings to be usable, the researcher makes decisions about what is more important or less important of the data collected. The inductive approach reflects frequently reported patterns used in qualitative data analysis and most inductive studies report a model that has between three and eight main categories in the findings. The categories used in content analysis can be determined inductively, deductively, or by some combination of both (Strauss, 1987). This study revealed four key categories resulting from the coding, the core of inductive analysis. The qualitative analysis of text often implies some form of coding of text units, with the purpose to reduce, categorise or find the meaning in the material (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Inductive coding in this study began with close readings of raw data text and consideration of the multiple meanings inherent in it. Text segments contained meanings which led to the creation of a label for a new category into which the text segment was assigned. Additional text segments were added to the category where they were relevant. An initial description of the meaning of category included a memo about any associations, linkages and implications discovered. The category was also linked to other categories using the study's Chapter 3 SWOT analysis and the case study's iFP logic model. The following procedures were used for inductive analysis of qualitative data: the preparation of raw data files (“data cleaning”); the close reading of text; the creation of categories; the managing of overlapping coding and unassigned coded text and finally the continuing revision and refinement of category system to then have arrive at four key categories that form the basis of the case study's findings. The four categories are reported using five key features: a label; a description; the text/data associations (subcategories); possible linkages (between the four key categories) and finally the incorporation of the category into this study's theory and logic model of the case study. Before the findings were written up, interpreting the quality of the data analysis was an important consideration. Denzin’s (2002, p. 362-363) "interpretive criteria" suggests that at the conclusion of analyses, the following questions about the interpretive materials produced
will serve as a robust summary to understanding of the qualitative analysis process:

Chapter 4, Graphic 2 – XAIU iFP Denzin (2002) Interpretive Criteria Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Addressed in this iFP study?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Do the materials illuminate the phenomenon as lived experience? In other words, do the materials bring the setting alive in terms of the people in that setting?</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Are they based on thickly contextualized materials? We should expect thick descriptions that encompass the social setting studied.</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Are they historically and relationally grounded? There must be a sense of the passage of time between events and the presence of relationships between social actors.</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Are they processual and interactional? The researcher must have described the research process and his interactions within the setting.</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>In terms of the phenomenon, is the analysis situated in the context of prior research? Does the researcher acknowledge his orientation on first starting the investigation?</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


4.2 The Findings

The study’s overview, study questions and propositions, the study’s logic model, the study’s design and SWOT analysis (that included the PESTEL) were all essential components of the study design. These components make up an overall framework of guidance, reference and focus throughout the data gathering and analysis processes. The SWOT analysis helped to frame the context and boundary of the study and revealed potential themes that indicated further investigation and discovery. The result being that the inductive analysis approach then allowed clear research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant, or significant themes inherent in raw data, without the restraints imposed by structured methodologies (Thomas, 2006). Thomas (2006) says that when reporting findings from inductive analysis, the key categories are often used as main headings in the findings, with specific categories as subheadings and a good practice is to include suitable quotes in the text to illustrate the meanings of the categories. A sequence to describe key information about the category is an effective style of reporting qualitative findings and consists of:

- A label for each key category;
- A description of the meaning of that key category;
- Specific sub-categories for each key category together with a label for them and their description and;
Thomas (2006) says this style is recommended for reporting the most important categories that comprise the main findings from an inductive analysis. In this study, four key categories emerged from the raw data analysis and a map is attached as Appendix 6 – XAIU iFP Case Study Findings Map to guide the reader through this section of the case study. The four categories of key findings are: government policies, commercialisation, iFP human resourcing, and XAIU internal dynamics.

4.2.1 Key Finding 1 – Government Policies

According to the data collected government policies was the general term used to describe government policies, laws, and regulations at three levels: central, provincial and municipal. Government policies refer to the external environment (outside of XAIU) and provide the legal framework under which all higher education institutes operate. Some provinces and districts have adopted very progressive higher education policies by using a broad interpretation of central policy to allow innovative higher education initiatives. Other provinces are more conservative and as one interviewee described the Shaanxi provincial government education department as “liking to stick to the status quo”. The Shaanxi provincial government education department oversees most of XAIU’s operations ensuring compliance with both State and provincial level Chinese higher education policies. XAIU’s continued existence relies on favourable higher education policies, particularly in terms of addressing universal access for secondary school leavers looking to continue their higher education studies. In the late 1990s when policies were first introduced, XAIU met the gaps created between the government wanting to build a more capable workforce to meet its economic growth strategies; society demanding greater access to higher education as a result; and there not being the capacity under the government’s higher education infrastructure to absorb that extra demand at the time. More recently the government completed a major reform of its public higher education infrastructure, allowed the growth of independent institutions and reviewed admission policies to ensure access targets were being achieved.
Key Finding 1 Subcategory – Competition

Although government policy supports the continued development of private higher education in China, an interviewee described that commitment as "on paper and at XAIU there is little evidence of that government support". Another interviewee commented that "the government has created the laws and regulations to legitimise the existence of private higher education but actual support is not an option". "The government's first priority is supporting research at Tier 1 level and second is protecting its own established higher education infrastructure - look at the self-study stream". At the very bottom end of the Government's universal access policy sit Tier 3 demand absorbers like XAIU and is made up almost entirely of private higher education institutes.

The government provides funding for its public higher education institutes and subsidies for students enrolling in them, which is not the case for XAIU. The second tier is dominated by provincial and municipal public higher education institutes and hybrid independent higher education institutes. The lower-end of Tier 2 institutions are predominantly independents essentially operating like a private higher education institute but under the name/brand of a public university. These independent higher education institutes offer foundation programs and so are considered direct competition to XAIU’s iFP program. An interviewee said that under provincial government application, XAIU has in the past tested government policy and re-classified itself as Tier 2 in some provinces. This initiative proved less than successful moving XAIU from the top of Tier 3 to the bottom of Tier 2. Typically, Tier 3 contains private higher education institutes and they focus their recruitment at a particular target market of students described by an interviewee as students who: have not reached the minimum score to gain entrance to any public or independent higher education institute but who want to continue to higher education and whose families can afford the full fee payment structure of private higher education. Some borderline students (who were only a few marks away from access to a public higher education institute) will use initial access to private higher education as a potential stepping stone to future access to a low-end Tier 2 public higher education institute once their private education qualification is completed. This can only happen with some state recognised qualifications and then only some lower level public higher education institutes will accept that kind of transfer. However most students’ parents, disappointed with their child’s low gaokao results, are satisfied with their child at least gaining access to higher education, albeit private and as one interviewee commented it is to do with the Chinese perception of ‘face’. Within XAIU, iFP attracts the same type of student but these students’
parents want their study to focus on both a local and international qualification (under an internationalised curriculum that has a mapped articulation agreement that delivers the initial stages of study at XAIU and concluding stages abroad at a foreign partner). Parents’ must have the means to meet the premium full fee payment for iFP which is around five times the typical full fee payment. The extra costs for iFP are a result of meeting the financial costs of delivering the internationalised curriculum offered.

Most Tier 3 private higher education institutes have some type of foundation program/department on offer. The primary sources of competition for XAIU’s iFP program therefore come from 1) Tier 2 independents and 2) other Tier 3 private higher education institutes. Research revealed that an emerging competitor is 3) secondary school-based foundation programs. Students (and their parents) are opting out of the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE or gaokao) system completely and instead are studying an internationalised secondary school curriculum. This leads towards an internationally recognised qualification that is accepted by foreign universities as an acceptable level of study to commence university study. The Global Assessment Certificate (GAC) is an example of this internationalised qualification. In contrast to the increased levels of direct competition for the target market of students created by ongoing market reforms in the higher education sector, the pool of students who can potentially be attracted to higher education is decreasing primarily as a result of the inter-relationship between government policy and demographic and socio-cultural change.

