

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

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[International Qualifications Assessment Service \(IQAS\)](#), 9th Floor, 108 Street Building,
9942 - 108 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5K 2J5

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International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Country: China	Official Country Name: People's Republic of China	Region: China
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Status: Published	Date Entered: Apr 22, 2003
Category: Secondary School(academic)	Date Revised: Oct 12, 2005

Credential Actual Name: 普通高级中学毕业证书 高中毕业证书	Credential English Name: Certificate of Graduation from Senior Secondary School
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Credential Alternate Actual Name(s):	Credential Alternate English Name(s): High School Diploma Upper Middle School Graduation Certificate
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Time Period Credential Offered: Current
Issuing Body: Ministry of Education, China
Admission Requirements:

- Completion of primary and junior secondary schools (nine years of schooling in total) and passing provincial entrance examinations.

To continue their study in the general/academic rather than specialized/vocational route, junior secondary graduates must pass the entrance examinations for general senior secondary schools. Designed and administered by provincial educational authorities, the examinations include six subjects: Chinese, mathematics, foreign language, politics (open-book), physics, and chemistry.

Program Description:

- Three-year senior secondary school program (following nine years of combined primary and junior secondary education).

All senior secondary schools in China follow the national curriculum and syllabuses published by the Ministry of Education, though the textbooks may vary from province to province. Senior secondary education changed from two years to three years in the 1980s. Each of the first two school years lasts 40 weeks, including 35 weeks of classroom teaching and 3 weeks of review and examination. The third year has 26 weeks of classroom teaching and 12 weeks of review and examination. The 13 compulsory subjects include ideology and politics, Chinese, mathematics, information technology, foreign language (English, Russian, Japanese, etc.), physics, chemistry, biology, history, geography, physical education, art, and labour skills. In the third year, students are usually divided into the science track and arts and humanities track and choose the elective components of the subjects accordingly - e.g. physics, chemistry and biology for the science track and history and geography for the humanities track. Students must complete all required courses and pass the provincial senior secondary unified graduation examinations (introduced in

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1990) in order to receive the Certificate of Graduation from Senior Secondary School.

Provides Access to in the Home Country:

- Entry level employment.
- Further education in colleges and universities.

Senior secondary graduates may be admitted into *zhuanke* or *benke*/bachelor programs by passing the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE). They may repeat the NCEE if their scores are not high enough for the institution or program of their choice. Senior secondary graduates who have entered the workforce may pursue further education in the adult higher education sector, usually on a part-time basis, by passing the National Adult College Entrance Examination (NACEE).

Placement Recommendations:

IERF 2004

Completion of high school.

NOOSR

N/A

PIER 2000

May be considered for freshmen admission.

UK NARIC 2005

Is considered comparable to GCE Advanced Subsidiary AS level / Scottish Higher standard.

IQAS Recommendations for:

Employment

Generally compares to the completion of Grade Twelve.

Post-secondary Admission

Generally compares to the completion of Grade Twelve.

Course Equivalencies

Chinese: Language Arts - Grade 12

Mathematics: Pure Math 30

English: ESL - Grade 12

Physics: Physics 20 (taken for two years) or Physics 30 (taken for three years)

Chemistry: Chemistry 20 (taken for two years) or Chemistry 30 (taken for three years)

Biology: Biology 20 (taken for one year) or Biology 30 (taken for two years)

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IQAS Rationale: Background

In China, basic education refers to primary, junior secondary and senior secondary education. Senior secondary graduation may represent 10, 11 or 12 years of school education depending on the time period, province, and even individual schools. The 12-year system has been in place since the mid to late 1980s.

1966-1976 (Cultural Revolution) basic education curriculum: 10 or 9 years

1978 basic education curriculum: 10 years (5+3+2)

1981 secondary curriculum: 5 years (3+2) or 6 years (3+3)

1986 primary and junior secondary curriculum: 9 years (6+3 or 5+4)

1990 senior secondary curriculum: 3 years

2000 senior secondary curriculum: 3 years

In the 1978 national curriculum, senior secondary education lasted two years in the 10-year school system (5+3+2). In the early to mid-1980s, when the transition to the 12-year school system took place, senior secondary education followed the 1981 secondary curriculum and lasted either two or three years. From the mid-1980s to 1990, most schools adopted the 6-year version of the 1981 curriculum. Many students who graduated from senior secondary school in the 1980s went through an 11-year system (5-year primary + 6-year secondary).

The 1981 curriculum introduced the practice of grouping senior secondary students into the arts and humanities (*wen*) track and the science (*li*) track, starting mostly in year 3 but sometimes in year 2.

