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EDUCATION

教育

IN THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF CHINA

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FOREWORD

With the growing internationalisation of the higher education sector in Finland, the number of foreign students in Finnish higher education is increasing. As a result, student admissions offices at higher education institutions are faced with an increasingly demanding task in determining the eligibility a foreign qualification gives for higher education. The information on foreign education systems is spread across various sources and the reliability of the sources may be difficult to evaluate. Furthermore, changes in the educational systems are continuous.

Higher education in the People's Republic of China aims to provide an overview of the education system of China with a focus on information that is relevant to student admission. As the provision of education in a country the size of China is manifold, an exhaustive description of the education system was not possible.

The groundwork for this publication was laid by the *Finnish Polytechnic Network for East and Southeast Asia* which is also this publication's co-funder. The text has been compiled and edited by Janne Ketola (MA, Chinese studies) to whom we owe special thanks. The publication has been finalised by the *Recognition and Comparability of Qualifications Unit* at the *Finnish National Board of Education*.

Please send your comments concerning *Higher education in the People's Republic of China* to recognition@oph.fi or the *Finnish National Board of Education's Recognition and Comparability of Qualifications Unit*.

1 Historical overview

1.1 Before 1949

The roots of a formal system of education in China can be traced back at least as far as the 16th century B.C. later Shang Dynasty (1523 - 1027 B.C.). Throughout this period education was the privilege of the elite few, and for the most part existed for no other purpose than to produce government officials. Early on, the curriculum centered on the so-called "Six Arts": Rites, Music, Archery, Chariot-Riding, History, and Mathematics. However, based on the teachings of Confucius (551 - 479 B.C.) during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods (770 - 221 B.C.), the curriculum gradually gave way to one based on the Four Books and the Five Classics. These works outlined the principles of society and government. Confucian philosophy exerted a fundamental influence on virtually all aspects of life, and certainly on education, at least until the ascent to power by the Communist Party in 1949.

In 1905 the examination system was dismantled, and a series of reform measures were issued by the last of the Dynasties (Qing). These called for the old academies to be reorganised into a modern system of primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education based on Western models.

Shortly after, in 1911, the Qing Dynasty was overthrown during the Bourgeois Revolution, and a republican government was established. By this time, there were already European, American and Japanese educational models on Chinese soil. Because of Japan's successful adaptation, their system was tried first and implemented by a large number of Japanese-trained Chinese scholars. During the warlord period of the early 1920s, this gradually gave way to a system more closely patterned on American models. At the same time, the Chinese Communist Party was born (in 1921), with its own ideas about the form for education in China.

All sides of the debate agreed that a system was needed to provide for the technological needs of the country without sacrificing its Chinese identity, and which at the same time could be expanded so as to reach the masses in a predominantly rural society. During this period, a number of experiments were attempted, including the short-lived Hunan Self-Study University established by Mao Zedong. One of the prime objectives of this experimental university was to bring higher education to those who otherwise could not afford it. With the Japanese invasion in the late 1930s, this and other experiments and debates were suspended until after 1949.

1.2 1949 - 1976

Shortly after the founding of the People's Republic of China, a new educational system was imported: the Soviet model. This model was applied with even less concern for the special features of Chinese identity and culture than the model following the Sino-Japanese War. As before, motivation was driven by technological needs, and the Soviet Union was now held as the new model of success.

Most of the government's efforts during this period were devoted to the development and restructuring of higher education. As a result of this restructuring, the number of comprehensive universities diminished in number, while the amount of specialised colleges showed a significant increase. As part of the restructuring efforts, the Ministry of Higher Education was given a stronger role in overseeing the administration of the comprehensive and vocational universities, as well as the teacher-training institutions.

By 1961, the failed policies of the Great Leap Forward, an epidemic of natural disasters, and the breaking of relations with the Soviet Union thwarted further progress along these lines. Even before this, the Anti-Rightist Campaign in 1957 had alienated the

intellectuals, many of whom had been instrumental in bringing about the sought-after educational reforms.

With the Soviet model no longer the paradigm, the government resumed earlier attempts at a balance between Confucian and Western-style education. These included vocational and work-study schooling, regular university, college and college preparatory schooling. This system developed fairly smoothly, until the breakout of the Cultural Revolution in 1966.

The system of education was seen by many as one that would continue to produce a small elite group, with the masses having to settle for less quality of education. Increasingly, it was felt that the administrators in the “regular” schools were to blame, because they were perpetuating a system in a way that could only be viewed as self-serving. In May 1966, the Cultural Revolution was under way.

Political struggles against administrators quickly spread to schools across the country. During the next three years, campuses were controlled in turn by the propaganda teams of the Red Guards, soldiers from the People’s Liberation Army, and finally workers and peasants. The curriculum was reconstituted so as to conform to practical needs, resulting in the elimination of courses in subjects such as history, geography and literature. Even such core science subjects as physics and chemistry gave way to courses in industrial skills. These reform measures can be traced directly to the Communist Party Central Committee and its various sub-committees, rather than to the Ministry of Education which ceased to function from 1967 through 1974.

In June 1966, the system of university entrance examinations was halted. Few colleges and universities admitted new students until the early 1970s, and the selection of students was now based on political virtue. Those from families of workers, peasants or soldiers were deemed the most “virtuous,” and were among the first admitted.

All in all, the period of Cultural Revolution was a very disruptive one for Chinese society in general and its education system in particular. The educational infrastructure was decimated as a result of the revolutionary struggles, and students suffered because of a vastly watered-down or non-existent curriculum. Perhaps the only gain, again at the expense of quality, was the delivery of elementary education to an unprecedented percentage of school-aged children, largely because agricultural collectivisation allowed for the creation of large numbers of “commune schools” overseen directly by the collective rather than by higher-level agencies.

1.3 1976 to the present

With the fall of the “Gang of Four” and the ascension to power of the twice rehabilitated Deng Xiaoping, the educational policies reverted to those that had been initiated during the early 1960s. The guiding principle was to bring about educational reforms that would realise the “Four Modernisations,” significant advances in the areas of agriculture, industry, national defense, and science and technology, but would keep with the “Four Cardinal Principles”: the socialist road, the people’s democratic dictatorship, the Chinese Communist Party leadership, and Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong thought.

The process of regularisation in schools was resumed, whereby academic standards were reintroduced at all levels, placing an emphasis on the quality of education. In most cases, a 6-3-3 system (six years primary, three years junior secondary, and three years senior secondary school) was re-established. The designation of “key” schools was used once again to single out schools whose mission was to administer to the special needs of the educational elite. At the same time, a proposal was made to expand the system of vocational and work-study schools in order to provide a meaningful educational track for those not meeting the standards for college, or college preparatory studies. This restarted old debates on populist versus elitist education.

One of the first changes in higher education after the end of the Cultural Revolution was the restoration of the national unified university and college entrance examinations in 1977. Further reforms borrowed heavily from two important documents of the early 1960s: the “Decision on Unifying Management in the Higher Education System,” and the “Sixty Articles of Higher Education.” Very briefly described, the former document was a regularisation decree inasmuch as it called for the setting of academic standards, and empowered the Ministry of Education as the final authority and facilitator. The second document was a resolution that the institutions of higher education were to train the experts needed for socialist construction, and that the teachers would be relatively unencumbered by political constraints as they went about their business of dispensing their expertise. The definitive reformulation of these earlier decrees came in 1985 with the “Decision of the Reform of the Education System.” This has been the guiding document of reform, not only for higher education, but also for all levels of education during the post-Mao years.