Key Finding 1 Subcategory – Demographics

The changing characteristics of the target market of students have been influenced by the government policy. 1) China’s one-child policy (first introduced in 1978) has resulted in there being less young people now and therefore a smaller pool of potential higher education entrants. As a result the one-child policy over the last two years has been under review. 2) Another contributor is the cost of raising families. In recent years this has become more expensive and as young working couples who are struggling with their careers consider the cost of child raising, care and education, many are opting out of having children altogether which will continue the trend for lower numbers of young people. 3) Increased family wealth has allowed some parents to opt out of the China’s higher education system and send their children abroad to study at the end of secondary school (after gaokao). 4) The wealthiest families choose to send their children abroad before they sit gaokao opting out of China’s
secondary education system completely. One interviewee commented that “there is a definite lack of public confidence in secondary school and higher education sectors”. 5) Poorer families, struck by the sheer costs of the market-driven higher education are opting out of higher education all together in favour of their children going directly to work after secondary school. Their logic being that, with a typical undergraduate degree taking four years to complete, in fact four years of work experience could be of more value than their child entering the workforce four years later with a higher education qualification. This is in light of the current oversupply of higher education qualified graduates. In addition to that, these parents also save on three years (for an associate degree) or four years (for an undergraduate degree) of school fees and associated costs. One interviewee concluded that “for demand absorbers to continue to maintain student numbers the only option is lowering the entrance requirements”. In conclusion for this key finding: data analysis revealed that one of the key findings was external identifying government policies. The two sub-categories, competition and demographics reveal a dilemma for XAIU. Increased direct competition for students from three main competitors and fewer students available in the Chinese higher education recruitment pool have an impact on the internal commercial operation of XAIU and therefore on iFP attracting the right kinds of students in the right numbers.

4.2.2 Key Finding 2 – Commercialisation

The Chinese higher education sector driven by market based and privatisation policies, and influenced by globalisation and internationalisation, has become a highly commercialised industry. Higher education institutes at all levels and operating models have emerged to meet the market demands of access to higher education. This has created aggressive competitors at all levels of the higher education spectrum. Since student choices of universities and academic programmes would certainly affect the student intakes for any academic institution, higher education institutions (especially minban institutions) are confronted with the rise of consumerism and challenges resulting from the commodification/commercialisation of higher education (Ngok, 2002).

Key Finding 2 Subcategory – XAIU as a Demand Absorber

Private higher education institutes in China were re-established to absorb the demand created by the governments need to create a workforce to drive its post-Mao economic aspirations. Universal higher education access policies created the supply of students and private higher
education policies created a sector to meet that demand. In order to encourage entrants to the industry, policies were drafted in a way that was, as one interviewee described as "sufficiently ambiguous", allowing new entrants (typically entrepreneurs and investors) to be able to make a 'reasonable return' on their investment. Many purists of socialism within the Chinese communist party do not like the concept of profit and so profit remains a contentious term. Private higher education, in the formative years, provided excellent returns seeing a flood of new entrants into the sector. The issue with these demand absorbers has always focused around the quality of education provided and the recognition of private sector as a credible higher education provider. More recently, many private higher education institutes have closed, unable to meet the competitive demands of the sector. This has resulted in the most well adapted commercialised models of higher education to survive and thrive during 2000 and 2008. Near the end of the decade the government revitalised its public higher education structure using mergers to establish independent higher education institutes to absorb demand from the lower end of the student cohort. The private higher education institutes that remained then faced increased competition from the revitalised public sector. Subsequent policies that favoured public higher education institutions then ensured that Tier 1 and 2 essentially pushed private higher education institutes to occupy Tier 3. One participant interviewee remarked that "universal access policies will drive down the cut-off level of student gaokao scores ensuring we will continue to have students ... it's just the quality of them is the issue". "Universal access does ensure a continuing supply of students for XAIU but the overall pool of students is declining and competition is fierce". The founder was quoted as saying that it is difficult to satisfy current investors, and even more difficult to attract new investors under current competitive conditions. The founder supports creating a credible reputation for XAIU, believing that developing international partnerships and piggy-backing on the established reputation of foreign higher education institutes is an important part of that strategy. XAIU has developed a range of international activities that focus on attracting international partners. iFP is a key international activity aimed at adding value to XAIU student offer using a three-year preparation program to increase the desirability of those students to current and prospective international partners. This is in terms of their robust preparation for the rigours of undergraduate study, in English and in an international setting. Unlike mainstream programs, iFP is not subject to the NCUAS admission quota system (reviewed in Chapter 2) and so students from any province in China can be recruited without restriction. The XAIU iFP program is a 'supplier' of good students to international universities. The better iFP can prepare the students, the better the supply chain, the better the international partner attracted, the better XAIU's reputation and hopefully the more students iFP attracts, the
better return on investment for XAIU’s owners and investors.

Key Finding 2 Subcategory – XAIU as a Key Supplier to International Partners

‘Upstream’ local partners (secondary school partnerships supplying students to iFP) → 3-year iFP program (‘Instream’ international partners co-delivering the iFP internationalised curriculum) → ‘Downstream’ international partners (demanding students who have successfully completed iFP)

International higher education institutes are “flooding into China” in search of partnerships with Chinese higher education institutes. Their own circumstances mirroring the global trend towards the commercialisation and managerialisation of services traditionally supported for by governments and higher education provision is part of those rationalisations. XAIU had 26 foreign higher education institutes visit the campus in Xi’an during the period of this study. During discussions, potential partners cover a wide range of activities that could be possible, but in the researcher’s experience during the study period, most come with one purpose – to attract Chinese students back to their institutions. This is normally achieved by foreign higher education institutes offering additional internationalised ‘products’ that add value to XAIU’s existing range of domestic ‘products’. As a working example iFP is a three year foundation program that satisfies around 75% of the requirements of an internationally recognised general business undergraduate degree by delivering a pre-negotiated internationalised curriculum in English. The iFP three-year foundation program was developed by the iFP team using the following framework:

- During recruitment the student market for iFP are students who: did not do well overall in gaokao but have done well in the English component, they have the means to meet the premium study fees of the program and are considering study abroad in the future.
- iFP is a three year foundation course delivered over six semesters (averaging 18 weeks per semester, 20 contact hours per week).
- All course units are: full-time attendance, face-to-face delivery mode, course units delivered consecutively (not concurrently) in block-delivery mode of one course unit per month, equal to four course units per semester, equal to eight course units per year.
- Actual courses units and curriculum developed by XAIU in conjunction with iFP partners.
- Value of course units using the United States semester credit hour system. Fifteen hours
of contact per semester credit and each course unit valued at three semester credits (i.e. 40-50 contact hours plus 40-50 non-contact hours of study for each course unit). This system of course unit evaluation was then mapped against the ‘240’ three-year credit system for undergraduate business degrees used by many universities in Australia and New Zealand. This ensured a universal understanding of the course unit value so students can gain maximum credit transfer when considering articulation to ‘downstream’ partners at the end of Year 3 of iFP.

- Year 1 covers two semesters of intensive English instruction preparing students for the rigours of business studies in English (commencing in Year 2).
- Year 2 covers two semesters of course units in both introductory business and general studies (the equivalent of Year 1 of a business undergraduate degree abroad). Course units are jointly delivered by XAIU and iFP instream partners (who send lecturers to XAIU deliver selected course units in block mode).
- Year 3 covers two semesters. Year 3, Semester 1 delivers compulsory business and general studies course units (the equivalent of Year 2 of a business undergraduate degree abroad). All course units from Year 2 and Year 3 to date, through credit transfer, then allow direct articulation to the TAFE SWSI Advanced Diploma of Business which is delivered in Year 3, Semester 2. This final qualification prior to the end of iFP provides a convenient exit point for students who do not wish to continue studies. Student who wish to continue studies then choose between the eight downstream partners to complete their general business undergraduate degree.
- Concurrently over the three years, iFP students study independently with towards IELTS (International English Language Testing System) aiming to achieve the level of IELTS Academic 6.0 by the time they apply for articulation to their chosen downstream partner. XAIU recommends several 3rd party intensive IELTS training schools to iFP students, but does not provide the training itself.
- All course units have been developed in partnership with iFP instream and downstream partners to ensure maximum credit transfer as graduates of iFP articulate to iFP partner courses.
- Students can complete their undergraduate general business undergraduate degree abroad in Year 4 (this framework is commonly referred to as a ‘3+1’ delivery model).

A graphical overview of the iFP foundation program discussed above is attached as Appendix 7 – XAIU iFP Program and Partnership Framework. As outlined above, iFP has negotiated three
‘instream’ partners (international higher education institutes) who, during the progression through the three year program, co-deliver courses using a block delivery model. This model is based around delivering a course as a block over one calendar month of intensive study (20-25 contact hours of per week for four weeks). IFP has eight ‘downstream’ partners (of which three are also ‘instream’) who have all negotiated and agreed that iFP framework represents 75% of their higher education institutes’ general business undergraduate degree – this is generally termed as articulation via a curriculum-mapped credit transfer. The final 25% of the program structure (i.e. Year 4) is delivered by the international partner either in China at the partner institution or abroad at their institution (the latter is preferred by all the current iFP partners). There are three reasons for partners preferring to final year of delivery at their institution: 1) the international higher education institute partner can ensure quality standards during the final part of the degree; 2) the international higher education institute partner can capture full-fee paying international students for that year and 3) the international higher education institute partner can up-sell the student to more specialised undergraduate business-related degrees (e.g. accounting or law) or to continue to post-graduate studies to that cohort of students (creating a ‘3+1+1’ model). IFP was developed as a pilot program to gauge market response to the brand and product and if viable, XAIU planned to expand the scale and scope of the brand for the 2013 intake. Expansion by attracting even more students to the current program in 2013, and expansion by developing new areas of study to add to the iFP brand in 2013. Based of the success of iFP in terms of intake numbers and partner support in 2012, XAIU’s VPIA has directed the iFP Dean and iFP DoS to develop two new areas to add to a total of three. Those two new areas of iFP study are: Accounting Studies and Tourism and Hospitality Management. See Appendix 8 – XAIU iFP Expansion Plan for 2013.

