

Evaluation and Benchmarking of the Diploma in Ceramic Design and Technology from Tangshan Polytechnic College

Context and scope

Tangshan Polytechnic College commissioned Ecctis for an independent evaluation and benchmarking of its Diploma in Ceramic Design and Technology, which was completed in August 2022.

The Diploma in Ceramic Design and Technology is one of many programmes offered by the College. The 8 departments within the College consist of automation engineering, machinery engineering, management engineering, automobile engineering, architectural and chemical engineering, art design, information engineering and preschool education.

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 Ceramic Design and Technology seeks to develop students' knowledge in traditional Chinese painting decoration techniques, Chinese ceramics, 3D design and 3D printing and ceramic technology. 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 2842 hours' guided learning time. Reflecting its vocational focus, the Diploma combines classroom-based study with practical-based simulated learning and the internship. This internship provides a particularly useful context for students to learn within due to physical integration of college and factory facilities.

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

Upon completion, many students enter the workforce²; 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 awards.

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

- High-level campus facilities and an extended classroom into the commercial factory setting.
- The use of studio-based assessment, allowing for a rounded understanding of students' progress and development.
- Students learning traditional decoration and painting techniques.
- A high standard of teaching and learning; supporting students in the development of a body of knowledge and skills to graduate into professional practice.
- Well-defined teaching and learning processes.
- A comprehensive student handbook where information is given about the Diploma.

In terms of international comparability, the Diploma in Ceramic Design and 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**

² The employment rate of graduates is typically high.

The information available to prospective students, current students and other interested stakeholders is accurate, transparent and clear for the intended audience.

Engagement

Tangshan Polytechnic College has committed to further development and engagement encompassing:

- Re-writing learning outcomes and programme and module level to make them more specific and measurable, and to establish the critical thinking skills students are expected to demonstrate.
- Reviewing both the overall assessment framework and the existing assessments in order to map learning outcomes to assessments and allow students to demonstrate critical thinking skills.
- Revising the guidelines for programme design, development, and approval to ensure that learning outcomes reflect Level 5 knowledge and skills descriptors.
- Designing programme specifications (Teaching Plans) that detail the assessment strategies used and their link to module learning outcomes.
- Developing a unified internal quality assurance handbook which consolidates all existing written policies and processes, as well as documenting and unwritten policies or processes.

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.