The Chinese higher education system was still structured after the Soviet models prevalent during the 1950s. The arts and sciences were still taught at the comprehensive universities (*zonghe daxue*), whereas separate institutions were responsible for other fields. The major disciplines offered were still very narrow, since the colleges and universities were primarily responsible for finding job assignments for their graduates.

Since then, the curriculum has broadened somewhat to compare more closely to that in American colleges and universities. At the same time, the job assignment role of the universities is being phased out.

2 Educational system in China from 1977

Compulsory education in China lasts for nine years. Children enter primary school at the age of six. Before primary school the children may have attended preschool for a few years. Compulsory education is divided into six years of primary school and three years of lower middle school.

Upon completion of the nine-year compulsory education, students undertake entrance examinations towards senior secondary education which is provided by three different types of schools. The general senior secondary school (senior middle school) prepares students for the national university entrance examination and subsequently for admission to higher education. Specialised (sometimes translated as “technical”) and vocational (sometimes translated as “professional”) schools provide subject/occupation specific education and training. Graduates from these two types of schools enter the labour market. Although it is possible for graduates from a specialised secondary school to take the national university entrance examination and enter a vocational university, this is extremely rare in practice.

Higher education is provided by institutions of various types including universities (general and technical), specialised institutions (medicine, agriculture, foreign languages etc.), vocational universities (e.g. teacher training) and specialised colleges. Entry to higher education in China is highly competitive.

The Bachelor’s degree is granted by universities and specialised institutions. However, the right to grant the Bachelor’s degree has also been given to some vocational universities. Vocational universities and specialised colleges provide non-university postsecondary studies and their graduates are awarded diplomas.

Higher education is also provided by adult higher education institutions of various types. The length of studies may vary from one month to three years. Some institutions have the right to award the Bachelor’s degrees upon the completion of four-year studies.

Education System and Qualification Structure

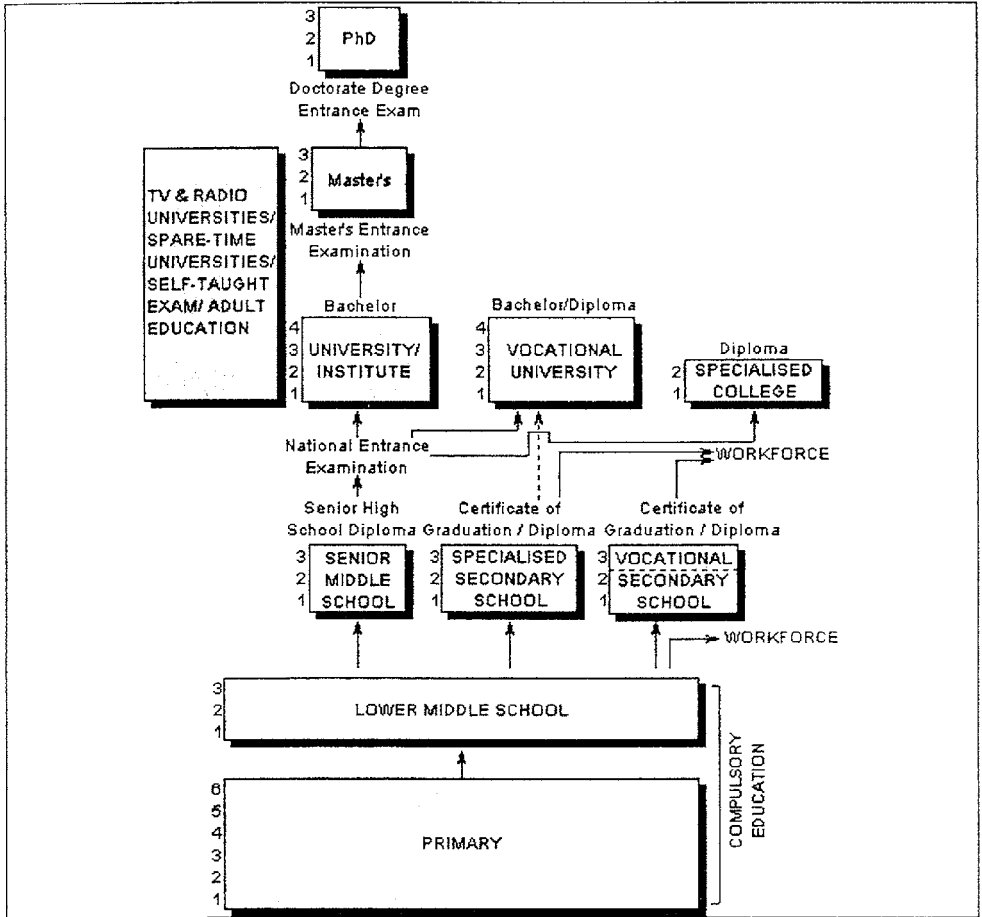


Chart 1: Education system in China (UK NARIC, ECCTIS Ltd, 2005)

3 Higher education in China

3.1 Administration and funding of higher education

The Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China is the supreme education administration body in China. It is responsible for carrying out related laws, regulations, guidelines and policies of the central government; the planning development of the education sector; integrating and coordinating educational initiatives and programmes nationwide; manoeuvring and guiding education reform countrywide.

The Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council and the Ministry of Education (MoE) exercise a unified leadership over the country's higher education and are responsible for macro guidance and administration. The full text on educational laws can be found from the Ministry of Education's English website,

www.moe.edu.cn/english/laws_e.htm.

Starting from the 1990s, substantial structural reform has been implemented. The central Ministry of Education, known from 1985 until 1998 as the State Education Commission (SEdC), is still responsible for the overall policy, and the development and reform of higher education. Education authorities in the major cities (Beijing, Chongqing, Shanghai and Tianjin) and the provinces, however, have been given the responsibility for local higher education policy, programmes, quality assurance and implementation of the central reform programme.

The Disciplines Appraising Group under the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council is formed according to disciplines and consists of those specialists and scholars with high academic achievements. Its duties include the examination and ratification of newly-established Master's and Doctor's degree conferring units and disciplines, evaluation and issuing of the catalogue of degree-conferring disciplines and specialties, promotion of suggestions on higher education, and the examination of the quality of degree conferment and higher education.

The Academic Degrees Committee, education commissions of autonomous regions, provinces' degree committees and municipal higher education bureaus under the provinces and autonomous regions, are responsible for administering graduate education and degree conferment in higher education institutions under their jurisdiction.

The central ministries have relinquished control of most of the higher education institutions to provincial and municipal education authorities. A small number of universities are still under the direct control of the Ministry of Education, CSTIND

(The Commission of Science, Technology, and Industry for National Defence), the Chinese Academy of Science and other central ministries.

The China Academic Degrees and Graduate Education Development Center (CDGDC) is an administrative department directly under the Ministry of Education (MoE). The center was established in 2003. It engages in scientific research into academic degrees and provides counselling for MoE in the formulation of higher education policy. The CDGDC undertakes the accreditation, authentication and consultation work concerning degree certificates and other related materials.

At the higher education institutions, the president or one of the vice-presidents is in charge of education. If a department admits students at Master’s-level, the administration work rests with the dean or vice-dean. The teaching office and advisors in the departments are responsible for training and the implementation of training plans.

