

Evaluation and Benchmarking of the Diploma in Rehabilitation Therapy Techniques from Taishan Vocational College of Nursing

Context and scope

Taishan Vocational College of Nursing commissioned Ecctis for an independent evaluation and benchmarking of its Diploma in Rehabilitation Therapy Techniques, which was completed in May 2024.

The Diploma in Rehabilitation Therapy Techniques is one of 15 qualifications currently offered by the College's School of Basic Education, which is home to six departments such as Nursing, Midwifery, Rehabilitation and Health Management. It aims to prepare students for roles in the rehabilitation therapy industry.

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 Rehabilitation Therapy Techniques is designed to develop students' knowledge in a range of specialist modules covering physical, occupational, speech and traditional rehabilitation therapy. 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 Diploma 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 2988 hours' guided learning time. Reflecting its vocational focus, the Diploma combines classroom-based study with practice-based simulated learning and assessed professional practice in the form of a two-part internship totalling 720 hours.

Upon completion, many students enter the workforce²; however, some students will be

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

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.

The study revealed several strengths of the Diploma in Rehabilitation Therapy Techniques, namely that it demonstrated:

- That the Diploma's content effectively combines specialist regional approaches such as acupuncture with internationally recognised practices such as the use of electrotherapy modalities and exercise intervention approaches.
- High levels of contact hours ensure students experience significant levels of teacher-led instruction and feedback.
- A wide variety of internship providers that allow students to gain practical experience in different settings.
- That the College has clear admission policies, rigorous enrolment reviews, and clearly defined responsibilities for admissions tasks.
- That the College's guidelines for programme development and approval are clearly articulated, with assigned responsibilities for each stage of the process, including working with a third party to provide internship placements.
- That the quality of teaching is monitored over the whole year, and the procedure is well developed with a clearly stated framework and guidance.

In terms of international comparability, the Diploma in Rehabilitation Therapy Techniques 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**

² The employment rate of graduates is typically exceeding 86%.

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

Taishan Vocational College of Nursing has committed to further development and engagement encompassing:

- Writing new learning outcomes at programme and module level, ensuring these are specific, measurable and feasible; and ensure all RQF Level 5 descriptors are met at programme and module level.
- Development of a programme assessment framework/plan
- Adoption of assessment and marking approaches that sufficiently test critical thinking skills such as analysis and evaluation.
- 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.
- Maintaining and ensuring adoption by all staff of the unified quality assurance handbook.

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.