

Evaluation and Benchmarking of the Diploma in Marketing from Anhui Business College

Context and scope

Anhui Business College commissioned Ecctis for an independent evaluation and benchmarking of its Diploma in Marketing, which was completed in August 2023

The Diploma in Marketing is one of 37 programmes delivered by the College, alongside programmes in the areas of business and tourism, art and design, financial science and technology, and artificial intelligence.

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 Marketing seeks to develop students' knowledge in marketing management, marketing research, and product sales. 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 2598 hours' guided learning time. Reflecting its vocational focus, the Diploma combines classroom-based study with practical-based simulated learning and an internship component within local enterprises.

Upon completion, many students enter the workforce;² 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.

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

² The employment rate of graduates is typically 98%.

The study revealed several strengths of the Diploma in Marketing, namely that it demonstrated:

- That students admitted to the programme continually exceed the minimum admission score of 200 points.
- The modes of learning are clearly articulated within the module documentation and demonstrate a wide range of learning and assessment activities.
- That graduates of this programme have a high employment rate of 98%, evidencing that the programme is structured around the skills required for specifically identified roles in enterprise.
- That there appears to be good support for students by enterprise instructors, professional teachers, and school counsellors.
- There are rigorous and fair admission processes, with good pre-enrolment support for candidates.

Stakeholder consultation and involvement for ongoing alignment with employability aims, market trends and employer requirements.

In terms of international comparability, the Diploma in Marketing 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

Anhui Business College has committed to further development and engagement encompassing:

- Writing new learning outcomes at programme and module level, ensuring these are specific; measurable; and that an indicative 60% of the programme targets a higher level of knowledge and critical thinking skills.
- Developing a programme assessment framework/plan. As well as, Adopting assessment and marking approaches that sufficiently test critical thinking skills such as analysis and evaluation.
- Developing and/or standardising the use of tools, such as reporting templates or action plans, to support the standardisation of the process of annual review referred to as “dynamic adjustment”.
- Creating written policies for all plagiarism policies and academic misconduct rules, ensuring clear guidelines are outlined and published for the relevant stakeholders to view.
- Ensuring that there is a clear policy on programme assessment plans. Assessments should be developed so that they are clearly linked to intended learning outcomes. There should be clear limits on the use and weighting of attendance as part of the assessment.
- Maintaining and ensuring adoption by all staff of the unified quality assurance handbook.

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.