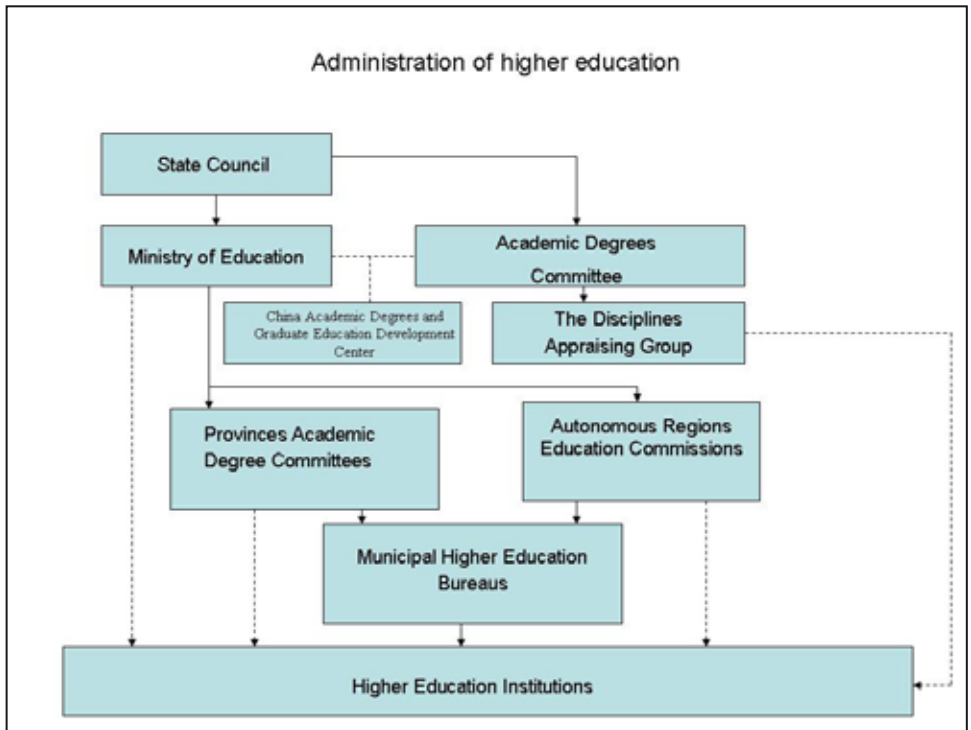


Chart 2: Administration of higher education in China

Most funding for the education budget is received from government funding. However, multiple funding channels have also been opened up by the government. At present, funding needed by the schools directly controlled by the central government

comes from a central financial pool, and schools controlled by local governments are supported by local financing.

China has set up an education system with the government as the major investor and social partners as co-investors. Currently the local government plays a key role in financing compulsory education, while the central and provincial governments are dominant in higher education. In occupational and adult education, social partners including industrial organisations, businesses and public institutions play an increasingly important role. Tuition fees were introduced in the early 1990s and can now be as high as 12 000 yen (1 217 euro) per year.

3.2 Higher education institutions

In 2004 there were 2 236 higher education institutions (HEIs) in China. Out of these 1 731 were regular HEIs and the other 505 were higher education institutions for adults. The number of regular higher education institutions has increased from 598 in 1978 to 1 731 in 2004.

A significant reform has been the amalgamation of higher education institutions to create strong, comprehensive universities. Some amalgamations have involved a number of small institutions in areas with similar or related fields merging to form a new institution. Others have involved smaller institutions merging into an existing larger institution.

Non-governmental private “minban” education constitutes the fastest growing sector of education in China. Since the 1980s when private higher education was re-established, it has grown dramatically. Businesses or enterprises, non-profit agencies, community groups or individuals run non-government institutions. Some programmes are run through partnerships with foreign universities and colleges. “Minban” institutions charge tuition fees.

There can be two types of programmes offered by the non-government higher education institutions: those leading to a degree recognised by the Ministry of Education, and those not leading to any formally recognised degree. The latter class includes programmes preparing students to sit examinations for a recognised degree under the government self-study examinations system, and programmes offering training in knowledge and skills of importance to the Chinese economy.

Only a very small number of non-governmental institutions are authorised to offer degrees recognised by the Ministry of Education (MoE). These institutions are listed on the MoE website alongside regular higher education institutions recognised by MoE,

www.moe.edu.cn/english/list.htm (in English) or

www.moe.edu.cn/edoas/website18/info965.htm (in Chinese).

As of 2003, 131 non-governmental HEIs have awarded degrees recognised by the Ministry of Education (MoE), four institutions have offered Bachelor's degree programmes, and 127 institutions have offered two- or three-year postsecondary level programmes leading to a graduation certificate or graduation diploma. Students completing a programme not leading to a degree recognised by MoE are often issued a Certificate of Completion by the institution.

The academic year of full-time universities is divided into two semesters (a few have three). The first semester begins in September and the second in February. Each semester consists of about 20 weeks and each week of six school days. In addition to mandatory winter and summer vacations, every May (International Labor Day, May 1st) and October (National Day) students have seven-day holidays. Also for the celebration of the Chinese New Year the students have a week-long holiday either in January or February. On other anniversaries and traditional festivals the universities operate normally.

3.2.1 Formal higher education

Formal higher education has the following characteristics:

1. Admission is based on scores obtained in the unified national university/college entrance examination.
2. Curriculum guidelines are prepared nationally, and the number of student places available in specific programmes at specific institutions is based on economic needs as determined through central government planning.
3. Upon successful completion of the programme, in some cases the graduate is assigned a post of employment by the government. In the past most graduating students were assigned to employment by the government, but this is changing.

3.2.1.1 Universities and specialised institutions

Universities and specialised institutions offer degree programmes in 11 different fields. Each field is divided into sub-fields and then further into specialities.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Agriculture | 7. Medicine and Pharmacy |
| 2. Arts | 8. Natural Science |
| 3. Engineering | 9. Physical Culture |
| 4. Finance and Economics | 10. Political Science and Law |
| 5. Forestry | 11. Teacher Training |
| 6. Humanities | |

3.2.1.2 Specialised schools/colleges

The Chinese characters for “specialised schools” are consistently used in the names of institutions in this category. The characters are usually translated into English in a number of ways: “junior college”, “college”, “institute” and “school”. These institutions offer higher education programmes which represent less than four years of full-time study, in the following fields: agriculture, animal husbandry, various areas of commerce (i.e. accounting and customs), engineering and technology, medical sciences, navigation, sericulture, teacher training, and tourism.

Admission to specialised colleges is generally based on graduation from senior middle school and scores on the unified national university entrance examinations. Diplomas may be earned upon completion of two- or three-year full time programmes, or three- to four- year part-time programmes. The most common length of an academic programme offered by specialised schools is three years of full-time study.

After two years of study, successful students in specialised colleges can apply to the third year of a Bachelor’s programme in a degree-granting higher education institution.

3.2.1.3 Vocational universities

Vocational universities are part of the formal system of higher education. The purpose of vocational universities is to address the manpower requirements of the community in which they are located. Some of the institutions have grown out of employees’ colleges and some out of the branch colleges of large universities, while some are entirely new establishments. The graduates are usually awarded diplomas, but very few vocational universities also have the right to offer the Bachelor’s degree programme (this should always be verified from the university case by case). The issue of student transfers from vocational non-degree programmes to Bachelor’s degree programmes is still an unsolved issue.

Even though most vocational universities do not offer degree programmes, they generally use the Chinese characters for “college” or “university” in their official name. The characters for “vocational” may or may not appear in the institution’s name.

