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China: Verification of Chinese educational qualifications

12 December 2023

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Introduction

The following note is focused on verification of Chinese educational qualifications of the official and formal education system of China.

As a point of departure, the note introduces the background of educational verification, including an outline of the scope of the Chinese education system as well as of issues of fraud with Chinese educational certificates. Subsequently, the two agencies providing verification, China Higher Education Student Information and Career Centre (CHESICC) and China Academic Degrees & Graduate Education Development Centre (CDGDC), are presented in their own separate sections, including information on which educational qualifications and/or educational certificates they can verify, where to apply for verification, descriptions and document examples of the reports the agencies issue as proof of verification, how these reports can be authenticated online, etc.

The note is based on online open sources and interviews conducted by NIDC in Beijing in October 2019 with representatives from the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (MoE), representatives from CHESICC and CDGDC.

Background

The Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (MoE) is the competent educational authority in China. The MoE is responsible for the official and formal education system of China, which adheres to the entire country, except for the two special administrative regions (Hong Kong and Macau), as they operate individual education systems.¹

¹ MoE, Beijing, October 2019; Danish Agency for Science and Higher Education, year of issue n/a.

Only institutions that are recognised by the MoE may offer and issue recognised Chinese regular and adult educational qualifications as well as appertaining educational certificates, belonging to the official and formal education system of China.

Forgery is a severely widespread problem in China. In order to combat the wide use of fraudulent educational documents, the Chinese authorities have established two government agencies directly under the MoE that among other tasks are responsible for verifying educational qualifications:

- China Higher Education Student Information and Career Centre (CHESICC).
- China Academic Degrees & Graduate Education Development Centre (CDGDC).²

China Higher Education Student Information and Career Centre

CHESICC was established in 1991. The organisation is represented at three locations in Beijing and operates 35 agencies across mainland China as well as overseas, including Australia and Japan.³

CHESICC is responsible for verifying the following educational documentation attesting to obtained educational qualifications, including that of regular and adult education:

- Senior Secondary (high school) Graduation Certificate and transcript.
- Senior secondary final provincial exam results (also known as academic proficiency test (APT) etc. and the historic version, huikao).
- Gaokao results (National College Entrance Examination).
- Zhuanke/Dazhuan Graduation Certificate and transcript (sub-degree level).
- Benke Graduation Certificate and transcript (benke level).
- Master's Graduation Certificate and transcript (master level).
- PhD Graduation Certificate and transcript (PhD level).⁴

Verification reports

A CHESICC verification report of a graduation certificate or a transcript confirms that the document is genuine and that it was issued by a recognised educational institution. Moreover, it verifies the information on the educational document in question, including information on the holder, the educational programme and/or the given exam results.⁵

² CDGDC, Beijing, October 2019; CHESICC, Beijing, October 2019.

³ CHESICC, Beijing, October 2019.

⁴ CHESICC, Beijing, October 2019.

⁵ CHESICC, Beijing, October 2019; Danish Agency for Science and Higher Education, year of issue n/a.

Below is an example of a CHESICC verification report of a Benke Graduation Certificate with a photo of the holder (verification reports do not always include a photo of the holder):

Verification Report
of
China Higher Education Qualification Certificate

NAME Yang Li **Report No.:** 501111
Sex: Female **Date of Report:** Oct. 14, 2017
Date of Birth: January 01, 1983
Type of Education: Regular Higher Education
Education Level: Undergraduate
Institution: China University of Political Science and Law
Major: Civil Law and Commercial Law
Forms of Learning: full time
Type of Program: 4-year
Start Date: September 2002
Graduation Date: July 2006
Status of Student Record: Graduation
Diploma No.: 11111111111111111111

The above mentioned information is verified authentic.
(The following empty)

China Higher Education Student Information and Career Center

Verification Report can be verified online at
<http://www.chsi.com.cn/en/pvr/>

Image 1: Example of a CHESICC verification report (CHESICCs website https://www.chsi.com.cn/en/pvr/brief_cheqc.jsp).

From July 2018 to October 2019, CHESICC has issued eight million paper version verification reports and 13 million e-verification reports.⁶

Applying for a verification report

All steps of the application process for verification can be done by the holder of the educational document online through CHESICCs website:

⁶ CHESICC, Beijing, October 2019.

<https://www.chsi.com.cn/en/service/>. It is possible to have the verification report in a paper edition or as an online verification report. Verification reports in Chinese have been free of charge since 1 July 2018. A smaller fee applies if the verification report of a graduation certificate needs to be in English. An additional fee is applied for verification of a transcript.⁷

Online check of verification reports

The authenticity of verification reports can be checked on CHESICCs website. On CHESICCs website, online verification reports are checked with the online verification code: <https://www.chsi.com.cn/en/service/>, while paper verification reports are checked with the certificate number and the report number:

<https://www.chsi.com.cn/en/pvr/check.jsp>.