Key Finding 2 Subcategory – The Issue of Student Quality

The biggest issue to address for iFP is recruiting sufficient numbers of students who have the potential to successfully complete iFP courses in English to a level acceptable to our ‘downstream’ partners and who have the means to complete the final year of the 3+1 model abroad. Some of this process must be managed in the initial recruitment of the students to ensure the right students are attracted from the beginning. This means that the XAIU recruitment department needs to take ownership of the marketing and promotion of iFP. In addition to these pre-requisites, iFP downstream partners have told XAIU they prefer students who have been well prepared during the three years to: 1) be able to work independently; 2) have the ability to think critically; and 3) be able to express their views and learning both in the
classroom and through written assignments (communicative capacity). This is how the downstream partners have defined quality students. If iFP is able to provide suitable numbers of these kinds of students for 'downstream' partners then XAIU feels that over time it can attract new 'downstream' partners with better reputations in addition or as a replacement for current iFP partners. In this way XAIU feels its own reputation will be enhanced by association – described by one interviewee as “reputation by proxy”. And of course in the next step in XAIU's causal chain, attracting bigger better international higher education institute partners can attract and higher quality of student to XAIU, and in turn a higher quality of teacher, which then attracts even more higher quality students to XAIU. XAIU leadership believes that this upward spiral approach will help retain and attract more investment to XAIU.

4.2.3 Key Finding 3 – iFP Human Resourcing

Private higher education institutes expenditure on human resourcing is on average only half of public higher education institutes budget. The quality of student attracted can only be matched by the quality of teacher they can attract to teach them. In addition budgetary constraints on rewards, particularly benefits, result in only a particular type of teacher willing to work under those conditions. Therefore student quality and the reward structure are key to attracting good teachers to iFP in order for iFP to deliver a quality 'supply' of students to its 'downstream' international partners.

Key Finding 3 Subcategory – iFP Administration

iFP is an internationalised higher education foundation program within the College of International Cooperation (CiC) and under the international directorate of the Vice-President of International Affairs (aka VPIA). The VPIA is an academic scholar and former president of Xi'an International Studies University. The VPIA tasked two key personnel to develop and implement iFP: the ex-TAFE Dean who will become the new Dean of the iFP program (aka iFP Dean), a career educator and delivers English courses and the ex-TAFE Director of Studies who will become the new iFP Director of Studies (aka iFP DoS). During the development of the iFP program, the iFP Dean and the iFP DoS were assisted by two other personal that formed the five person iFP team: the current Director of the XAIU iCenter (aka iCenter D) and one of the Deputy-directors of the XAIU iCenter (aka iCenter DD1). The five person iFP program team was sponsored by the VPIA and that team is represented by the darkened positions in Appendix 9 – XAIU International Structure + iFP HR.
During iFP implementation period the five person team was reduced to three: the VPIA, the iFP Dean and the iFP DoS. Both the iFP Dean and the iFP DoS joined XAIU in 2004 and have worked together on the former XAIU/TAFE program and are transitioning together to iFP. Under the new iFP program, the iFP Dean and the iFP DoS both have eight hours of contact teaching a week, the rest of time spent on the management of iFP (primarily on curriculum development, partnership relations and coordination of the program within XAIU support departments) and strategic development of new business opportunities for CiC. IFP management is supported by two indirect labour administrators: an iFP student affairs manager, managing the day-to-day lives of the iFP students who all live on campus, and the first contact should parents raise issues, and an administrative manager who oversees the daily operations of the iFP project including the management of the iFP teachers. XAIU also provides operational support services like: HR, finance, marketing and recruitment. Key to the success of iFP is managing the supply chain: students, parents and Chinese secondary schools (upstream); teachers, courses and international partners that make up iFP (instream); and international partners expecting quality students from iFP output (downstream). Maintaining the quality of the supply chain is expensive and needs to be balanced by the premium fees XAIU charges iFP students. Unfortunately, the iFP Dean reports that the “internal finance structure does not allow iFP to be contained as its own cost centre and therefore profits from iFP are spread throughout the schools operations” and general cost policies applied to iFP’s premium product. This application of XAIU internal policy impacts on iFP operations and in particular in the teacher/teaching quality area.

Key Finding 3 Subcategory – iFP Direct Labour

iFP direct labour, that is labour directly involved in the delivery of the iFP curriculum, is made up of a mix of three foreign (two male and one female) and eight local teachers/teaching administrators (two male and six female). Again, please refer to Appendix 9 – XAIU International Structure + iFP HR for the human resources overview of the iFP program. The iFP Dean and the iFP DoS are included in that count but their reward structures differ from the full-time teachers. The two foreign teachers focus on the delivery of the English language component known as Year 1. The Year 1 foreign teachers are joined by the very best local teachers to ensure that Year 1 students get focussed attention in the most formative of the three year iFP program. If students are unable to build on the English that they learnt in the 12 years of primary and secondary school, they will struggle with using it as the primary medium of communication in Year 2 and Year 3 of iFP. The two iFP foreign teachers have 16 hours of
contact classes and are expected to spend the same available for additional out-of-class contact or preparing lessons for which they receive a salary around AUS$750 after tax per calendar month which is capped by XAIU HR policy. In addition iFP foreign teachers have all travel, accommodation, utilities and basic insurances included in their employment contract. Under the Shaanxi Department of Labour guidelines, a bachelor degree in any field is the minimum requirement for foreign teachers to gain a foreign expert resident visa (Z visa). Visas are given for one year and need to be renewed each consecutive year. XAIU gives one-year employment contracts to foreign teachers that are renewable for consecutive years in line with the visa policy. In addition, XAIU prefer foreign teachers to also have a TESOL teaching certificate. The quality of foreign teachers for iFP is judged on: academic qualifications, fit-for-purpose teaching experience, independence and flexibility, classroom management skill and cultural connectivity (being able to work with Chinese work colleagues and students in a Chinese environment). Availability of quality foreign teachers has proven a major issue to manage as typically the very best foreign teachers have options along the East coast of China where monthly salaries are up to three times the iFP offer. Even if foreign teachers do make their way West to Xi’an most would be drawn to Tier 1 and Tier 2 where salaries are double. XAIU foreign teachers tend to be transient only staying a year before using gained experience to move to better opportunities. It therefore safe to say that, because of internal HR policy, XAIU tends to attract the bottom end of the foreign talent pool and that this has an impact on the overall delivery quality of iFP courses. There are similar circumstances for the eight iFP local teachers/teaching administrators. Six are female and two are male. They are all ‘locals’ of Shaanxi and graduates from Tier 2 and Tier 3 Shaanxi province higher education institutes who have been unable to secure higher paid teaching positions in other education institutes. Competition for teaching jobs is high and currently the minimum academic requirement for public higher education institute positions is PhD-level. XAIU current minimum academic requirement is Masters-level and this is reflected in the salary package which is lower than a public higher education institute.

Staff remuneration and related expenses are around 40% of total spending for public higher education institutes but represent only 20% for XAIU. The gap is explained by the more comprehensive benefits and health care packages offered to public higher education institute teachers (because they are classed as public servants). The savings XAIU makes not offering or lowering the cost of the benefits is used to drive down its operating costs. Two female local teachers on iFP that have foreign post-graduate qualifications gained abroad and both deliver business courses. Four local female teachers have local post-graduate qualifications and the
two remaining long-serving male teachers are in the process of completing their postgraduate qualifications. All but one of the eight local teachers is married and of those seven remaining, six have young children. Having children has lowered these teachers’ career expectations substituting possible job opportunities for regular incomes in a supportive work environment.