3.2.2 Adult (non-formal) higher education

The Adult Education Guidance and Coordination Commission, formed by the State Education commission in 1986, administers adult higher education. In most cases the admission is based on the unified national entrance examination for adult higher education, which differs from the unified national college/university entrance

examination. Enrolment quotas are not part of the central government plan and the graduates are not assigned employment by the government. In China, adult higher education is considered to be at tertiary level, but nevertheless to be at lower level than the formal programmes of higher education.

3.2.2.1 Administrative colleges

Administrative colleges are also known as “in-service management cadre colleges”. They offer adult middle school and higher education programmes for “cadres”, a term which designates all the levels of the staff members employed in government offices. Some training courses are also offered in separate departments or sections at colleges and universities.

3.2.2.2 Correspondence departments and attached evening colleges

Many colleges and universities offer part-time adult higher education programmes through correspondence and attached evening colleges. Diploma programmes, in-service courses, refresher courses, and other courses are offered on a tuition basis in order to supplement an institution’s income. Bachelor’s degree programmes may also be offered on a part-time basis by correspondence departments and evening colleges. Bachelor’s degrees earned in this way are considered to be equivalent to Bachelor’s degrees earned in formal higher education programmes and therefore approved by the Ministry of Education.

3.2.2.3 Employees’ colleges

This type of institution is also referred to as a staff, or workers’, college or university and may or may not designate in its name whether it enrolls students on a regular or part-time basis, or both. Admission to an employees’ college requires completion of a unified national entrance examination for adult higher education. Since 1982, in addition to coursework, the awarding of a diploma has required completion of a graduation project or thesis, as well as a graduation examination regulated by the national government and administered by the local educational authorities. This examination is required if the college is not registered and approved by the Ministry of Education.

The employees’ colleges award two types of credentials: specialty certificates which testify a certain level of specialised knowledge and single-subject certificates. There is some evidence that a few employees’ colleges may offer Bachelor’s degree programmes recognised by the Ministry of Education.

3.2.2.4 Independent self-study examinations

Following a trial period during 1981 and 1982, this system has been available nationally since 1983. It is the only form of higher education in China with an entirely open admissions policy. Because of this policy of unrestricted admission, the Ministry of Education carefully regulates the examinations in order to ensure quality. Students who pass all self-study examinations in a Bachelor's degree programme are granted the Bachelor's degree, the first of which was awarded in 1986. In the self-study examination system, a regular university, under the supervision of the municipal or provincial Higher Education Self-Study Examinations Guidance Committee, develops the study materials, conducts the examinations, as well as awards the Bachelor's degree.

Certificates issued after passing independent self-study examinations will normally have an official round red seal, with a centre star and terminology/text such as the "Self-Study Examinations Guidance Committee of Higher Education of Zhejiang Province." The seal of the university at which the examinations have been conducted may also be stamped on the certificate.

3.2.2.5 Radio and television universities

Radio and television universities are open and distance education institutions which offer multi-media courses through radio, television, print, audio-visual materials and computer networks on a nationwide basis. Radio and television universities are run at four levels, corresponding to the organisation of China's system of national and regional governments.

The Central Radio and Television University (CRTVU) in Beijing, at the highest level, is under the direct leadership of the Ministry of Education. The provincial radio and television universities, at the second level, are under the auspices of provincial governments. Their branch schools, at the third level, come under the prefectures and civic governments. Work stations, at the fourth level, are run either by district or county education bureaus or by a particular industry.

The CRTVU controls the unified admission standards, teaching plans, level of education and examination criteria. It is also the national centre of teaching administration, programme production, course delivery and distance-education research.

Graduation from senior middle school is not mandatory for admission, but passing an entrance examination is required. Diplomas can be earned upon the completion of a 3-year programme and a nationwide standardised exit examination. They are viewed by the government as equivalent to a three-year full-time diploma programme offered by specialised schools/colleges.

3.2.2.6 Spare-time universities

Spare-time universities offer sub-degree level programmes undertaken in the students' "spare-time". The universities are under the supervision of the local authorities and offer programmes of an applied nature that are relevant to the needs of the local community.

3.3 Higher education degrees, certificates and diplomas

Higher education institutions offer a wide variety of traditional and non-traditional programmes that lead to degrees or diplomas. However, only programmes approved by the Academic Degrees Committee/Ministry of Education can be considered as recognised.

There has not been much change to the structure of higher education since the resumption of the education programmes in the late 1970s. There have, however, been some changes in entry requirements, advanced standing opportunities and the nature of some programmes.

Sub-degree programmes, often referred to as "diploma" programmes, last for three years. Programmes are offered at two levels: postsecondary level *zhuanke* programmes which are usually vocationally oriented and largely applied, or undergraduate level *benke* programmes which are more academically orientated. Both programmes may require a graduation project. A graduation certificate or graduation diploma is awarded upon the successful completion of these programmes. The Bachelor's degree *xueshi* programmes usually involve the exact same coursework as the *benke* programmes, but have the approval of the Academic Degrees Committee.

3.3.1 Higher education degrees

Degrees are regulated by the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council together with the Ministry of Education. In principle, all degrees and examinations throughout the country are the same. However, the concept "credit" has not been defined nationally. This is why the required number of credits for graduation varies among colleges and universities. There is also a lot of variation in the names and contents of courses provided by different higher education institutions.

3.3.1.1 Bachelor's degree

The Bachelor's degree is generally awarded after four years of full-time study. Programmes in medicine, dentistry, architecture and engineering in some universities, however, may take five to six years to complete. Students who successfully complete

all requirements are awarded two certificates: the degree certificate and graduation certificate. Those students who do not pass all the requirements for a degree, by getting marks that are too low, failing courses or the National English Examination, for example, only receive the graduation certificate. Those students who enrol in non-degree programmes also only receive the graduation certificate. The requirement for the graduation certificate is lower than that for the degree certificate.

Traditionally, the Bachelor's degree is a highly academic programme. Alternative pathways appear to allow students to pursue a more vocational or applied programme of study. For example two- or three-year postsecondary or sub-degree level programmes followed by two to three years in a Bachelor's programme can lead to the Bachelor's degree.

3.3.1.2 Master's degree

Since 1981, applicants to Master's degree programmes have been obliged to hold a Bachelor's degree and be under the age of 35. Most Master's degree programmes involve three years of full-time study after the Bachelor's degree. It is, however, in some cases possible to earn a Master's degree in 2 to 2.5 years.

Master's degree programme components include:

- completion of basic theoretical and specialised courses
- reading and research ability in one foreign language
- study of Marxist theory
- thesis and its oral examination.

A substantial portion of the degree involves research work and writing a thesis in preparation for the oral examination. Students who complete the Master's curriculum without a thesis can only be awarded a diploma. The diploma states the completion of the courses but does not mention completion of the thesis examination. A thesis can be completed later, and the Master's degree can be earned upon the successful completion of the thesis examination. The graduates will be issued two diplomas: the graduation certificate and degree certificate.

3.3.1.3 Doctor's degree

The Doctor's degree is offered at degree-granting universities, institutes and research institutes. Generally, candidates must hold a Master's degree and be 40 years of age or younger to gain admission. Candidates must take an entrance examination. A graduate from a Bachelor's programme with top grades can also be allowed to take the Doctor's entrance examination and gain admission, but this is extremely rare.

Doctoral programmes usually take a minimum of three years to complete for persons with a Master's degree, or four to five years for persons with a Bachelor's degree. The required coursework includes advanced courses in one specialised area and the mastery of two foreign languages. The preparation and defense of a dissertation are also required.

