

Evaluation and Benchmarking of the Diploma in Preschool Education from Dongguan Polytechnic

Context and scope

Dongguan Polytechnic commissioned Ecctis for an independent evaluation and benchmarking of its Diploma in Preschool Education, which was completed in May 2025.

The Diploma in Preschool Education is one of over 50 programmes delivered by the College alongside programmes covering e-commerce, product art design and social sports.

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 Preschool Education seeks to develop students' knowledge and skills in preparation to work in kindergartens, early childhood education institutions and the wider preschool education industry. 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 Diploma 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 2872 hours' guided learning time. Reflecting its vocational focus, the Diploma combines classroom-based study with practical-based simulated learning and a 416-hour internship that allows students to gain hands-on practical experience within a real-world environment.

Upon completion, many students enter the workforce; 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 HNDs, Diplomas 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.

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

- The Diploma's part-time study option is a strength, as it makes the Diploma accessible to individuals with pre-existing commitments such as work or family.
- A wide variety of hands-on teaching and learning environments can be considered a strength of the Diploma in developing students' independence in Preschool Education settings.
- The College's facilities directly accessible on campus can be considered a strength of the Diploma, and aid students' development of practical skills in work-related environments. In addition to the quantity of training rooms, it is especially the specialisation of rooms dedicated to various aspects of the Diploma that can be considered a strength.
- The high number of contact hours within the Diploma is a clear strength, as students arguably benefit from the greater access to instruction and feedback from teachers.
- The Diploma's Internship is assessed jointly by on-campus teachers and enterprise teachers, providing practical expertise.
- Vocational skill certificates that indicate a student's specific competencies relevant to roles in the Preschool Education sector are a strength of the Diploma.

In terms of international comparability, the Diploma in Preschool Education 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

Dongguan Polytechnic has committed to further development and engagement encompassing:

- Writing new learning outcomes at programme- and module- level, ensuring these are specific, measurable, and feasible. Ensure that learning outcomes explicitly target higher level of knowledge and critical thinking skills, in line with all RQF Level 5 descriptors.
- Developing new programme assessment frameworks/plans that link the MLOs to assessment that is able to test the skills and knowledge required.
- Ensuring that there is a clear policy on programme assessment plans. Assessments should be developed so that they are clearly linked to MLOs.
- 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 25-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 and universities.