

Evaluation and Benchmarking of the Diploma in Architectural Interior Design from Nanning College for Vocational Technology

Context and scope

Nanning College for Vocational Technology commissioned Ecctis for an independent evaluation and benchmarking of its Diploma in Architectural Interior Design, which was completed in May 2023.

The Diploma in Architectural Interior Design is one of many programmes the College offers. Other programmes include subjects such as Accounting, Computer Science, Engineering, Environmental Studies, Management and Technology.

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 Architectural Interior Design seeks to develop students' knowledge in Interior design, digital creative modelling, AR interactive design, building information modelling, technical engineering, and project management. 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 2850 hours' guided learning time. Reflecting its vocational focus, the Diploma combines classroom-based study with practical-based simulated learning which prepares students for the progression into the industry.

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

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

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 Architectural Interior Design, namely that it demonstrated:

- A modern teaching and learning environment with excellent resourcing and facilities to support students' learning.
- Highly relevant professionally-oriented, practice-based programme designed to meet the interior design industry needs, evidenced by the strong focus on delivering the skills (largely digital) that students require to secure employment in the industry.
- An established teacher recruitment and quality monitoring system.
- Clear, documented processes in place for programme design and approval, and for regular monitoring and review.
- Integration of wide-ranging consultation with industry experts and consideration of market demand to ensure the ongoing relevance of the curriculum.
- Involvement of students in programme development and review through a range of feedback practices.

In terms of international comparability, the Diploma in Architectural Interior Design 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

Nanning College for Vocational Technology has committed to further development and engagement encompassing:

- Undertaking a review of the Talent Training Programme document to centre programme design around the intended outcomes and ensure a clear, central and overarching specification for the programme.
- Ensuring clarity on which modules of the programme are compulsory, and ensure consistency between information detailed in the TTP and provided in other relevant documentation.
- Reviewing the learning outcomes at programme-level.
- Developing an overarching assessment framework, to strengthen the overall validity and rigour of the assessment. This would enable closer alignment with international standards and expectations at RQF Level 5.
- Reviewing questions and tasks to ensure that there is sufficient scope to assess students' critical analysis and evaluation skills through extended responses.
- Reviewing accompanying mark schemes to ensure they are suitably detailed to enable markers to consistently and reliably assess and differentiate levels of performance within and across cohorts.
- 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.