3.3.2 Types of certificates and diplomas

Chinese-language certificates are always available and should be the only official documents accepted. Translations may be verified by an institution's foreign language department, if one exists, but such a verification cannot be a guaranteed one. Only certificates issued by the institution either completely in Chinese, or in a bi-lingual format, should be considered official.

A certificate of attendance can be issued at any point of exit from the educational process. This certificate verifies a student's enrolment in courses only, and not their actual completion.

Students who successfully complete all requirements are awarded two certificates: the degree certificate and the graduation certificate. Those who do not pass all the requirements (e.g. marks are too low, courses failed) or enrol in non-degree programmes only, receive the graduation certificate; no degree certificate is awarded.

From 1982 to 1984, graduating students were awarded a separate degree certificate and graduation certificate. Between 1984 and 1993, however, both certificates were combined into a single booklet called the "Graduation Certificate." In 1993, the degree certificate and graduation certificate were separated once again. Since then students have been awarded with two certificates, both the degree certificate and graduation certificate.

From 1994 to 2000, all certificates were printed by the Ministry of Education (MoE) but awarded by individual institutions. Starting in 2000, universities and colleges began issuing their own certificates, and these must be registered and made available for inspection at MoE.

3.3.3 Notarial certificates

Notarial certificates provide evidence that the documents attached to the notarial certificate are true copies of the original documents. Notarial certificates are prepared by notaries public in China. The copies are bound into a booklet with an attached notarial certificate attesting that the copy is a true copy. Notarial certificates are not educational

qualifications in their own right, although they may provide some information about the document to which they are attached. The notarial certificates should not be considered to be official proof of the award of degree without the attached copies of the original documents. In order to prevent the use of false documents, it is strongly recommended that application materials are authorised by a notarial office not lower than the city level, as these offices are considered reliable.

The notarial certificates may contain the following documents:

1. Diploma or degree certificate to prove the level of education (Appendix II, sample 1)
2. Transcript of records to show the subjects and the grades of each course (Appendix II, sample 2)
3. Personal identity certificate to show personal information (Appendix II, sample 3).

3.4 Admission to higher education

3.4.1 Formal higher education

Students may apply to university an unrestricted amount of times as long as they meet the following requirements:

1. The applicant supports the “four cardinal principles” of China: love motherland, observe discipline, observe laws, and express determination to study hard for the socialist modernisation programme.
2. The applicant is a graduate of senior middle school or its equivalent.

Admission to all formal higher education (Bachelor’s degree programme) requires graduation from senior middle school and a passing grade on the annual national university entrance examination.

Graduates from specialised (technical) upper secondary schools are allowed to take the national university/college entrance examinations in order to enter vocational universities. However, in reality they are not encouraged to do so because this kind of upper secondary education is labour market oriented. The purpose of this education and training is to prepare graduates for jobs for which academic degrees are not required.

The national university entrance examination is drafted by the State Examination Commission and administrated by provincial authorities throughout the country during three days in June. Until 2001 the entrance examination comprised examinations in five

subjects. Since 2001 there have been three compulsory subjects (Chinese, mathematics and one foreign language) and three optional subjects (chosen from physics, chemistry, biology, politics, history and geography).

Admission to master-level studies requires the completion of a Bachelor's degree or equivalent and is determined by the results on the national Master's entrance examination and entrance examinations administered by the admitting institution. Students who have completed the Bachelor's study programme and have received the graduation certificate, but have not received the degree certificate because of low marks or failed courses, have access to Master's degree programmes. Admission, however, is very rare because of hard competition in entrance examinations.

Admission to doctoral programmes requires the completion of a Master's degree or its equivalent and the results of the national Doctor's degree entrance examination as well as additional entrance examinations administered by the admitting institution. It is also possible to access a doctoral programme without a Master's degree, but admission is very rare. In this case, the length of studies for the Doctor's degree is longer than when based on the Master's degree.

3.4.2 Adult (non-formal) higher education

Beginning in 1976, admission to employees' colleges required graduation from senior middle school. In 1986, the Adult Education Guidance and Coordination Commission stated that students wishing to enrol in diploma programmes offered by employees' colleges must meet certain standards. According to these standards students must

1. be under the age of 30
2. have a minimum of two years working experience
3. pass national, provincial, or municipal entrance examinations for adult higher education
4. be senior middle school graduates or the equivalent.

4 Sources

4.1 Publications

The Country Education Profile Update 2003 for China
Published for AEI-NOOSR by the J S McMillian Printing Group 2003
ISBN 1 877032 59 X.

A Guide to Evaluating Educational Credentials from China
by Shelley M. Feagles and was published in 1992.
Second printing 2001. ISBN 1-883971-0-4.

The Educational System of China, Cloud Bai-Yun, UK NARIC & James Frey, Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc. Unpublished material for a workshop at EAIE seminar in Cracow in Sept 2005.

4.2 Links

Listings of Chinese universities:

www.moe.edu.cn/english/list.htm

www.canadian-universities.net/World_Universities/China.html

www.internationaleducationmedia.com/china/universities.htm

www.index-china.com/index-english/index-china-edumap.html

Chinese websites:

Ministry of Education

www.moe.edu.cn

Education law of China

www.moe.edu.cn/english/laws_e.htm

CERNET (China Education and Research Network)

www.cernet.edu.cn/HomePage/english/index.shtml

China Education Association for International Exchange (CEAIE)

www.ceaie.edu.cn

List of the members of the State Academic Degrees Committee

www.chinavitae.com/connect.php?cat=STA&inst_id=320.568000000

Chinese Academy of Sciences

<http://english.cas.cn/eng2003/page/T42.htm>

Beijing Municipal Education Commission

<http://english.bjedu.gov.cn/>

Department of Education of Guangdong Province

www.gdhed.edu.cn

Hebei Education Department

www.hee.cn/en/en.htm

Hubei Provincial Department of Education
www.hbe.gov.cn/e21web/jyt_english/index_en.html

National Education Examinations Authority
www.neea.edu.cn/buttom/english.htm

Ministry of Justice
www.legalinfo.gov.cn/english/englishindex.htm

China Daily
www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/home/index.html

University rankings in China (2003)
<http://rank2003.netbig.com/en/index.htm>

Other websites:

University of Hong Kong: Centre of Research on Education in China (CREC)
www.hku.hk/chinaed/index.html

Articles and links on higher education in China
<http://us.tom.com/english/197.htm>

Asia Pacific Academic Recognition Network
www.aparnet.org

International Association of Universities
www.unesco.org/iau/index.html

European Network of Information Centres
www.enic-naric.net

World Education Services
www.wes.org/ewenr/02march/practical.htm

Educational Credential Evaluators
www.ece.org

NOOSR (National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition)
<http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/QualificationsRecognition/default.htm>

National University Network for East and Southeast Asian Studies and
Finnish Polytechnic Network for East and Southeast Asia
www.asianet.fi

4.3 Contact information

For verifying documents:

China Academic Degrees and Graduate Education Development Center
1 WangZhuang Road
HaiDian District
Beijing 100083 China
www.cdgdc.cn (in Chinese) and
<http://79.cic.tsinghua.edu.cn/english/about.htm> (basic information in English)

China Higher-Education Student Information
Science, Technology and Engineering Building Tower
NO. 9 Zhongguancun South Street
Haidian District
Beijing 100081 China
e-mail: kefu@chsi.com.cn
www.chsi.com.cn/about_en

For recognition of studies & qualifications:

