

Evaluation and Benchmarking of the Diploma in Intelligent Welding Technology from Changzhou Vocational Institute of Engineering

Context and scope

Changzhou Vocational Institute of Engineering commissioned Ecctis for an independent evaluation and benchmarking of its Diploma in Intelligent Welding Technology, which was completed in July 2023.

The Diploma in Intelligent Welding Technology is one of 42 majors offered by the College in multiple fields of engineering. Majors offered by the college include Applied Chemical Technology and Construction Engineering Technology amongst others.

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 Intelligent Welding Technology seeks to develop students' knowledge in subject specific areas such as arc welding, MIG welding, TIG welding, submerged arc welding and robot welding. 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 2528 hours' guided learning time. Reflecting its vocational focus, the Diploma combines classroom-based study with practical-based simulated learning and an internship component of the programme provides students with relevant opportunities to apply practical skills. Students can undertake their internships with local enterprises linked to the College.

Upon completion, many students enter the workforce;² 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 Intelligent Welding Technology, namely that it demonstrated:

- Practical facilities that allow a strong link between the classroom and theoretical learning.
- Enrolment procedures that are clearly documented and effectively executed.
- The programme allows for the delivery of high-quality practical welding content.
- The large number of elective modules allows for students to tailor their learning in distinct areas of welding technology.
- The processes for designing new programmes and reviewing existing programmes effectively engage external stakeholders and thoroughly assess the current labour market requirements.
- The Diploma's modes of learning are relevant to taught Intelligent Welding Technology content.
- The broadening of teachers' academic qualifications and learning help motivate and raise expertise, increasing the knowledge passed on to students.
- Appropriate structures are in place to ensure that published information is accurate, clear, and up to date.

In terms of international comparability, the Diploma in Intelligent Welding Technology 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

² The employment rate of graduates is typically 83%.

- **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

Changzhou Institute of Engineering has committed to further development and engagement encompassing:

- Writing new learning outcomes at the programme and module level, ensuring these are specific and measurable, and target higher knowledge and critical thinking skills.
- Developing a programme assessment framework/plan.
- Revising assessment briefs to ensure sufficient testing of critical thinking skills such as analysis and evaluation, coherent with the new learning outcomes.
- 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.

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.