In general, local XAIU teachers’ salaries are around AUS$300 per month (under current Chinese tax law workers can make up to RMB3500 (AUS$500) per month without incurring income tax) and work requirements, compared to foreign teachers, see teaching contact hours raised, office hours raised, salaries lowered and very few fringe benefits included. Interestingly, iFP local teachers did not feel any resentment because of the disparity in qualifications required and reward packages between themselves and iFP foreign teachers. They put this difference down to foreigners having more perceived credibility/legitimacy in teaching English especially with parents and students. In 2010 new central government labour laws established certain rights and benefits for full-time employees and XAIU reacted to these additional compliance costs with redundancies to balance additional labour costs. The general labour market has not helped teachers as there currently is an oversupply of new higher education graduates wanting teaching opportunities. The lower-end of these graduates tend to gravitate toward demand absorbers like XAIU and are valuable because: they are: new to work and eager to impress, flexible with time because they don’t have their own families yet and cheap in terms of low labour costs. One interviewee commented that demand absorbers like XAIU tend to drive down direct labour costs by attract two types of local teacher: “the young who are willing but unable and the old who are able but unwilling”. The former settle into the routine of work and soon discover from the experienced teachers that much of the working conditions of a demand absorber are profit motivated. This can create frustrations that can lead to motivation and morale issues and because of that are closely monitored by the iFP Dean. The latter tend to be experienced retired teachers from public higher education institutes who teach at XAIU on a part-time adjunct arrangement. These older teachers often do not fully embrace the profit-driven private higher education institute model of education because of their previous careers as public servants within the public higher education system. At either end, young or old, the issue of quality delivery by iFP local teachers again is important sub-category of findings. In addition part-time and temporary teachers are used to compliment full-time teachers and reduce fixed labour costs. These teachers tend to lack the engagement and commitment needed to deliver quality course units. Issues of quality delivery directly influence the reputation of iFP (and therefore XAIU), its partners, teachers and staff. The iFP Dean and the iFP DoS address the issue of ‘instream’ quality delivery with: an open-
door policy for discussion, weekly meetings to encourage innovation, monthly teaching workshops to introduce and review pedagogies, study abroad exchange opportunities and encouraging teachers to continue their studies. The iFP logic model was used extensively to guide the development and implementation of iFP. During the final stages of development and the early stages of implementation, the iFP logic model's list of desired outputs became the actual outputs. As a conclusion to this key finding, Appendix 10 – iFP Case Study Logic Model Actual Outputs compares the original iFP logic model's desired outputs to the actual output recorded during the development of this Chapter.

4.2.4 Key Finding 4 – XAIU Internal Dynamics

In any study within China, cultural dynamics need serious consideration. XAIU is no exception and findings reveal that it is an extended family business with rich layers of internal dynamics that impact on its operation.

Key Finding 4 Subcategory – XAIU Inter-relationships

The founder of XAIU has several of his immediate family in key supporting roles. This creates a unique context for the unit of analysis – developing and implementing iFP. The VPIA commented that this type of internal structure may be “common in the Chinese private sector but not prevalent in Chinese public sector higher education”. Highlighting the close relationships enhances the richness of the context of this study. The founder has the official title of Chairman of the Board of Trustees of XAIU. In 2011 he stepped down as the President of XAIU and appointed another to the position of running the day-to-day operations of XAIU. The founder’s daughter acts as the Vice President of XAIU and Executive Secretary of the XAIU Board of Trustees. The founder’s older brother acts as XAIU’s Director of Technical Services and the founder’s wife acts as another of the iCentre’s Deputy-Directors. There are also a number of the founder's extended family members and friends working throughout XAIU in various levels of responsibilities and capacities. Although the founder has stepped down as the president, he still remains Chairman of the Board and uses an authoritative management style to control the board (and therefore by proxy XAIU). The founder was quoted as saying that “in reality, I’m the only one who is capable of making key decisions ... Chinese people always long for a bright leader and if not bright enough, everything will go wrong ... if I make a bad decision, no one at XAIU can stop me”.

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During the formative years of private higher education institutes where demand for access to higher education was high this type of management style may have been justifiable. More recently as competition increases and public/independent higher education institutes use government quotas and the gaokao to protect the supply and quality of students, innovation and creativity become essential for XAIU to compete.

If XAIU wants to continue to absorb market demand then, in the short term, universal access via Tier 3 higher education institutes will ensure a ready pool of students be available in the near future. But the quality associated with these students is questionable. XAIU wants to develop a reputation as a world-class private higher education institute: known for quality and offering innovative and creative programs in addition to its mainstream qualifications. These programs need to contribute to attracting strong international partners and high-premium paying Chinese students who demand specialised and customised programs delivered by high quality teaching staff and administered by professionals. One interviewee commented that perhaps the founder's authoritative management style together with the hint of nepotism/favouritism within the management structure could create a myopic view of the purpose of XAIU with too much emphasis on return and not enough on quality education”. Another interviewee commented about feeling “a sense of helplessness followed by low motivation as most decisions are made and/or vetoed by the founder”. The VPIA defends those comments saying that XAIU being the type of higher education institute it is within the market it competes in, you can’t have one without the other – “without profit there’s no chance of quality”.

Key Finding 4 Subcategory – The Three International Departments

Knight’s (2003a) definition of internationalisation emphasises that it is a “process of integration” and the researcher contends that this definition should extend to all activities and policies at institution level. It is therefore the task of the VPIA to introduce and integrate internationalised policy and activity into every college and department within XAIU in order to ensure XAIU works as a cohesive unit when considering how to develop an internationalised future. This should be an ongoing process and should begin within the three international organs under the VPIA’s directorate and then emanate out to other XAIU colleges.

This has not always been achievable at XAIU given the dynamics of the senior management enmeshed in family relationships and ex-public servant personalities and so the in the true
sense of Knight’s internationalisation definition, XAIU has fallen short. Currently, VPIA oversees three key organs that make up XAIU’s international position: the College of Foreign Languages, the College of International Cooperation (CiC) and XAIU International Center (iCenter).

At the time of this study all three leaders (and including the VPIA) were retired academics from various Shaanxi public higher education institutes. In addition, the iFP Dean is a military academy retiree from the National Security section. All four receive their retirement benefits from Shaanxi public higher education institutes and not from XAIU. Relationships are again complex: the College of Foreign Languages head is an ex-student of the VPIA. The VPIA and the iCenter D are ex-classmates. The context of these relationships adds another rich layer to this case study. The founder believes that “recruiting retirees helps XAIU strengthen its academic competence while also boosting its reputation nationwide”. From another perspective retirees are very cost effective as the payment, insurance and medical components of their retirement packages from their former institutes cover them while working at XAIU. Essentially all XAIU pays is a monthly stipend (and in some cases a Chinese New Year ‘red packet’ – one-off tax free bonus payment each Chinese New Year) avoiding all additional provisions and costs of a normal full-time employee. With the exception of the VPIA, it may be argued that the three department leaders lack the expected management skills to successfully drive a private higher education institute. The VPIA spent many years abroad at various international universities and has a better perspective on target-based management objectives. The remaining heads do retain some public higher education institute attitudes and that puts their level of actual productivity at XAIU in question. To balance that comment, there is no doubt that their previously held status and reputation has value. Therefore findings indicate that for senior managers, re-hired from retirement, are an excellent “hit the ground running” teaching and management resource and can bring a wealth of experience, skill and knowledge to XAIU. However, they may lack private sector knowledge because of their relatively sheltered careers as public servants. This raises issues of productivity.

Continuing the findings on productivity at the support level, the administration that serves to operationalise the heads of department function has raised some efficiency issues. With low salaries (about half the salary of a local teacher) and minimum benefits, again mostly young people starting out of university are attracted to administrative positions. Another point of entry is being the “relation of someone” – using ones relationships or guanxì. There’s no better way for XAIU to gain favours, especially from government officials, then to give someone’s relative or friend a job. Entering XAIU this way with very little practical experience
and immediately gaining senior sounding job titles serves very little purpose if these peoples’ relationships do not yield the desired results. It may be that it is the proper selection of the right people and the right training provided that produces the quality and productivity required.

During this study the iCenter had turnover of several very qualified and capable administrators who moved on to other positions outside of XAIU. As part of the Chinese culture, the issue of ‘face’ and ‘guanxi’ often arises at XAIU in terms of administrator efficiency. A status quo attitude tends to protect and perpetuate the tenure of the inefficient administrator. Comments like “let’s not say anything” or let’s at least give them some face” and “he’s related to someone” or “her parents are someone” or “she has a young family” were often heard before or concluding meetings. A typical scenario observed were one or two very capable administrators within a workgroup of a total of six administrators; the two doing most of the work. It seemed to be tolerated by XAIU management and this raises issues of productivity which then returns to the common theme of maximising investor return.

