China

Overview of Higher Education System
The higher education in China consists of three types; regular higher education, adult higher education, and higher vocational education. The term higher education institution (HEI) refers to universities and specialised full-time colleges. Regular HEI include comprehensive universities, specialised universities and colleges, junior colleges or advanced vocational schools. The State retains the authority to approve the establishment of HEIs.

In 2013, 879 regular HEIs, 1266 vocational HEIs, 287 independent colleges and 52 university branch campuses or teaching centres were qualified to recruit students. Admission to HEIs is predominantly based on results from the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE), administered annually and taken by graduates of senior secondary education who wish to pursue undergraduate studies.

After successful completion of full-time studies at HEI’s, graduates are usually awarded a certificate of graduation and a certificate of academic degree. China Higher Education Student Information and Career Centre (CHESICC) verifies certificates of graduation. China Academic Degrees and Graduate Education Development Centre (CDGDC) verifies certificates of academic degrees.

National Qualifications Framework
China has not established a National Qualification Framework (NQF). When the Asia-Pacific Regional Convention officially comes into force, the government will consider initiating a clear agenda for the development of a NQF.

Quality Assurance
The Higher Education Evaluation Centre of the Ministry of Education is responsible for the quality evaluation of Bachelor degrees and sub-degree level higher education. The Academic Degree Committee of the State Council (ADCSC) and the CDGDC take charge of quality evaluation of postgraduate level education. Universities are also encouraged to set up their own internal quality assurance mechanisms.

Assessment and Recognition of Overseas Qualifications
The Chinese Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE) promotes international education cooperation and exchange. CSCSE offers a broad range of services for Chinese students studying abroad and international students interested in studying in China. Within the CSCSE, the Overseas Academic Credential Evaluation Office is the main office responsible for evaluating foreign academic higher education qualifications for official recognition in mainland China. The evaluation process includes: examining the legal status of the awarding institution; validating the authenticity of the documents; and assessing the equivalency of stated credentials. At the end of the evaluation process, the Office provides the applicant with a written assessment report in Chinese.

Quick Facts and Links
Ministry of Education
Holds overall responsibility for higher education.

Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council (ADCSC)
Formulates and amends academic degrees regulations. Leads and administers the work of conferring academic degrees throughout the country.

China Higher Education Student Information and Career Centre (CHESICC)
Provides verification reports on student records and qualification certificates in English and Chinese.

China Academic Degrees and Graduate Education Development Centre (CDGDC)
Assesses and verifies education qualifications gained at senior secondary level and tertiary level. Mainly responsible for assessing the authenticity of domestic academic degrees and graduate education.

Chinese Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE)
Specialises in offering a broad range of services for Chinese students studying abroad or returning from abroad, and for international students wanting to study in China.
Issues and Challenges Concerning Foreign Qualifications Recognition

The rapid expansion of cross-border education provision and the great diversity in higher education systems, degree awarding policies and modes of delivery are all factors that make the recognition, verification and validation of foreign degrees challenging. In particular, lack of information on programme and institution legitimacy and quality assurance mechanisms in some countries make identification of fraudulent documents a big challenge. In addition, satisfying multiple demands from large numbers of applicants is also a challenge.

Progress toward ratification of the Asia-Pacific Regional Convention

The ratification process goes very well in China. The Chinese Ministry of Education is working to promote student mobility by focusing on encouraging and facilitating international cooperation in higher education by promoting exchange programs, the mutual recognition of academic credit, and joint degree and double degree programmes.

Commitment to Information Sharing Mechanisms

China is a member of and has a comprehensive profile on the UNESCO Portal to Recognised Higher Education Institutions.

Once the Asia-Pacific Regional Convention comes into force, the Chinese government will take measures to support the establishment and functions of an official National Information Centre.

Criteria and Procedures for Assessment

The CSCSE offers assessment services on the request of the qualification holder. Periods of study are not assessed, only full qualifications (degrees and diplomas).

The following aspects are taken into account during the assessment and evaluation procedure:

Institutional status
Only qualification obtained from institutions officially recognised and accredited in the country of origin are assessed.

Availability of Programme
Whether or not the study programme undertaken is still offered by the higher education institution should be clarified.

Qualifications Level
The qualification is assessed to determine its equivalency to relevant Chinese qualifications.

Other key considerations
Specific admission requirements specified by the institution, programme requirements and learning outcomes.

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