

Evaluation and Benchmarking of the Diploma in Software Technology from Chengdu Polytechnic

Context and scope

Chengdu Polytechnic commissioned Ecctis for an independent evaluation and benchmarking of its Diploma in Software Technology which was completed in January 2023.

The Diploma in Software Technology is one of 38 majors delivered by Chengdu Polytechnic, including animation production technology, tourism management, hotel management, internet finance, accounting, nursing, ophthalmology technology, e-commerce, logistics management and business English.

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 Software Technology aims to develop students' knowledge and skills in software design, programming, project development, and the management, development, testing, operation and maintenance services of application software, internet products and embedded applications. 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. Reflecting its vocational focus, the Diploma combines classroom-based study with project-based learning and assessed professional practice in the form of an internship.

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

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

awards.

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

- The programme provides students with a well-organised, practical-based learning experience with multiple project- and group-based learning opportunities.
- The College has well-equipped training facilities, appropriate for the practical focus of the programme.
- The programme delivery model facilitates a good integration of modules and there is clear progression of programme content from RQF Level 4 to RQF Level 5.
- A clearly defined, well-structured and transparent admissions policy.
- An inclusive process for programme approval and review by a range of stakeholders, including the Academic Affairs Office, the Program Construction Committee, and the Department of Education.
- Clear and precise guidelines for the recruitment, monitoring and support of academic staff.

In terms of international comparability, the Diploma in Software 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
- **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

Chengdu Polytechnic has committed to further development and engagement encompassing:

- Rewriting the learning outcomes at programme and modular level to make them more specific and measurable, thereby ensuring the learning outcomes link appropriately to the assessment methods of the programme.
- Revising the programme specifications so that assessment strategies to be used and their link to module learning outcomes are clearly set out, and learning outcomes form the basis of the design
- 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.