Key Finding 4 Subcategory – XAIU Recruitment

Recruitment of students is the major function of sales at XAIU and without sales no programs including iFP would exist. Recruitment initiatives start in late April early May of every year and culminate with new recruits arriving near the end of August. Restrictions come in the form of the: Tier system, the NCUAS admission quota system for mainstream courses, the high costs of recruitment activities nationwide and because of those costs the right mix and allocation of recruitment resources given those cost limitations. As discussed, in terms of recruiting for iFP the NCUAS restrictions do not apply. The XAIU recruitment department essentially is a centralised internal agency that creates an integrated marketing plan, buys advertising and recruits 3rd party agents to then go out to recruit students. Relationships are again rich and complex with the Head of Recruitment being the husband of XAIU’s Chief Financial Officer – both being powerful, influential and potentially lucrative positions. From the 3rd party agents’ perspective, recruiting students can be financially rewarding depending on the location the agent chooses to recruit from. Recruitment rewards for agents are incentivised via commissions. In the last few years general recruitment, in line with increased competition and a shrinking cohort has fallen which also affected the old XAIU/TAFE program numbers and other XAIU specialised programs. Agents did not receive sufficient incentive to spend the time and effort promoting specialist programs they did not know much about. As one agent
explained, he could recruit six mainstream-program students in the same time it took him to recruit one specialised-program student - “where's the incentive”.

To launch iFP and not get students would be disastrous. Early meetings with the recruitment department received little support and so, in an unprecedented move, the founder’s wife, one of the two Deputy-Directors of the XAIU iCenter, was asked to intervene. She was asked to put the case forward to the department to consider adjusting its status quo attitude to specialised program promotion and to embrace the market realities of increased competition and a shrinking cohort. One interviewee involved in early recruitment department negotiations said the department was like a “kingdom”. Subsequently the founder raised recruitment incentives for agents recruiting for iFP and those agents were given several briefing sessions prior to going out to the ‘field’. Although successful in terms of inaugural iFP recruitment, it did create some ‘ill will’ within the recruitment department in that iFP went above them to bring about change. Typically in business situations, departments should be willing to work cooperatively together for the greater good but in this situation the recruitment department, despite the market reality, wanted to maintain control of recruitment policy - described by one interviewee as “a closed shop”. This is understandable given that the department had ridden to success on universal access policies with little knowledge or skill required. The recruitment department was a “gold mine”: an over supply of full fee-paying students with low NCEE results, 3rd party agent contract appointments and commission-based incentives. But from 2010, the situation changed, overall recruitment falling 10% per year, geographical admission quotas, aggressive competitors and government study fee subsidies favouring public higher education institutes. This directly affects the number of students that can be recruited, given the full-fee nature of private higher education, impacts on XAIU operating income and therefore investor return.

4.3 The Quality of this Study

There is no agreed universal standard for judging the quality of qualitative research and many different positions exist that remain not only viable but also contested. The researcher extensively explored the issues of quality in Chapter 3, section 3.7 while addressing the study’s limitations. The four traditional criteria for quantitative validity are: internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity. Now arriving at the conclusion of this study, the quality of this study was addressed using two alternative qualitative methods:
1. Guba and Lincoln’s (1982) four alternative criteria are: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability:

**Credibility by:**
- The researcher adopting a well recognised research method – the case study;
- The researcher developing an early familiarity with the Chinese higher education industry and the internal culture of XAIU;
- The researcher achieving triangulation via the use of different methods of data collection;
- The researcher using several tactics to help ensure honesty of the study’s informants;
- The use of iterative questioning during data collection dialogues;
- Organising regular debriefing sessions between the researcher and his supervisor;
- Providing a description of the background, qualifications and experience of the researcher;
- Using member checks (informant feedback/respondent validation) of data collected; and
- Developing case study theory and rival theory.

**Transferability by:**
- Providing background data to establish the context of this study and a detailed description of the study’s phenomenon to allow comparisons to be made.

**Dependability by:**
- The design and development of an in-depth methodological description in Chapter 3 of this study allows this study to be reviewed and repeated.

**Confirmability by:**
- Triangulation to reduce effect of any researcher bias;
- The admission of researcher’s beliefs and assumptions;
- The recognition of shortcomings in study’s methods (addressed in Chapter 3, section 3.7) and their potential effects on the study; and
- An in-depth methodological description to allow integrity of research results to be scrutinised and the use of appendices, diagrams and tables to demonstrate an ‘audit trail’ of study.

2. Similar to Guba and Lincoln, Yin (2009) also has four alternative criteria to address issues of quality and suggests at what phase the test of quality should occur. Yin’s matrix has been customised for this study in the Chapter 4, Graphic 2 below:
Chapter 4, Graphic 3 – XAIU IFP Case Study Tests of Quality Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Case Study Tactic</th>
<th>Used in this IFP study?</th>
<th>During what phase of the study?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Construct Validity</td>
<td>Use of multiple sources of evidence</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establish a chain of evidence</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Have key informants review draft case study report</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Internal Validity</td>
<td>Do pattern matching</td>
<td></td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do explanation building</td>
<td></td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Address rival explanations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use logic models</td>
<td></td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. External Validity</td>
<td>Use theory in single-case studies</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Research design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use replication logic in multiple case studies</td>
<td></td>
<td>Research design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reliability</td>
<td>Use case study protocol</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop case study database</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted by the researcher from Yin (2009) p. 41.

In addition to these four criteria, section 3.7 raised discussion on potential ethical matters in direct relation to this research. Raising specific limitations, important ethical considerations and issues within this study assures the reader of the reliability of the research and its findings.
Chapter 5 – Conclusions

5.1 Summary

This descriptive case study has guided the reader through a year-long journey of discovery on a leading Chinese private higher education institute Xi’an International University (XAIU) and focusing on the development and implementation of an internationalisation activity – a program branded iFP. The iFP program grew out of the necessity for XAIU, within its international dimension, to continuously develop new and innovative products in order to stay current in a fiercely competitive market. Chapter one provided an overview of the case study topic, described how the case study was constructed and gave the reader a glimpse of what to look forward to as they journey through the next four chapters. Chapter two used a top down approach to move the reader from globalisation to internationalisation to privatisation to commercialisation through the lens of XAIU and its international program section, the College of International Cooperation (CiC). Chapter three reinforced why the case study strategy was the right methodology for this study and used a logic model to bind theory, output and outcomes into a cohesive framework that provides a clear overview for the reader. Chapter four used a practical data approach to business studies research and used a general inductive analysis to reduce the large amount of narrative data to four clear key findings. Those findings and their sub-categories were then comprehensively explored in the Chapter four’s findings. Finally this chapter will attempt to carry the reader to a new level of perception about the study. It reaffirms the theory statement and seeks to offer answers to the study questions raised in the research and justification for the approach used as well as pathways forward. Therefore this conclusion chapter stands alone to provide justification and defence of this thesis and is developed with a clear overall structure with each sub-chapter providing a specific insight into the study. This chapter addresses the following sections:

5.1 Summary
5.2 An Introduction to the Conclusions
5.3 Empirical Findings
5.4 Theoretical Implications
5.5 Policy Implications
5.6 Recommendation for Future Research
5.7 The Final Conclusion
5.2 An Introduction to the Conclusions

The study set out to explore how the concept of internationalisation impacts on a Chinese private higher education operating in a very competitive sector of a primary industry. Is the motivation behind this pursuing internationalisation activities profit? The Chinese government, keen to meet their plans to continue strong economic growth, sees qualified, trained and skilled youth as one of the key contributors to growth and therefore access to higher education as imperative. At the bottom end of higher education provision are demand absorbers like XAIU competing for the recruitment of students to its comprehensive offering of programs and courses. How to create a difference in such a competitive sector? An international dimension has been identified by XAIU as an important contribution to building reputation, creating that difference and making it more competitive. What are the challenges of including internationalisation activities? The importance of this study is what it reveals in terms of the internal and external issues and dynamics faced establishing an internationalisation activity by a selected team from XAIU’s College of International Studies (CIC). The activity – an internationalised foundation program branded iFP. The literature review of this study was first addressed at a global level then focussing down to the dynamics of China’s post-Mao higher education policy and then further down to a SWOT analysis of XAIU’s current external and internal situation. A descriptive case study strategy was chosen as the methodology to inquire about a contemporary phenomenon (iFP as an internationalisation activity within XAIU) within its real life context (at XAIU, a private higher education institute operating in a socialist country but being influenced by globalisation and commercialisation) and bound by time (for the school year September 2011 through to the end of September 2012), place: (within the Shaanxi province in China, inside a degree conferring private higher education institute) and limits (observing the dynamics of team within a single college – CIC, that in turn has assigned a team to develop and implement a new internationalisation activity -iFP). To address the issues and dynamics the study sought to answer two questions and their associated propositions:

1. Why are internationalisation activities so important to XAIU?
   a) Proposition 1. Internationalisation activities at XAIU contribute to building XAIU’s reputation.
   b) Proposition 2. A mix of internationalisation activities at XAIU are needed to meet a changing market.
2. **How an internationalisation activity would be developed in practice at XAIU and what actions would occur?**
   a) Proposition 1. Establishing a new internationalisation activity, like an international foundation program has key internal challenges.
   b) Proposition 2. Establishing a new internationalisation activity, like an international foundation program, means working within key external constraints.

