

Training of University Tour Guiding Students: A Reading of the Field Training Program at King Saud University, Riyadh

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Abstract:

Field training in the tourism industry in general, and in the field of tour guiding in particular, represents an effective element in preparing and equipping the student to suit the labor market. The field training provides the student with the necessary skills and knowledge required to perform his future role in accompanying tourist groups and providing them with interpretation, explanation and guidance.

Based on this importance, the Tour Guiding Program at the College of Tourism and Archaeology at King Saud University in Riyadh (KSA) has considered that the field training program should be appropriate and sufficient to prepare the trainee student for the labor market. The program has allocated an entire semester for field application training during which the student studies two courses, one of which is the field training course, and the other is the research project course. In the first course, the student is trained to simulate the role of a tour guide in a number of touristic, heritage and historical sites in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, while in the latter course, the student is asked to prepare a research project for a comprehensive guided tour in a city or site.

This paper discusses, in details, the field training program for tour guiding students at King Saud University, including a SWOT analysis that shows the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of this program.