Roughly one third of junior secondary graduates go on to attend general/academic senior secondary schools by passing provincially administered entrance examinations. In about 30 cities, counties and districts assigned by the Ministry of Education to carry out a basic education curriculum reform initiative, senior secondary entrance examinations have been abolished since 2004, with admissions based on the results of junior secondary graduation examinations and a comprehensive appraisal. It is not known whether the reform will be extended to the rest of the country.

Curriculums and Subjects

Senior secondary curriculum has undergone many changes since the late 1970s. The Ministry of Education usually drafts a new national curriculum, tries it out in a few provinces for a few years, then revises it and implements it across the country. The provincial educational authorities may also make minor changes to the national curriculum to meet local needs. The national curriculum prescribes the instructional hours for each required subject. For detailed information about the curriculums of different periods, refer to School Education, China Country Profile. In order to graduate, senior secondary students in most provinces have to write a unified graduation examination, which was introduced in 1990. For more information, refer to the credential template: General Senior Secondary Unified Graduation Examination.

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Chinese, mathematics and foreign language: All students must take these three major subjects for three consecutive years. For Chinese and foreign language, total instructional hours are usually the same for all students. In the 2000 curriculum, both Chinese and foreign language have total hours of 384 (4 hours per week). The total hours for mathematics depend on the chosen track. In the 2000 curriculum, science and humanities students have 384 and 332 class hours in mathematics respectively. English is the predominant foreign language. "Foreign language" on the transcript usually means English.

politics and physical education: All students must also take the two subjects for three consecutive years, usually for 2 hours per week.

physics and chemistry: In the 1980s, science students took physics and chemistry for three consecutive years (in the three-year curriculum) or two years (in the two-year curriculum); humanities students took physics for one year and chemistry for two years (in the three-year curriculum) or both subjects for two years (in the two-year curriculum). After 1990, science students take both subjects for three years; humanities students take both subjects for two years. In the 2000 curriculum, science students typically have 306 hours of physics and 271 hours of chemistry; humanities students typically have 158 hours of physics and 140 hours of chemistry.

biology: From 1981 to 1990, the national curriculum prescribed only one year of biology (2 hours per week) for senior secondary students. After 1990, biology is taken for two years by science students and one year by humanities students. In the 2000 curriculum, biology has 105 hours of compulsory component and 78 hours of elective component. The compulsory component is usually taught in year 2 to all students (3 hours per week x 35 weeks = 105 hours), and the elective component is taught in year 3 to science students (3 hours per week x 26 weeks = 78 hours). There are two possibilities for transcripts that indicate biology taken for three years: The province (or school) may have chosen to teach the two-year content over three years (e.g. 2 instead of 3 hours per week), or the transcript may be fraudulent. A curriculum comparison indicates that senior secondary biology courses in China cover briefly the biology content of Science 10 (Cycling of Matter in Living Systems) and most of the contents of Biology 20 and Biology 30 as well as some topics not included in the Alberta curriculum.

history: From 1981 to 1990, it was taken by science students for one year and humanities students for two years. After 1990, it was taken by science students for two years and humanities students for three years.

geography: From 1981 to 1990, it was taken by science students for one year and humanities students for one or two years. After 1990, it was taken by science students for one year and humanities students for two, occasionally three years.

information technology: Introduced in the 2000 curriculum, it is taken for at least one year and up to three years by all students. The compulsory component is 70 instructional hours, and the elective component, an additional 70 hours.

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arts (music and fine art): Arts can be taken either as a single course or as two separate courses (music and fine art). It was introduced as a compulsory subject in the 1996 curriculum (which was tried out in a few provinces and revised to become the 2000 curriculum). Students may take arts for two or three years. Total number of class hours for arts is 96 in the 2000 curriculum (70 in the 1996 curriculum), or 1 hour per week for three years. It is highly unlikely for a student to take music and fine art as two separate subjects for three years. Though a school may offer more hours in arts as a local or school elective course, students who want to get into a non-arts program at a university or college cannot afford to spend lots of time on arts courses, which are not part of the NCEE.

Conclusion

Senior secondary graduation in China generally represents 11 or 12 years of formal schooling. Schools usually adopt textbooks and teaching schedules standardized across the province or major city, which are in turn based on the national curriculum and syllabuses formulated by the Ministry of Education. Graduation from senior secondary school allows an individual to attend college or university by passing the NCEE (National College Entrance Examination). Based on the above information and placement recommendations from other evaluation resources, IQAS compares the certificate of graduation from senior secondary school to the completion of Grade Twelve.