5.3 **Empirical Findings**

The main empirical findings are chapter specific and were summarised within Chapter 4 of this study. The purpose of this section was to synthesise the empirical findings to answer the study's two research questions to then help determine if the propositions stated were warranted:

1. **Why are internationalisation activities so important to XAIU?**
   a) To remain competitive, an international dimension that includes the delivery of internationalisation activities must form part of XAIU’s overall delivery strategy. First, it needs be recognised that, using Knight's (2004) definition of internationalisation for this study, for internationalisation to be successful at the institutional level it should be integrated into all aspects of the activities and policies of XAIU. The findings of this case reveal that, at XAIU, more needs to be done if this integration is to be achieved in the future. At the demand end, students (and their parents) within the target market and based on their gaokao scores want to gain access to a best school possible to enhance their future prospects. A reputation for innovative and cost-effective courses that are current and recognised is important to satisfy those demands. At the supply end, potential international partners want to gain meaningful access to the Chinese market and therefore want their partner to be credible and able to supply well prepared students for any partnership programs established.
   b) Given that both the sources of demand and sources of supply are searching for institutions of high reputation in order to satisfy their requirements, XAIU to remain competitive, must be seen to be reacting to those market forces. Essentially, XAIU key competition within higher education providers is the
other private higher education institutes. Seeking international partners and then developing innovative ways to form meaningful partnerships to deliver reputable programs is an important strategy in creating competitive advantage for XAIU. Integrating and international dimension into the overall culture of XAIU is seen to be imperative to achieving this.

2. How an internationalisation activity would be developed in practice at XAIU and what actions would occur?
   a) Two key internal challenges faced the establishment of iFP. Providing competent local and international staff to drive the iFP initiative to an acceptable level of student and partner satisfaction was going to prove difficult given current internal human resource policies. Second, given the context of the schools establishment, the appointment of family members and friends to senior XAIU positions meant that issues of capacity, effectiveness and efficiency became evident. This raised a more general problem of overall productivity.
   b) It was discovered that government policies do no actual favours for private higher institutions like XAIU. The government protects its elite Tier 1 higher education institutions and uses its Tier 2 higher education institutes and newly created independents as a buffer of protection against the threat of private higher institutions. Further protection of the public sector come in the form of student subsidies for fees, capital investment for infrastructural development, the merging of public institutions and the admission quota system of recruitment.

5.4 Theoretical Implications

This section provides the contribution and implications of section 5.3’s syntheses with respect to the research questions and how they may impinge on existing theories or understanding. This section will explain how the study’s findings could influence further understanding or application of knowledge. The two initial ingredients of this study were a theory statement and a rival theory. The theory statement that bound the two study questions and their propositions was that “XAIU internationalisation activities are profit motivated”. The study’s rival theory produces a possible contrasting perspective of participants and stakeholders reality and was stated as “XAIU internationalisation activities may fail if too much emphasis is
The study’s theory statement was guided by a series of myths suggested by Knight (2011) and supported by de Wit (2011): Myth 1: foreign students as internationalisation; Myth 2: international reputation as a proxy for quality; Myth 3: international institutional agreements; and Myth 5: global branding. Knight’s (2011) myths helped to focus inquiry about existing understandings of the concept of internationalisation and in this study the theory statement was affirmed as it was discovered that the perception of quality of supply, delivery and productivity impacts on XAIU’s overall reputation. Also, that having a mix of internationalisation activities like the activities highlighted in Knight’s myths contributed to existing understandings that internationalisation activities aimed at improving reputation were perceived to contribute to increasing XAIU’s competitive position. Further, a private higher education institution like XAIU was established on the premise that although not explicitly stated was that the ability to make and retain profit was implied. What was discovered is that fully engaging in internationalisation activities like iFP is resource intensive and as one interviewee expressed “to make money you need to spend money” if quality outcomes are to be achieved and maintained.

5.5 Policy Implications

In this section the policy implications of the findings of this research will be presented as a brief synthesis. As stated in Chapter 1, this study has the theoretical underpinnings of social constructivism/constructionism. Constructivism proposes that each individual mentally constructs the world of experience through cognitive processes while social constructionism has a social rather than an individual focus (Young and Collin, 2004). The main theoretical understanding on which this study has been based is that internationalisation activities at XAIU are motivated by profit and developing and implementing these kinds of activities are challenging and resource intensive. The theoretical understanding was made real by positioning the study at the practical end of the theory by exploring the development and implementation of an internationalised foundation program branded iFP and discovering the unfolding challenges, both internally and externally. This study could influence the debate on internationalisation because the discourse happens at the development and implementation level. Examples of two successes of the study are: the decision internally by XAIU to expand the scale and scope of iFP for the 2013 intake discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.2.2 and recent interest shown within the cross-border higher education industry. TAFE SWSI currently has
five JV partnership programs in China and has requested that the XAIU iFP program model be piloted with a view to being implemented at other venues in China and greater Asia. That is, rather than TAFE SWSI losing current and potential projects to other international higher education institutes, embedding TAFE SWSI qualifications into a foundation program can deliver higher-level qualifications than TAFE SWSI alone.

Knowing that many of the internal and external challenges will be similar, the generalisation of the XAIU iFP program and the scaling-up of the XAIU iFP program to other Chinese venues is an interesting prospect. In November 2012, the TAFE SWSI director implemented a pilot project and identified three Chinese venues where the researcher and a XAIU colleague will travel to potential partners and ‘pitch’ the iFP model with the view of presenting an innovative and competitive product in the hope of creating new business opportunities. This kind of practical application is an effective response to any remarks made about not being generalisable for which qualitative studies have previously been criticised. Yin (2009) explained that the purpose of case studies is in “analytical generalisation” to expand theory and not in statistical generalisation (p. 38). Stake (1995) also argued that with case studies researchers make “naturalistic generalisations,” which are different from deductive generalisations based on statistical analysis. He added that naturalistic generalisations develop by recognising similarities of objects and issues within a context and “by sensing the natural covariations of happenings” (Stake, 2000, p. 22).

5.6 Recommendation for Future Research

There is potential for future research in the same field in China. With knowledge gained from this single case study, projection of the present challenges includes an opportunity to discover future patterns. This study was undertaken with the realisation that it could be replicated in other Chinese higher education institutions in order to provide further study and comparative analysis. If the TAFE SWSI pilot projects prove successful, this research can be expanded with a number of existing, modified and new TAFE SWSI projects. A comparative analysis of multiple cases can then be considered. This future research will prove valuable because:

- It will provide further understanding on how other provinces administrations operate and manage central and provincial level higher education policy and regulations, it similarities and differences;
• It will provide variants of demographic data about students who are ready to enter higher education for analysis and comparison;

• It will provide further information about the kinds of international higher education institutes who have made contact with local partners and their motives and intentions, ready for analysis and comparison;

• It will provide information on what motivates these Chinese higher education institutes to seek internationalisation activities as part of their mix of operations and how they allocate resources toward achieving those goal, ready for analysis and comparison;

• It will provide further insight into the internal dynamics, relationships and management styles of Chinese higher education institutes and whether those factors have any impact on managing the institution and the productivity of outputs.

• With each new venue visited, it will provide the opportunity for a matrix of comparison to be developed. The more venues studied the greater the validity of the generalisations proposed. The greater the level of generalisation the more universal consultancy opportunities may be; and

• As an example of using this study toward commercial consultancy opportunities: early in the study, the researcher was in contact with Uwe Brandenberg from German consulting group Centre for Higher Education (CHE at www.che.ed). Brandenberg wrote to the researcher saying “We are also looking into extending business consulting to China with an emphasis on internationalisation. Could be that you might be a perfect match if that is something you are interested in of course” (personal communication, 26 October, 2011).

