

## Evaluation and Benchmarking of the Diploma in Nursing from Taishan Vocational College of Nursing

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### Context and scope

Taishan Vocational College of Nursing commissioned Ecctis for an independent evaluation and benchmarking of its Diploma in Nursing which was completed in October 2024.

The Diploma in Nursing is one of 15 programmes currently offered by the College across the subjects of nursing, midwifery, health management, and rehabilitation treatment techniques. It covers content such as surgery, management, genetics, mental health, and internal medicine.

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 Nursing seeks to develop students' knowledge in a variety of specialist modules such as Pathology, Obstetrics and Gynecology Nursing, Traditional Chinese Medicine Nursing, Surgical Nursing and Pediatric Nursing. 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 2,900 to 3,000 hours' guided learning time. Reflecting its vocational focus, the Diploma combines classroom based study with practical-based simulated learning and a Post Internship, which sees students complete ten four-week placements totalling around 720 hours of practical study.

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

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

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 Nursing, namely that it demonstrated:

- The College's facilities are well-maintained, technologically advanced, and numerous.
- Clinically current programme content, such as anatomy, pharmacology, and nursing professionalism, allows for up-to-date learning for students.
- Good balance of teacher-guided and student-centred approaches to learning nursing content.
- Clear guidelines for teachers on developing assessment using a "comprehensive assessment" framework.
- Clearly stated policies for admissions, rigorous review of qualifications of admitted students to ensure appropriate students are enrolled on the programme, and clearly defined responsibilities for admissions tasks.
- A well developed, clearly stated framework and guidance for monitoring the quality of teaching provision over the whole year.
- Clearly articulated College guidelines for programme development and approval with clear responsibilities for each stage of the process, including where the College works with a third party to provide internship placements.

**In terms of international comparability, the Diploma in Nursing 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

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

- Revision of learning outcomes across all programme modules, to ensure they are specific, measurable and feasible, and form a firmer basis for assessment design and marking.
- Review of the overall assessment framework, including module assessments and their weighting to better understand how individual course elements are assessed.
- Review of assessment strategies across modules to ensure they link appropriately to module learning outcomes and that assessment tasks better test higher cognitive skills expected at RQF Level 4 and 5.
- Maintaining and ensuring adoption by all staff of the unified quality assurance handbook.

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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.