China Education Association for International Exchange
37, Damucang Hutong Xidan
Beijing 100816 China
www.ceaie.edu.cn

Office of the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council
37 Damucang, Xidan
Beijing 100816 China
www.moe.gov.cn

APPENDICES

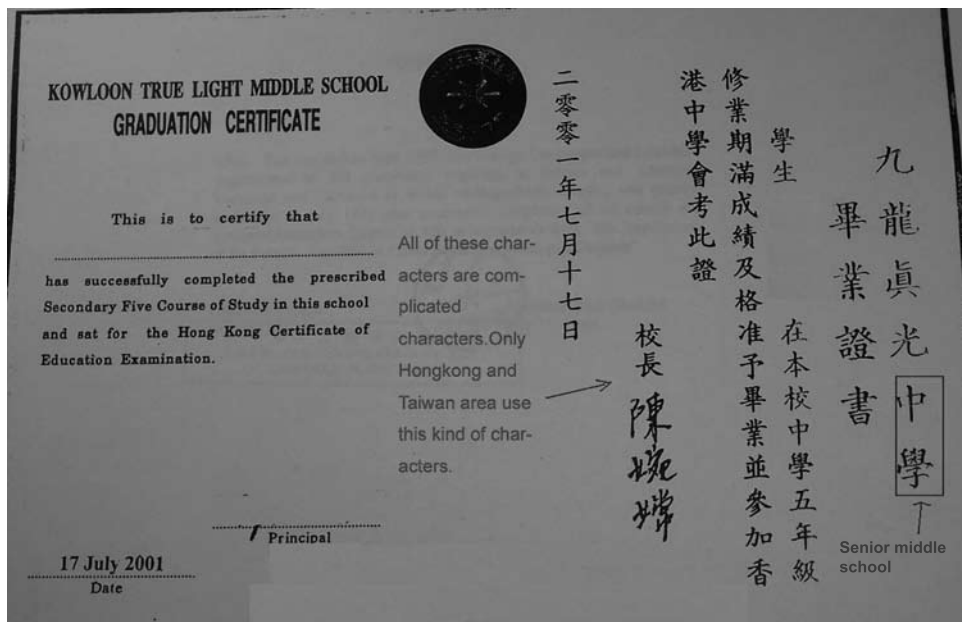
APPENDIX I: CERTIFICATE SAMPLES

1. Senior Middle School Graduation Diploma/Certificate
2. Senior Middle School Graduation Diploma/Certificate from Hong Kong
3. Graduation Certificate from a Vocational Secondary School
4. Graduation Certificate from an Ordinary College (non-degree programme)
5. Graduation Certificate, Bachelor's Degree
6. Certificate from a University of Workers and Staff
7. Graduation Certificate of a Higher Education Self-study Examination (without degree)
8. Graduation Certificate of a Higher Education Self-study Examination

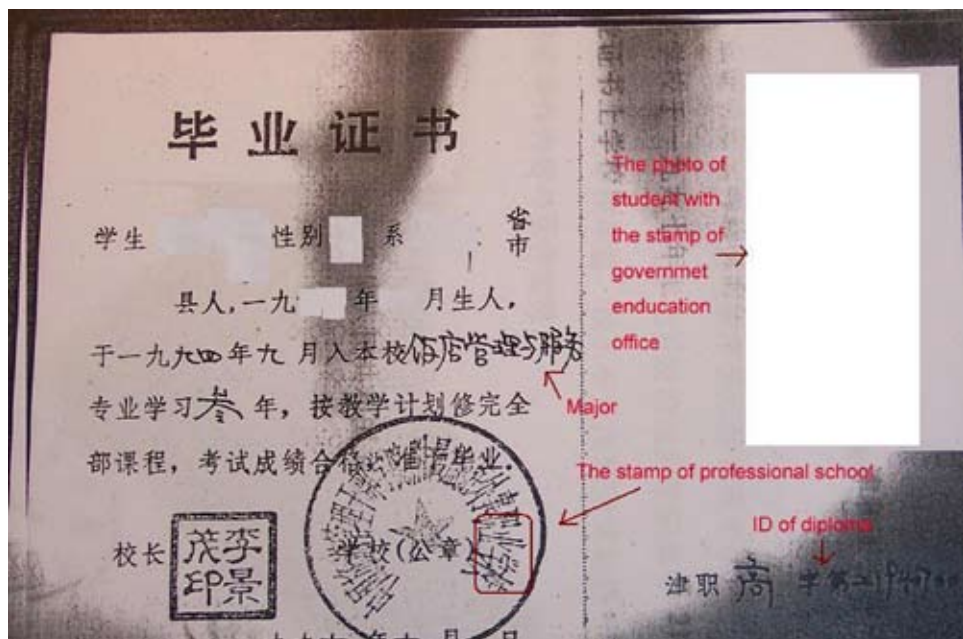
Note: The certificates do not have a nationally uniform format; there are differences between the certificates of different provinces, cities and schools.



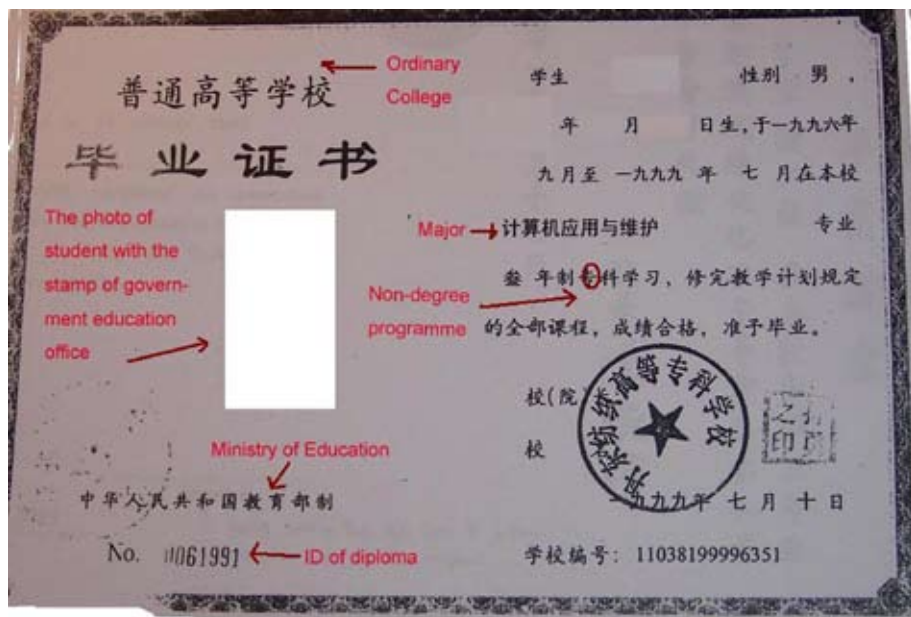
1. Senior Middle School Graduation Diploma/Certificate