5.7 The Final Conclusion

The primary aim of this study was to add to the body of knowledge on internationalisation in China by focussing on the development and implementation of a real-life internationalisation program in China. The motivations and challenges of establishing the program naturally became the theory and from that grew the study's propositions. The study provides a foundation of knowledge that is not normally accessible, yet provides significant promise in educational and commercial relationships between Australia and China.
References


The circular process of discovery (data gathering) using 3 key data sources: open-ended interviews, participant observation and documentation.

The circular process being: Iterative, Recursive, Holographic

**DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS**
- Revision and refinement of key categories (between 3-8 categories which become the basis of the findings of the study)
- Determining relevant/non-relevant data (will arrive at around 15-20 categories)
- Determining specific categories (30-40 categories)
- Determining general categories

**DATA PREPARATION**
- Identify specific segments of data (themes are identified from segments of text)
- Initial read through the entire text data
- Clean data

**INFERENTIAL STATISTICS**
- Generalisations?

**The Data Analysis / Coding Process**
- Theory / Rival Theory to test against original research questions
- Key Patterns (findings)
- Propositions (hypotheses)

**Appendix 1 - XAIU iFP Case Study Overview**
"Developing an Internationalised Foundation Program: XAIU iFP – A Descriptive Case Study"

Research Q1
Why are internationalisation activities so important to XAIU?

Q1 Proposition 1
Internationalisation activities at XAIU contribute to building XAIU’s reputation

Q1 Proposition 2
A mix of internationalisation activities at XAIU are needed to meet a changing market

Research Q2
How an internationalisation activity would be developed in practice at XAIU and what actions would occur?

Q2 Proposition 1
Establishing a new internationalisation activity, like an international foundation program has key internal challenges

Q2 Proposition 2
Establishing a new internationalisation activity, like an international foundation program, means working within key external constraints

Q1+Q2 Theory
XAIU internationalisation activities are profit motivated

Q1+Q2 Rival Theory
XAIU internationalisation activities may fail if too much emphasis is placed on profit
## Appendix 3 – XAIU Internationalisation Strategies and Activities

### Strategy 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Programs</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>&quot;at XAIU&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;cross border&quot;</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student exchange programs</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>TRIALING</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cross border exchange to CLC trialed in 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language study</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES (ad hoc)</td>
<td></td>
<td>English, French, Japanese, Korean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalised curricula</td>
<td>SOME</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>TAFE JV and CLC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area or thematic studies</td>
<td>SOME</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>TAFE JV, CLC, and ad hoc exchanges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work/study abroad</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Internships to USA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International students</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong Korean links, a small European student exchange and ad hoc XAIU students continuing study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching/learning process</td>
<td>SOME</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>TAFE JV, CLC, and ad hoc exchanges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint degree programs</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>iFP starts in September 2012</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-cultural training</td>
<td>SOME</td>
<td>SOME</td>
<td></td>
<td>Happens ad hoc some exchanges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty/staff mobility programs</td>
<td>SOME</td>
<td>Trialing in 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>Exchange with College of Lake County, IL, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting lectures/scholars</td>
<td>SOME</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Ad hoc exchanges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links between academic programs and research and scholarly collaboration</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Demand absorber so research opportunities limited</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Strategy 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research and Scholarly Collaboration</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>&quot;at XAIU&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;cross border&quot;</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area/theme focus/centers</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
<td>Demand absorber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint research projects</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
<td>Demand absorber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International conferences and seminars</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
<td>Global Advancement of Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Published articles and papers</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Harvard University Case Study (2009) – N2-309-074</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International research agreements</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
<td>Demand absorber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research exchange programs</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
<td>Demand absorber</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Knight (2004).
O
H
R
Y
E
T
x
x
x
x
x
x
XAIU's location
Materials
XAIU's current delivery capacity
Financial resources/support
Human resources and talent
Resources
x
x
x
x
x
x
are financially viable leads the researcher to believe XAIU internationalisation programs are motivated by profit.

Over the past 2 years XAIU's current i18n international foundation program has failed to attract sufficient students to make the continued operation viable. A possibility of closure of the current program affects external and internal shareholders, stakeholders and international operations of XAIU. XAIU’s need to run internationalisation programs that make the continued operation viable. A possibility of closure of the current program affects external and internal shareholders, stakeholders and international operations of XAIU. XAIU’s need to run internationalisation programs that make the continued operation viable. A possibility of closure of the current program affects external and internal

Because of rapidly changing HE industry in China, competition for students for international programs has increased. Because of rapidly changing HE industry in China, competition for students for international programs has increased.

The Culture of XAIU

To be successful, the new program needs to work within the framework of its external forces To be successful, the new program needs to work within the framework of its external forces

Assumptions (Research Propositions Q2P2 and Q2P2)

Long-term Outcomes — "hope to see"
Changes that follow medium-term outcomes:
- The market recognises IFP as legitimate, professional and well-organised international program
- Teachers and administrators from well-known Chinese universities applying to join the IFP team
- IFP gains universal support from all XAIU departments ensuring that internationalisation becomes integrated strategy
- More prestigious foreign universities contact XAIU for the wanting to become a future IFP partner
- IFP expands to offer foundation programs in several fields of study

Objective
For the new intake of Chinese students starting in September 2012, XAIU wants to have a robust and credible new international foundation program developed and ready to be taken to the education market in June 2012 in order to attract a sufficient number of students to make the operation viable. For the first intake, at least 40 full-fee paying students are required. If successful it is intended that this new program will replace the current i18n program.

Situation
For the new intake of Chinese students starting in September 2012, XAIU wants to have a robust and credible new international foundation program developed and ready to be taken to the education market in June 2012 in order to attract a sufficient number of students to make the operation viable. For the first intake, at least 40 full-fee paying students are required. If successful it is intended that this new program will replace the current i18n program.

Impact
China-wide, IFP becomes a well-recognised foundation programme with a reputation for attracting the very best international university partners. The market reacts to the program by creating more demand than supply in terms of places available on the program. XAIU limits intake numbers and raises tuition fees.

Resources (for the planned work)
- Human resources and talent
- Financial resources/support
- XAIU’s current delivery capacity
- Organisational tools
- Equipment
- Materials
- Technology
- XAIU’s location
- XAIU’s brand/reputation/image

Case Study
Strengths and Weaknesses)
(XAIU's Opportunities and Threats)

Key internal challenges within XAIU need to be addressed in order to get stakeholder "buy in"

External Factors

START OF SEMESTER 1 2011-12 to start of Semester 1 2012-13

Activities (outline for the planned work)
- Meetings with XAIU leaders for authorisation
- IFP project team interviews
- External market research conducted
- Draft IFP framework developed
- Contact foreign universities for partnerships
- IFP framework and Year 1 curriculum developed
- Shaanxi Education Department consulted
- IFP recruitment toolkit developed
- IFP final preparation to go to the market
- XAIU staff and resources prepare for first intake
- Students arrive for first intake of IFP

Long-term Outcomes — "hope to see"
Changes that follow medium-term outcomes:
- The market recognises IFP as legitimate, professional and well-organised international program
- Teachers and administrators from well-known Chinese universities applying to join the IFP team
- IFP gains universal support from all XAIU departments ensuring that internationalisation becomes integrated strategy
- More prestigious foreign universities contact XAIU for the wanting to become a future IFP partner
- IFP expands to offer foundation programs in several fields of study

Rationale (Research Propositions Q1P1 and Q1P2)
- A mix of internationalisation activities contribute to building an higher education institute’s overall reputation
- A mix of internationalisation activities is needed to meet a changing and competitive Chinese higher education market

Medium-term Outcomes — "want to see"
Changes that follow short-term outcomes:
- Participants tell others of their positive experiences and then perceived values of the IFP program
- IFP participants begin to exhibit increasingly professional behaviours and characteristics
- Participants contribute to the development of IFP policies and practices to improve the operation of IFP
- Participants employ new technologies to ensure greater skills and experiences can offered by the IFP program
- XAIU develops management strategies that ensure more internationalisation programs are developed

Assumptions (Research Propositions Q2P2 and Q2P2)
- Key internal challenges within XAIU need to be addressed in order to get stakeholder "buy in"
- To be successful, the new program needs to work within the framework of its external forces

Outputs (have resources and activities)
- Final authorisation given to go ahead with IFP
- A 5-person IFP project team established
- Marketing research analysed
- IFP draft framework approved
- 10 foreign university responses received
- IFP framework and Year 1 curriculum approved
- Shaanxi Education Department approve IFP
- 4 integrated IFP marketing tools approved
- The 2 month window opens to recruit for IFP
- 9 IFP staff and a program cost centre confirmed
- At least 40 full-fee paying students enrol in IFP

External Factors (XAIU’s Opportunities and Threats)

IFP’s Planned Work

The Culture of XAIU (its Strengths and Weaknesses)

IFP’s Intended/Desired Results

Appendix 4 – XAIU IFP Case Study Logic Model
Appendix 5 – XAIU iFP Study Interview Protocol and Schedule

Interview Protocol and Schedule for:

Developing an Internationalised Foundation Program:

XAIU iFP – A Descriptive Case Study

UoN Ethics Approval – H-2013-0030

Robert T.W Rogers – Study Researcher

Instructions to the Interviewer

Arranging the interview

1. When a potential participant indicates their willingness to participate by return email, contact them to arrange a convenient time and place for an interview and forward a copy of the consent form sent by email.
2. Determine their preference for a location for the interview.
3. For face to face interviews, ensure the situation will be comfortable for the participant and that water is available.
4. Ensure that the recording device has sufficient battery power and is operational.

