

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Apprenticeship

“Apprenticeships” or “practical work” are academic activities that play an important role in the vocational education process. Through these activities, students not only gain direct work experience, but also learn to adapt to a real professional environment. Apprenticeship programs provide students with the opportunity to apply the theories they have learned on campus, understand work procedures in the industrial world, and develop critical thinking and adaptive skills in dynamic work situations. Thus, apprenticeships are an integral part of the learning process that prepares students to face challenges in the world of work after graduation.

State Polytechnic of Bengkalis as a vocational higher education institution, is committed to producing competent, professional graduates with high competitiveness. One of the concrete efforts made is to hold an apprenticeship program for all students, including students of the English for Business and Professional Communication Study Program. This study program emphasizes practical English communication skills in the workplace, particularly in the fields of business, services, and the creative industry. Therefore, apprenticeships are an important forum for integrating theory and practice, enabling students to understand how language skills are used in various professional activities, such as customer service, negotiation, promotional content creation, and intercultural communication.

PT. Rich Tour and Travel is a company engaged in domestic and international travel services. The company caters to a wide range of customer needs, from providing tour packages, airline ticket reservations, hotel bookings, travel

document processing, to providing tour guide services. As public interest in tourism and travel continues to grow, tour and travel companies are required to continuously innovate in order to provide fast, efficient, and communicative services. In this context, foreign language skills, especially English, have become an important aspect in supporting the quality of services provided to both foreign and local tourists.

Apprenticeships at PT. Rich Tour and Travel provide students with the opportunity to be directly involved in various activities related to the field of tourism, such as tour guiding, administration, marketing, and promotional design. In tour guiding activities, students can learn how to interact with tourists, provide interesting information, and maintain the company's professional image. In the field of administration, students practice managing documents, arranging travel schedules, and serving customers politely and efficiently. Meanwhile, in marketing and design, students learn to create promotional materials, manage social media, and understand digital marketing strategies that are in line with current tourism trends.

In addition to providing technical experience, apprenticeships also have educational and character-building value. Through this process, students are trained to work together in teams, value time, be disciplined, and take responsibility for the tasks assigned to them. Apprenticeships also help students understand the importance of effective communication, professional ethics, and creative thinking skills in dealing with problems in the workplace. All of these experiences are expected to be valuable assets for students as they enter the real world of work after completing their studies.

Thus, the apprenticeship program at PT. Rich Tour and Travel is not only a means of applying the knowledge gained in college, but also a platform for developing professional skills, building confidence, and expanding networks and insights in the tourism industry. Through this program, students are expected to become competent, adaptive individuals who are ready to compete in an era of globalization that demands creativity and cross-cultural communication skills.

1.2 Purpose of Apprenticeship

The objectives of the apprenticeship at PT. Rich Tour and Travel are as follows:

1. Sharpening students' professional competencies through direct involvement in tour guiding, administration, marketing, and promotional design activities that reflect real working conditions in the tourism industry.
2. Apply practical English business communication skills in providing customer service and in promotional and professional cooperation activities.
3. Fostering creativity and work responsibility as preparation for facing the challenges of the world of work, which demands independence, discipline, and adaptability in the service industry environment.

1.3 Significance of the Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship at PT. Rich Tour and Travel make a significant contribution to students, companies, and educational institutions.

1. For Students

This activity is a real learning process that requires the ability to adapt to the professional world of work. Through direct involvement in various activities such as tour guiding, administration, marketing, and promotional design, students not only gain practical experience but also understand the values of discipline, responsibility, and work ethics. This experience helps students integrate the theory they learn on campus with practical fieldwork, there by creating a more comprehensive understanding of the tourism industry.

2. For Companies

Apprenticeship programs are a means of collaboration with the education sector that is beneficial in developing operational quality. Apprentices often bring new perspectives, creativity, and digital skills that can help companies in their promotional and customer service activities. Through these activities, PT. Rich Tour and Travel can expand innovation, identify potential future employees, and strengthen the company's image as a partner that cares about the development of vocational education.

3. For State Polytechnic of Bengkalis

Apprenticeships are a means of evaluation and implementation of practice-based learning, which is a characteristic of vocational education. Through cooperation with industry, campuses can ensure that the material taught remains relevant to the needs of the field. Furthermore, the success of students in completing their apprenticeships also serves as an indicator of the institution's success in producing graduates who are ready to work and highly competitive. Thus, apprenticeship activities not only provide individual benefits for students, but also create a mutually beneficial relationship between the world of education and industry as part of the process of developing competent and professional human resources.