2. Senior Middle School Graduation Diploma/Certificate from Hong Kong



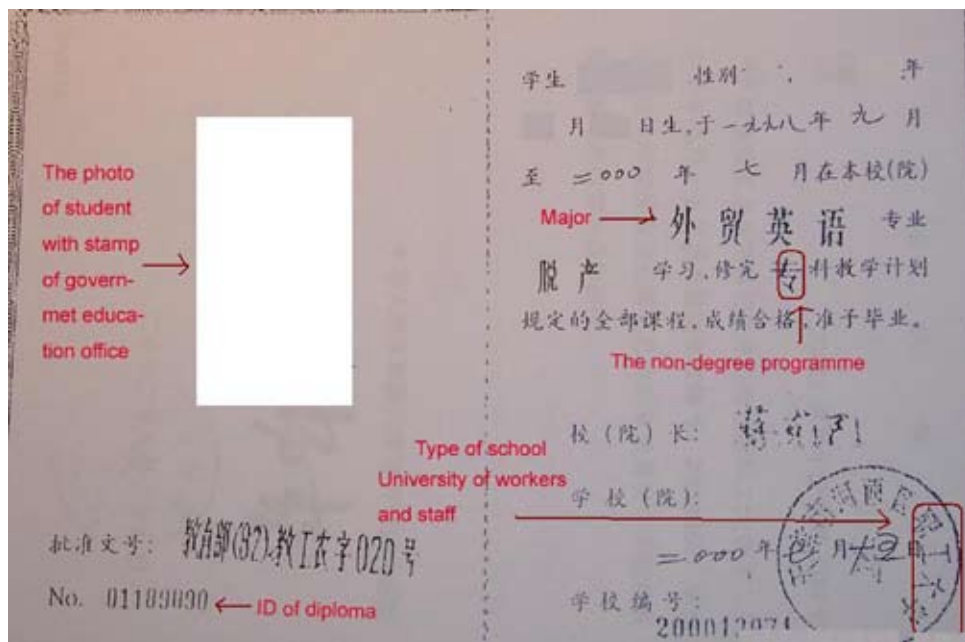
3. Graduation Certificate from a Vocational Secondary School



4. Graduation Certificate from an ordinary college (non-degree programme)



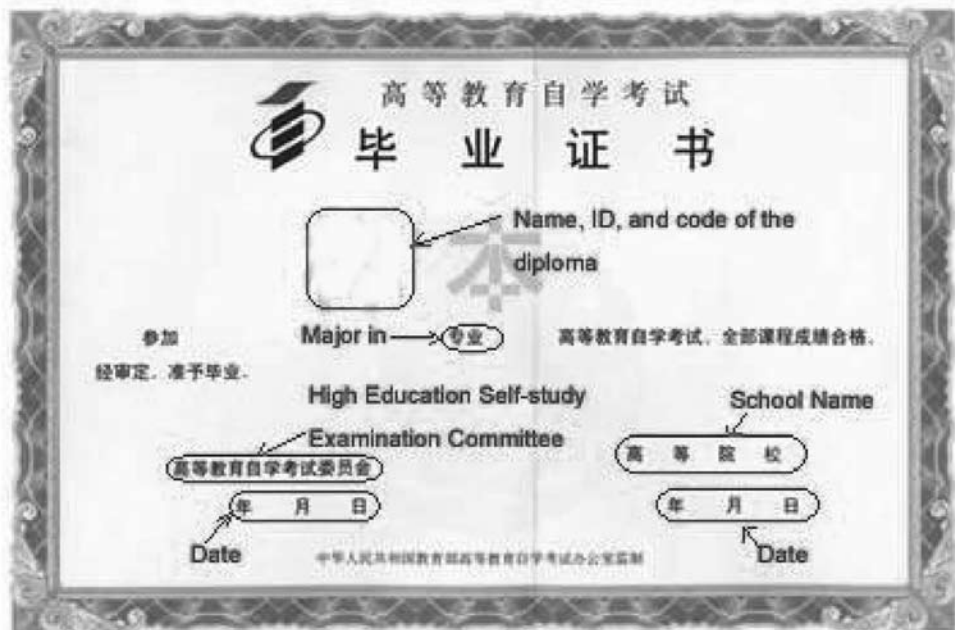
5. Graduation Certificate, Bachelor's Degree



6. Certificate from a University of Workers and Staff



7. Graduation Certificate of a Higher Education Self-study Examination (without degree)



8. Graduation Certificate of a Higher Education Self-study Examination

APPENDIX II: SAMPLES OF NOTARIAL CERTIFICATES

Sample 1: DIPLOMA OR DEGREE CERTIFICATE

Sample 2: TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS

Sample 3: PERSONAL IDENTITY CERTIFICATE

Sample 1: DIPLOMA OR DEGREE CERTIFICATE

Normally four pages:

- copy of the original diploma with personal photo
- translation of the diploma in English or other relevant language
- notarial certificate in Chinese to prove the diploma is genuine and the translation has the same content as the diploma
- translation of the notarial certificate in English or other relevant language.

公 证 书

Name of the Notarial Office



中华人民共和国天津市和平区公证处

Cover of a booklet of notarial certificates. Most notarial certificates look like the one here. The name of the notarial office is written at the bottom of the page.



Copy of original diploma with photo

DIPLOMA

(Translation)

Tianjin Hexi District Worker and Staff University

Diploma No. 01189090

Date of Issue: July 15, 2000

Student , female, born on , has studied in this university by full time in the specialty of Foreign Trade English from September 1998 to July 2000, completed all the courses stipulated in the teaching plan for junior college educational program with satisfactory results and is qualified for graduation.

Note: this page is merely translation of the content of the diploma.

President: Jiang Keji (Seal)

Tianjin Hexi District Worker and Staff University (Seal)

Approval No. Ministry of Education (82) JiaoGongNongZi No.020
School No. 200013071

Translation of diploma in English or other relevant language

公 证 书

Code of the notarial certificate → (2002) 津和平公字第 5581 号

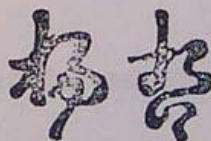
兹证明 持有的天津市河西区职工大学于二 0 0 0 年七月十五日发给她的学校编号: 200013071 毕业证书上大学印鉴及校长蒋克己的印章均属实, 并证明前面的复印件内容与原件相符。

Note: this certificate is to prove the copy of the diploma, the ID of the diploma, the stamp of the school, and the signature of the schoolmaster are all true and belongs to the holder.

Name of the Notarial Office

中华人民共和国天津市和平区公证处

Notary and signature → 公证员



ID of the notarial certificate

XX10864304

二 0 0 二年九月二十九日

Date and stamp of the Notarial Office



Notarial certificate of diploma in Chinese

NOTARIAL CERTIFICATE

(Translation)

(2002)Jin.H.P.G.Zi,No.5581

This is to certify that the seal of the university and the seal of President: Jiang Keji affixed on the *School No.200013071* DIPLOMA issued to _____ on July 15,2000 by Tianjin Hexi District Worker and Staff University are authenticated; and this is also to certify that the contents of the aforementioned duplicated copy are in conformity with those of the original copy.

Note: this page is the translation of the previous notarial certificate with the stamp of the Notarial Office.

