

Evaluation and Benchmarking of the Diploma in Music Performance from Luoyang Polytechnic

Context and scope

Luoyang Polytechnic commissioned Ecctis for an independent evaluation and benchmarking of its Diploma in Music Performance which was completed in March 2025.

The Diploma in Music Performance is one of 5 majors delivered by Luoyang Polytechnic, in specific areas of traditional Chinese opera arts.

The main aims of the benchmarking were to:

- Establish comparability in the context of the UK through reference to the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF), and by extension, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)¹
- Assess the extent to which the College's underpinning quality assurance meets a set of international standards.

Key findings

The Diploma in Music Performance aims to develop students' knowledge and skills in music theory, stage performance, piano accompaniment, and the history of Chinese and international music. In line with national requirements, the Diploma also encompasses "public basic courses" which include topics from arts, social sciences and science domains.

The general entry requirement for the programme is the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE, popularly known as the *gaokao* 高考) – comparable to GCE A Level / RQF Level 3 in the UK – or suitable marks in one of the College's own tests.

The Diploma is a three-year full-time programme equating to approximately 2792 hours' guided learning time. Reflecting its vocational focus, the Diploma combines classroom-based study with project-based learning and assessed professional practice in the form of a 624-hour internship in which students can develop their practical skills in a real-world setting.

Upon completion, many students enter the workforce; however, some students will be eligible to apply for top-up Benke (本科) / Bachelor degree programmes. These require a minimum of two years of further study, which shows that the Diploma has similar academic progression routes to that of HND, Diploma of Higher Education and other UK Level 5 awards.

¹ To date, a total of 35 countries have now referenced their national education systems to the EQF.

The study revealed several strengths of the Diploma in Music Performance, namely that it demonstrated:

- Students are required to engage within the business processes of a real-world music performance enterprise; therefore, preparing them for related employment opportunities.
- The inclusion of a large training theatre enables students to gain real-world experience within a realistic environment; therefore, preparing them for employment.
- Students are jointly evaluated by enterprise instructors and College teachers within the internship. Enterprise instructors can provide a real-world perspective on students' skills and performance alongside assessing their readiness for employment within the music industry.
- The College facilitates work-study positions of employment to provide an income for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Teaching staff undergo an in-depth interview process that ensures newly appointed teachers have the skills and knowledge to teach music performance.
- Teachers are required to undertake CPD within related enterprises for a minimum duration of six-months every three years. This includes participation within workshops on contemporary issues in education such as the implementation of AI.

In terms of international comparability, the Diploma in Music Performance has been found comparable to Level 5 of the RQF and EQF. It has also met international quality standards in the following five areas:

- **Admission**
There is a pre-defined and published admissions policy ensuring transparency in the admissions policy and supporting consistency in admissions decisions
- **Programme development, approval, monitoring and review**
There is a clear process in place for the design, approval and monitoring of programmes
- **Teaching and learning**
There is a formalised process for monitoring the quality and effectiveness of delivery, relevant to the modes of study employed
- **Assessment**
Assessment provides a sufficiently fair, valid and reliable evaluation of the intended knowledge, skills and competencies
- **Information**
The information available to prospective students, current students and other interested stakeholders is accurate, transparent and clear for the intended audience.

Engagement

Luoyang Polytechnic has committed to further development and engagement encompassing:

- Writing new learning outcomes at programme and module level, ensuring these are specific; measurable; and that an indicative 60% of the programme targets a higher level of knowledge and critical thinking skills.
Developing a programme assessment framework/plan. Adopting assessment and marking approaches that sufficiently test critical thinking skills such as analysis and evaluation
- Ensuring policies and processes related to programme development, approval monitoring and review should be more fully described. Specifically, clear timeframes and triggers for complete programme reviews should be described.
- Ensuring policies should be developed and clearly described for reassessment, reasonable adjustments, the cheating policy, and complaints and appeals.
- Ensuring that there is a clear policy on programme assessment plans. Assessments should be developed so that they are clearly linked to intended learning outcomes. There should be clear limits on the use and weighting of attendance as part of the assessment.
- Developing a unified internal quality assurance 'handbook' for the College to bring together all existing written policies and processes, and formalise any unwritten policies or processes.

Ecctis is a gold-standard provider of services in international education, training, and skills, and in the development and recognition of globally portable qualifications. We are an internationally trusted and respected reference point for qualifications and skills standards.

We are UK-based and operate worldwide, with a global network and client base spanning 62 countries and 5 continents. We have a 20-year track record in international consultancy and development.

Ecctis provides official UK national agency services on behalf of the UK Government in qualifications, skills, and migration – including UK ENIC, formerly UK NARIC.

UK ENIC is the UK National Information Centre for global qualifications and skills. Following the UK's leaving the EU, the former UK NARIC recognition agency function changes from a NARIC (which is an EU-only title) to an ENIC (the wider European title for national recognition agencies) in order to meet the UK's continuing treaty obligations under the [Lisbon Recognition Convention](#).

Since 2019, through our China representatives and Beijing office Nalike we have conducted qualification benchmarking in China and fostered educational links between China and other countries, to support the internationalisation efforts of China's higher vocational colleges.