Evaluation and Benchmarking of the Diploma in Electronic Commerce from Shenzhen Institute of Information Technology

Context and scope

Shenzhen Institute of Information Technology commissioned Ecctis for an independent evaluation and benchmarking of its Diploma in Electronic Commerce, which was completed in November 2023.

The Diploma in Electronic Commerce is one of 170 programmes delivered by the College in areas such as software engineering, information communication, computer science, finance and economics, and applied foreign languages.

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 Electronic Commerce seeks to develop students' knowledge in areas such as internet marketing, programming, enterprise management and business data analysis. 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 2765 hours' guided learning time. Reflecting its vocational focus, the Diploma combines classroom-based study with practical-based simulated learning and work-based learning in industry that occurs in students' third year of study.

Upon completion, many students enter the workforce[2]; however, some students will be eligible to apply for top-up Benke (本科) / Bachelor degree programmes. These require a

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[1] To date, a total of 36 countries have now referenced their national education systems to the EQF.

[2] The employment rate of graduates is typically 97%.

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.

The study revealed several strengths of the Diploma in Electronic Commerce, namely it demonstrated that:

- It has extensive resources to practice industry skills, including textbooks edited and authored by teachers.
- It has clear progression in teaching methods that require students to gradually increase their skills and understanding of the content.
- It has simulation training, which had been noted by students as being extra effective for the learning.
- It provides the opportunity for students to acquire skill certificates which will enhance their employability.
- It has an internship module which allows students to tailor their experience to the industry they want to progress into.

In terms of international comparability, the Diploma in Electronic Commerce 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

Shenzhen Institute of Information Technology has committed to further development and engagement encompassing:

- Amending and adding to the talent training programme to ensure the clear statement of programme learning outcomes by integrating clear and measurable outcomes that encompass higher order thinking skills.
- Revising module Level outcomes and ensuring that the final year modules target knowledge and skills that link well to RQF Level 5 descriptors.
- Reviewing the range of command words and the extent of content used in the learning outcomes.
- Ensuring that around 60% of the programme is targeting knowledge and skills associated with RQF Level 5.
- Producing an assessment framework for the programme.
- Revising existing assessments and marking approaches to give sufficient scope to test knowledge and skills associated with Level 5.
- Maintaining and ensuring adoption by all staff of the unified quality assurance handbook.