Notary: Yang Zhe

Heping District Notary Public Office

Tianjin

The People's Republic of China

September 29,2002

ID of the notarial certificate

↓
XX10864358

Translation of notarial certificate in English or other relevant language

Sample 2: TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS

- copy of the original transcript of records with or without photo
- translation of the transcript of records in English or other relevant language
- notarial certificate in Chinese to prove the diploma is genuine and the translation has the same content as the transcript of records
- translation of the notarial certificate in English or other relevant language

天津市和平区新华职工大学学业成绩单

班级名称：实用英语 99 ←—— Name of the program and class

姓名： _____ 出生日期： _____ 日

课程名称	第一学年		第二学年		第三学年	
	第一学期	第二学期	第三学期	第四学期	第五学期	第六学期
精读	86	85	83	88	85	
口语	90					
泛读		94				
语法测试			92			
翻译				84	82	
应用文写作					85	
计算机基础			优			
现代汉语修辞	78	80				
文秘英语				90		
思想政治教育		优				
听力		93				
市场营销学				85	81	
国际金融			78	76		
国际贸易		83	84			
西方经济学					80	
政治经济学	79	82				

Name and stamp of the school, and the date. → 天津市和平区新华职工大学



Copy of original transcript of records with or without photo

**STUDENTS' ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPT OF XINHUA
UNIVERSITY FOR WORKERS AND STAFF OF
HEPING DISTRICT, TIANJIN**

Name of Class: Practical English 99

Note: this page is merely the translation of the school report card

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

COURSE	1 st Year		2 nd Year		3 rd Year	
	Term1	Term2	Term3	Term4	Term5	Term6
Intensive English	86	85	83	88	85	
Oral Expression	90					
Extensive English		94				
Examination of Grammar			92			
Translation				84	82	
Practical Writing					85	
Basic of Computer			Good			
Modern Chinese Rhetoric	78	80				
English for Secretary				90		
Moral Education		Good				
Listening Comprehension		93				
Sales of Market				85	81	
International Finance			78	76		
International Trade		83	84			
Western Economics					80	
Political Economics	79	82				

THE SPECIAL SEAL FOR STUDENTS' STATUS OF THE DEAN'S OFFICE OF XINHUA UNIVERSITY FOR WORKERS AND STAFF OF HEPING DISTRICT, TIANJIN(seal)

March 2002

Translation of transcript of records in English or other relevant language

公 证 书

code of the notarial certificate

(2002)津和平公字第1121号

兹证明前面的复印件内容与《天津市和平区新华职工大学学业成绩单》原件相符，原件上天津市和平区新华职工大学教务处学籍专用章的印鉴属实。

Note: this page is to proved the previous school report card both in Chinese and English and stamp are true and belongs to the student.

Name of the notarial office

中华人民共和国天津市和平区公证处

Notary and signature

公证员

Stamp of the notarial office



ID of the notarial certificate

VY00171515

Notarial certificate of transcript of records in Chinese

NOTARIAL CERTIFICATE

(Translation)

(2002)Jin.H.P.G.Zi,No.1121

This is to certify that the contents of the above-mentioned duplicated copy are in conformity with those of the original copy of STUDENTS' ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPT OF XINHUA UNIVERSITY FOR WORKERS AND STAFF OF HEPING DISTRICT, TIANJIN. The seal of THE SPECIAL SEAL FOR STUDENTS' STATUS OF THE DEAN'S OFFICE OF XINHUA UNIVERSITY FOR WORKERS AND STAFF OF HEPING DISTRICT, TIANJIN affixed on the original copy is authenticated.

Notary: Yang Zhe

Note: this page is the translation of the previous notarial certificate with the stamp of the Notary Office.

Heping District Notary Public Office

Tianjin

The People's Republic of China

March 5, 2002

ID of the notarial certificate

XX06171533

Translation of notarial certificate in English or other relevant language

Sample 3: PERSONAL IDENTITY CERTIFICATE

Two pages:

- original notarial certificate indicating name, date of birth, place of birth, and the names of parents
- translation of the notarial certificate in English or other relevant language

公 证 书

Code of Notarial Certificate → (2002) 津和平公字第 5580 号

兹证明 [redacted] (女) 于一九七八年九月八日在天津市出生。 [redacted] 的父亲是 [redacted] , [redacted] 的母亲是 [redacted] 。

Name of the Notarial Office

↓
中华人民共和国天津市和平区公证处

Greffier or Notary and signature → 公证员

杨哲

ID of the notarial certificate

↓
XX10864303

二〇〇三年九月二十九日



↑
Date and Stamp of the Notarial Office

Original notarial certificate

NOTARIAL CERTIFICATE

(Translation)

Code of the notarial certificate → (2002)Jin.H.P.G.Zi,No.5580

This is to certify that [redacted] (female) was
born on [redacted] in Tianjin. The father of [redacted]
is [redacted]. The mother of [redacted]
[redacted] is [redacted]

Note: This page of notarial certificate is only the translation of the previous page which has stamp of Notary Office.

Notary: Yang Zhe

Heping District Notary Public Office

Tianjin

The People's Republic of China

September 29,2002

ID of the notarial certificate



XX10864359

Translation of notarial certificate

APPENDIX III: CHINESE – ENGLISH VOCABULARY

Numbers

一	Yi - one
二	Er - two
三	San - three
四	Si - four
五	Wu - five
六	Liu - six
七	Qi - seven
八	Ba - eight
九	Jiu - nine
十	Shi - ten

Dates

年	Nian - year
月	Yue - month
日	Ri - day
生	Sheng - born

Date of birth, e.g.

1972 April 3 born 一九七二年四月三日生

Common educational vocabulary

教育	Jiaoyu - education
本科	Benke - undergraduate course
本科学习	Benke xuexiao - undergraduate school
自学	Zixue - self-study
专科	Zhuanke - specialised studies
研究	Yanjiu - study, research
学制	Xue zhi - length of programme
专业	Zhuanye - name of major
学号	Xue hao - student ID
分校	Fenxiao - branch
学分	Xuefen - credit
毕业	Biye - to graduate

Types of schools

中学	Zhong xue - middle school
大学	Daxue - university
学院	Xueyuan - college
学校	Xuexiao - school
师范	Shifan - “normal”, teachers
师范学院	Shifanxueyuan - teachers’ college
师范大学	Shifandaxue - teachers’ university
广播电视大学	Guangbo dianshi daxue - radio and television university
业余大学	Yeyudaxue - spare-time university
职业大学	Zhiye daxue - workers’ (vocational) university
专科学校	Zhuanke xuexiao - specialised school
成人高等学校	Chengren gaodeng xuexiao - adult higher education institution
夜大学	Yedaxue - evening college

Fields of study, subjects

农学	Nongxue - agriculture
文学	Wenxue - arts
经济学	Jingjixue - economics
教育学	Jiaoyuxue - education
工学	Gongxue - engineering
历史学	Lishixue - history
法学	Faxue - law
医学	Yixue - medicine
哲学	Zhexue - philosophy
理学	Lixue - science
师范学	Shi fan xue - teacher training

Degrees

学位	Xuewei - academic degree
学士学位	Xueshi xuewei - bachelor’s degree
硕士学位	Shuoshi xuewei - master’s degree
博士学位	Boshi xuewei - doctor’s degree

Bachelor's degrees in different fields

农学学士	Nongxue xueshi - Bachelor of Agriculture
文学学士	Wenxue xueshi - Bachelor of Arts
商学学士	Shangxue xueshi - Bachelor of Business
经济学学士	Jingjixue xueshi - Bachelor of Economics
教育学学士	Jiaoyu Xueshi - Bachelor of Education
工学学士	Gongxue xueshi - Bachelor of Engineering
法学学士	Faxue xueshi - Bachelor of Laws
医学学士	Yixue xueshi - Bachelor of Medicine
理学学士	Lixue xueshi - Bachelor of Science

Types of certificates

文凭	Wenping - diploma
毕业文凭	Biye wenping - graduation diploma
证书	Zhengshu - academic certificate
毕业证书	Biye zhengshu - graduation certificate
学位证书	Xuewei zhengshu - degree certificate
肄业证书	Yiye zhengshu - certificate of attendance/incompletion
公正书	Gongzhengshu - notarial certificate