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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Internships offer international students a valuable opportunity to develop their skills in a new and culturally diverse environment. These experiences expose students to a wide range of employers, colleagues, and guests, broadening their professional and interpersonal competencies (Ruhanen et al., 2013). As the hospitality industry increasingly incorporates interns into its workforce, internship programs have become essential for bridging the gap between academic learning and industry practice. Well-designed internships not only provide hands-on experience but also help students explore potential career paths, develop professional networks, and gain insights into real-world hospitality operations (Gad & El-latief, 2019). This underscores the critical relationship between hospitality education and practical experience in preparing students to meet industry expectations.

The front office serves as the operational hub of a hotel, managing guest relations, reservations, and overall service delivery. This department offers a rich and dynamic learning environment for hospitality students, enabling them to develop essential skills in communication, problem-solving, and customer service (Aujero-Blanza et al., 2023; Gad & El-Latief, 2019). Choosing to undertake an internship at the front office of Pullman Bandung Hotel is motivated by a strong desire to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical setting, strengthen professional competencies, and gain meaningful exposure to the hospitality industry. This experience is expected to enhance both personal and career development, aligning academic preparation with the demands of a competitive global job market.

Pullman Bandung Hotel, known for its high standards of service and operational intern at a reputable establishment like Pullman Bandung Hotel not only enhances a student's resume but also increases their attractiveness to future employers (Soenarto, 2023). Internships are an integral component of vocational education

programs, offering students practical work experience, interaction with industry professionals, and exposure to real-world challenges. According to Guzman (2020), academe-industry collaborations such as internship programs are essential for bridging the gap between theory and practice, allowing students to gain a deeper understanding of industry requirements. Moreover, internships help strengthen competencies in key areas including leadership, human resources, and communication.

In conclusion, undertaking an internship at Pullman Bandung Hotel represents a strategic and valuable opportunity for the writer to apply academic knowledge in a professional, real-world context. The hotel's reputation for excellence, combined with its dynamic front office operations, provides an ideal learning environment to develop critical skills in communication, customer service, and problem-solving. Additionally, the internship experience will help bridge the gap between theory and practice, enhance professional competencies, and strengthen the writer's in global hospitality industry.

## 1.2 Purpose

The writer conducted the internship program so that the writer can achieve the end purposes, which are:

1. Graduate from semester 5  
To graduate from semester 5, the writer must apply the knowledge and skills learned during the past four semesters in a real workplace. In the industry, the writer will be graded by the supervisors regarding these skills that have been implemented.
2. Obtain real experience in the professional work environment.  
During the internship program at the hotel, the writer had many chances to learn and grow. With support from the hotel staff, the writer was able to gain new knowledge and skills that are important in the hospitality industry, such as serving guests, handling bookings, using hotel systems, and following hotel procedures. These new competencies will be useful for future jobs. The

internship also gave the writer real experience in a fast-paced environment, where staying calm and focused under pressure was very important. From these situations, the writer learned how to manage stress, work quickly, and stay professional. This helped the writer become more confident, mentally stronger, and better prepared for future work in the hospitality field.

### 3. Expanding networking

The writer was able to gain new connections during his internship program due to the amount of people with different backgrounds and interests. But, the most important part is that the writer gets to build connections and network with people that have the same interest in the field. Building networks and connections is important since they are highly needed for working opportunities in the future.

## 1.3 Period and Procedures

The Internship Program is mandatory for all Hotel Operations students once they reach fifth semester and one of the requirements for graduations. The Internship Program occurs for 6 months, starting from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 – 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 with a minimum of 800 working hours or 100 working days. For this year the writer can choose any department for the internship program, thus the writer chose to do Front office department.

Before doing Internship Program, the writer should be an active student, have minimum 75 SKS done and have a minimum of 2.75 GPA. If all the requirements are met, the writer needs to attend Internship briefing that is provided by the campus. The purpose of this briefing is so that the students can be prepared for completing the internship (Prawira et al., 2023).

After the briefing, the writer can proceed to look for hotels for the Internship Program. With knowledge on how to make a CV, how to do well in an interview and other courses related to the Internship Program, the writer was able to do well in preparing her Internship Program.

Below is the process of taking the Internship Program:

### 1. Internship Requirement

The Internship Program is mandatory for all Hotel Operations students in the fifth semester and is one of the graduation requirements.

### 2. Duration

The Internship lasts for 6 months, from 1st July 2024 to 1st January 2025, with a minimum of 800 working hours or 100 working days.

### 3. Department Selection

For this year, students can choose any department. The writer chose the Front Office Department.

### 4. Requirements to Apply

To join the Internship Program, the student must be active, have completed at least 75 SKS, and have a minimum GPA of 2.75. The student is also required to attend an Internship Briefing provided by the campus to understand the steps before and after the internship.

### 5. Preparation

Learn how to make a CV, prepare for an interview, and study related courses. The writer also searched for hotels after the briefing.

### 6. KM1 and KM2 Process

The writer had to make KM1, which includes the name of the chosen hotel and department. After that, KM1 was submitted to the Hotel Operations admin to receive KM2, which was signed by the Head of the Hotel Operations Program. This process took about 1–2 working days. Once KM2 was received, the writer sent it by email to the selected hotel along with a cover letter, CV, GPA transcript, and supporting certificates.

### 7. Application Timeline

June 16th, 2024: Application sent to the hotel

June 20th, 2024: Received feedback and scheduled interview

June 22nd, 2024: Attended second interview

June 24th, 2024: Received acceptance via WhatsApp and was asked to submit ID card photo and medical check-up letter.