

# Evaluation and Benchmarking of the Diploma in Safety Technology and Management from Yellow River Conservancy Technical Institute

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## Context and scope

Yellow River Conservancy Technical Institute commissioned Ecctis for an independent evaluation and benchmarking of its Diploma in Safety Technology and Management, which was completed in February 2024.

The Diploma in Safety Technology and Management is one of over 60 programmes delivered by the College alongside programmes covering water conservancy, surveying, robotics, big data, and cross-border e-commerce.

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)<sup>1</sup>
- Assess the extent to which the College's underpinning quality assurance meets a set of international standards.

## Key findings

The Diploma in Safety Technology and Management seeks to develop students' knowledge in areas such as engineering mechanics, water conservancy engineering, and construction safety. 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 2679 hours' guided learning time. Reflecting its vocational focus, the Diploma combines classroom-based study with practical-based simulated learning and an 18 week off-campus internship in which students can develop their practical skills in a real-work setting.

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

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

<sup>2</sup> 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 HNDs, Diplomas of Higher Education and other UK Level 5 awards.

The study revealed several strengths of the Diploma in Safety Technology and Management, namely it demonstrated that:

- The Diploma includes relevant content such as Earth-Rock Dam Engineering and Hydraulic Concrete Structure that enable students to develop a comprehensive understanding of various aspects of hydraulic construction and project management.
- Students of the Diploma enjoy a high amount of practical training within modules and the six-month internship. The high level of practical training suitably prepares students for employment and further education.
- The practical facilities students encounter within the internship are world-class and highly relevant and appropriate to the Diploma. The implementation of Virtual Reality (VR) simulation of engineering scenarios is a contemporary approach to learning that is not typically seen within similarly focussed UK engineering programmes.
- The College supports numerous mechanisms for providing feedback to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The active consideration of any issues arising in discussions with students and staff is helpful and supportive of stakeholder engagement and student involvement.
- The use of explicit monitoring statistics, with key quantitative indicators for action, is comparable with practice observed at international level and allows for consistent application in the evaluation of Diplomas, as well as allowing for benchmarking and comparability.
- The involvement of industry personnel in the development of the examinations question bank is considered good practice as it inputs current industry trends and practices into question-item development.

**In terms of international comparability, the Diploma in Safety Technology and Management 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

Yellow River Conservancy Technical Institute 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 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.
- Maintaining and ensuring adoption by all staff of the unified quality assurance handbook.

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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, and our UK China Council and UK NARIC China Council projects, 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.