When verifying graduation certificates by means of CHESICC, it is of course important to check that the information stated on the graduation certificate and the online CHESICC verification report match. Note that the diploma number on the CHESICC verification report corresponds to the certificate serial number on the graduation certificate.⁸

China Academic Degrees & Graduate Education Development Centre

CDGDC was established in 2003. The agency is responsible for verifying educational certificates attesting to educational qualifications at degree level, obtained through both regular and adult education, i.e.:

- Bachelor's Degree Certificates.
- Master's Degree Certificates.
- PhD Degree Certificates.⁹

Earlier, CDGDC also verified other types of educational documents than degree certificates, e.g. transcripts, adult educational certificates below degree level and gaokao-results but since second half of 2018, CDGDC only verifies degree certificates. The credentials reports from before second half of 2018 are still legally valid, also those verifying other than degree certificates, even though they have not been issued since then.¹⁰

Credentials reports

A credentials report from CDGDC confirms that the degree certificate is genuine and that it was issued by a recognised higher education institution with degree-

⁷ CHESICC, Beijing, October 2019.

⁸ CHESICC, March 2020.

⁹ CDGDC, Beijing, October 2019.

¹⁰ CDGDC, Beijing, October 2019.

awarding power. Moreover, it verifies the information on the degree certificate, including information on the holder and the awarded degree.¹¹

Below is an example of a credentials report verifying a Bachelor's Degree Certificate:

教育部学位与研究生教育发展中心
CHINA ACADEMIC DEGREES & GRADUATE
EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT CENTER

认 证 报 告
CREDENTIALS REPORT

1 验证编码: [REDACTED]

2 认证日期: 2019年11月09日

3 姓名: [REDACTED]

4 性别: 女

5 出生日期: 19[REDACTED]年[REDACTED]月[REDACTED]日

6 学位层级: 学士

7 学位授予单位: 桂林工学院

8 专业(专业领域): 社会工作

9 学科门类(专业学位类别): 法学

10 获学位年份: 2008年

11 证书编号: 1059642008[REDACTED]

教育部学位与研究生教育发展中心
CHINA ACADEMIC DEGREES & GRADUATE
EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT CENTER

备注:

1. 以上信息来源于“全国学位授予信息数据库”及学位授予单位学位授予记录。

2. 可凭本认证报告右上方的“验证编码”访问“中国学位与研究生教育信息网”(网址: <http://www.chinadegrees.cn/cqva/gateway.html>) 进行验证或使用“中国学位查询认证”微信小程序扫描右侧二维码进行验证。

Image 2: Example of a credential report from CDGDC (The Danish Agency for Science and Higher Education, Ministry of Higher Education and Science – Denmark).

¹¹ CDGDC, Beijing, October 2019.

The information pointed out in the above example with blue numbers match the following:

1. Verification code
2. Verification date (year, month, day)
3. Name (surname, first name)
4. Gender (female)
5. Date of birth (year, month, day)
6. Academic level (bachelor)
7. Degree awarding institution
8. Study major (specialisation)
9. Category of study programme (category of study specialisation)
10. Awarding year
11. Certificate serial number

CDGDC annually issues 600,000 credentials reports, approximately.¹²

Applying for a credentials report

The holder of a degree certificate can apply for a digital credentials report on the website of CDGDC. Credential reports are normally only issued in Chinese and they have been free of charge since 1 July 2018.¹³

Online check of credentials reports

The authenticity of credentials reports can be checked with the report number and/or the verification code on CDGDCs website.

When verifying degree certificates by means of CDGDC, it is important to check that the information stated on the degree certificate and the online verified CDGDC credentials report match.

¹² CDGDC, Beijing, October 2019.

¹³ CDGDC, Beijing, October 2019; Danish Agency for Science and Higher Education, year of issue n/a.

References

Oral sources

CDGDC (October 2019): China Academic Degrees and Graduate Education Development Centre interviewed in Beijing, China.

CHESICC (October 2019): China Higher Education Student Information and Career Centre interviewed in Beijing, China.

MoE (October 2019): Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China interviewed in Beijing, China.

Written sources

Danish Agency for Science and Higher Education (year of issue not available): Danish Agency for Science and Higher Education, Ministry of Higher Education and Science – Denmark: Landehåndbogen (an online database, latest update: 11 September 2019) (in Danish), <https://ufm.dk/uddannelse/anerkendelse-og-dokumentation/find-vurderinger/landehaandbogen/slaa-op>, retrieved 19 August 2022.

CHESICC (March 2020): E-mail correspondence.