At the interview

1. Thank the participant for agreeing to be interviewed
2. Ensure that the Consent Form has been signed
3. Reiterate that the interview should take no longer than 60 minutes and ensure that they have sufficient time to complete the interview.
4. Explain again that all the answers they will remain confidential and no information identifying individual participants will be published in any reports or papers.
5. Ensure again that they are comfortable with the interview being audio recorded and that you will tell them when you are starting and stopping the recorder.
6. Explain that during the interview they can ask for the tape to be stopped and edited or erased.
7. Add that you will be taking notes during the interview
8. If they decide that they would prefer not to be recorded, explain that they interview can proceed and that you will be taking notes.
9. Add that if they do not wish to answer a question they are not obliged to do so and if they wish to withdraw from participating at any time they can do so without giving a reason. They also have the option of withdrawing any data which identifies them.
10. Check whether they have any questions before you commence.
Interview schedule

We are interested XAIU’s experience with, and your views on, the internationalisation of higher education. Questions will center around, but not be limited to:

• Why you think internationalisation forms such a major part of higher education today?

• What motivates Chinese higher education institutes to consider internationalisation activities?

• Of the internationalisation activities XAIU currently has, what is going right/wrong with them?

• What are XAIU’s major external challenges to establishing an internationalised activity like iFP are?

• What are XAIU’s major internal challenges to establishing and internationalised activity like iFP are?

• What are your individual challenges in being asked to develop and implement iFP?

NOTE 1: Provide a reminder that we will send the transcript for their review of the interview.

NOTE 2: Don’t forget to thank the interviewee for participating.
Appendix 6 - XAIU iFP Case Study Findings Map

This map provides an overview of the four key categories of findings, their sub-categories and any linkages discovered as a result of the general inductive data analysis and these form the basis of the study's findings outlined in Chapter 4. This map is read in conjunction with the study overview, study questions and study logic model. Dotted lines indicate linkages between findings.

1. Government Policies
2. Commercialisation
3. iFP Human Resourcing
4. XAIU Internal Dynamics

EXTERNAL

INTERNAL

Competition from ...
Secondary school foundation programs
Tier 2 Public/Independent HEI foundation programs
Tier 3 Private HEI foundation programs
Demographics
Changing Characteristics

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# XAIU iFP (International Business)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Semester 1</td>
<td>Semester 2</td>
<td>Semester 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Hours/year</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Hours/semester (18 weeks x 20-25 hrs/wk)</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### “Instream” Embedded partner

- **Intensive General English** courses based on the “Tapestry” system
- **Intensive Academic English** courses based on the “Tapestry” system
- Joint CLC/XAIU courses during CLC Student Autumn Student Exchange at XAIU
- Core 100 level Business courses elective(s) delivered jointly with Arcadia University
- Core 100 level Business courses elective(s) delivered jointly with Arcadia University
- TAFE Advanced Diploma (8 units of Study - 10-12 weeks-only intensive course)

### Courses

1. GENG101 - Listening  
   AENG101 - Listening  
   HUMN101 - Chinese Culture and Society  
   BUSC101 - Business Mathematics and Statistics  
   BUSC106 - Introduction to Information Technology and Communications (ITC)  
   BSBHRM602A - Managerial and Organisational Resources Strategic Planning

2. GENG102 - Reading  
   AENG102 - Reading  
   HUMN102 - Chinese Literature and Art  
   BUSC102 - Principles of Accounting  
   BUSC106 - Introduction to International Business Law  
   BSBMGT615A - Contribute to Organisational Development  
   BSBMGT615A - Contribute to Organisational Development

3. GENG103 - Writing  
   AENG103 - Writing  
   CPSC121 - American National Politics  
   PHIL101 - Introduction to Ethical Theory  
   BUSC107 - Management and Organisations  
   BSBMGT607B - Manage Market Research

4. GENG104 - Communication  
   AENG104 - Communication  
   CPSC222 - International Relations  
   Possible non-business elective course based on individual tuning of partner articulation agreement  
   BUSC108 - Introduction to Finance  
   BSBMGT609A - Develop Organisational Marketing Objectives

5. MISOF101 - Introduction to Microsoft Office suite (continuously over Y1S1)  
   AENG105 - Presentation Skills  
   CRUB121 - Introduction to Business  
   BUSN102 - The UN and Human Society - A Critical, Historical Perspective  
   BSBMGT601A - Manage Finance and Information

6. CBUS122 - Principles of Marketing  
   Possible non-business elective course based on individual tuning of partner articulation agreement  
   CBUS103 - Economics  
   BSBMGT604A - Manage Employee Relations

7. CBUS104 - International Business  
   Possible non-business elective course based on individual tuning of partner articulation agreement  
   BSBMGT605B - Provide Leadership across the Organisation

### Concurrently over the 3 Yrs

- continuous and progressive IELTS training (from XAIU recommended 3rd Party providers) - level of achievement expected by end of Year 3 will be IELTS 6.0 Academic

### Key Learning Focus

- Program designed to provide students with 3 key academic skills: 1) ability for students to study independently, 2) ability for students to think critically, and 3) ability for students to articulate learning through essay writing
Appendix 8 – XAIU iFP 2013 Expansion Plans

Students select between the 8 downstream partners completing studies abroad.
Appendix 9 – XAIU International Structure + iFP HR
## Appendix 10 – XAIU iFP Logic Model Desired to Actual Output Results

For the complete logic model please refer to Appendix 4 - XAIU iFP Case Study Logic Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desired Outputs (have resources and activities) (initiated during Semester 1 – September 2011 to January 2012)</th>
<th>Actual Outputs (from Semester 2 – February 2012 to September 2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Final authorisation given to go ahead with iFP</td>
<td>Approved by the VPIA at the end of Semester 1 (January 2012).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A 5 person iFP project team established</td>
<td>3 people assigned to drive the iFP from concept through to implementation at the beginning of Semester 2 (February 2012). iFP needs to be ready for market by the end of May 2012.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Marketing research analysed</td>
<td>Potential student market analysed from February 2012 to May 2012. All indications point toward being able to reach the target number of 40 students for the inaugural intake.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. iFP draft framework approved</td>
<td>Draft framework approved by the VPIA in March 2012.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 10 foreign university responses received</td>
<td>14 foreign universities approached. 7 foreign universities agree to the iFP framework during negotiations throughout Semester 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. iFP framework and Year 1 curriculum approved</td>
<td>Final framework approved by the VPIA in April 2012. Year 1 curriculum approved by the VPIA in May 2012.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Shaanxi Education Department (SED) approve iFP</td>
<td>iFP agreed by SED in April 2012 in negotiation with iFP Dean from XAIU.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. 4 integrated iFP marketing tools approved</td>
<td>4 integrated marketing tools developed and presented to the XAIU recruitment department for approval. 3 tools (additional to normal recruitment tools) approved in May 2012.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The 2 month window opens to recruit for iFP</td>
<td>Recruitment agents in place, marketing and promotional tools implemented in June and July 2012. Most students recruited to the program after third “batch” - mid – late August 2012.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. 9 iFP staff and a program cost centre confirmed</td>
<td>Migration of the old XAIU/TAFE project delivery staff to new iFP program approved and expansion to a 12-person delivery team approved. See Appendix 5 – iFP HR Framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. At least 40 full-fee paying students enrol in iFP</td>
<td>By the middle of September 2012, 50 students had enrolled in the inaugural iFP program.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: XAIU College of International Cooperation iFP Development Team