Grading:

Table 1. Percentage Scale

Chinese %	IQAS %
100	100
99	99
98	97
97	96
96	95
95	94
94	92
93	91
92	90
91	89
90	87
89	86
88	85
87	84
86	83
85	81
84	80
83	79
82	78
81	76
80	75
79	74
78	73
77	71
76	70

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75	69
74	68
73	66
72	65
71	64
70	63
69	61
68	60
67	59
66	58
65	56
64	55
63	54
62	53
61	51
60	50

Table 2. Five-Level Scale

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
90-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	94
80-89	良好 or 良	B	Very Good	82
70-79	中等 or 中	C	Good	69
60-69	及格	D	Pass	57
0-59	不及格	E/F	Fail	Fail

Table 3. Four-Level Scale (I)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
85-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	90
70-84	良好 or 良	B	Good	71
60-69	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	56
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 1. Four-Level Scale (II)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
86-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	91
76-85	良好 or 良	B	Good	75
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 5. Four-Level Scale (III)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
91-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	95
76-90	良好 or 良	B	Good	79
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Note: Pass 合格 /fail 不合格 grades may be assigned to some non-core courses. For senior secondary school

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transcripts, IQAS uses the final year grades to determine the grade equivalencies.

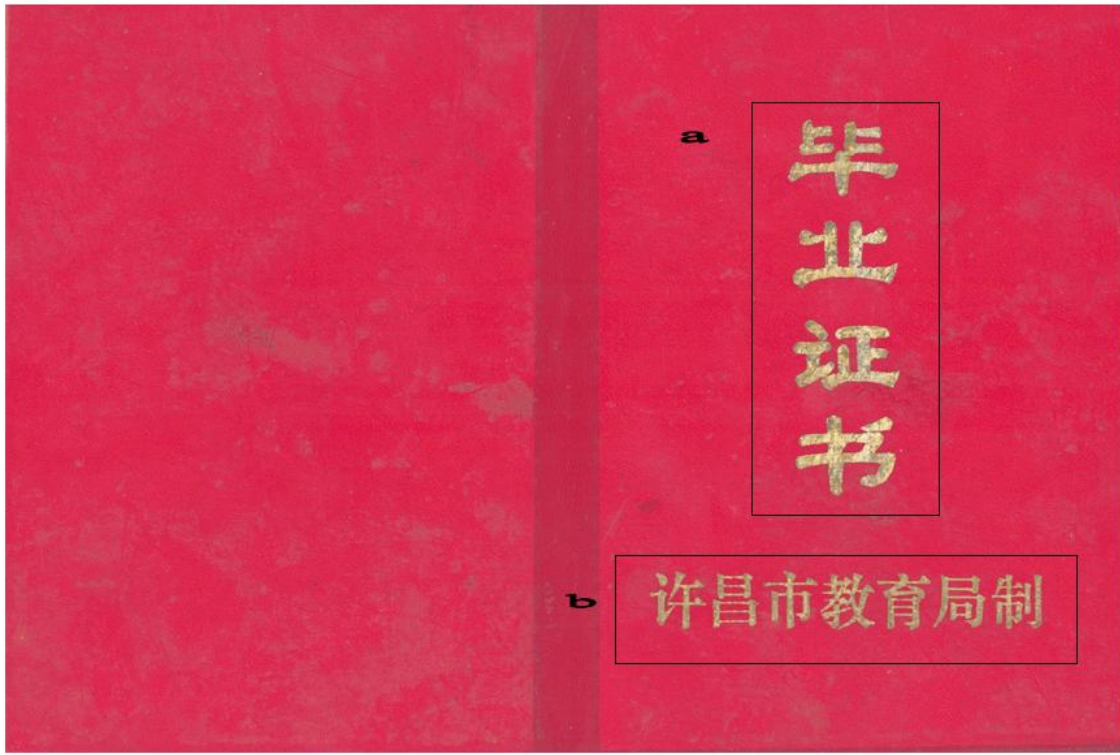
Comments:

This template applies to certificates of graduation from general/academic senior secondary schools. Course equivalency recommendations are based on student transcript. Please note there is high occurrence of fraud in senior secondary transcripts. For evaluating the results of unified provincial graduation examinations, refer to the template: General Senior Secondary Unified Graduation Examinations.

Traditionally, a certificate of graduation from senior secondary school is considered to be of little value once an individual has got into a university or college by passing the NCEE. It is plausible for an older applicant with postsecondary education to have misplaced or lost their certificate of graduation from senior secondary school.

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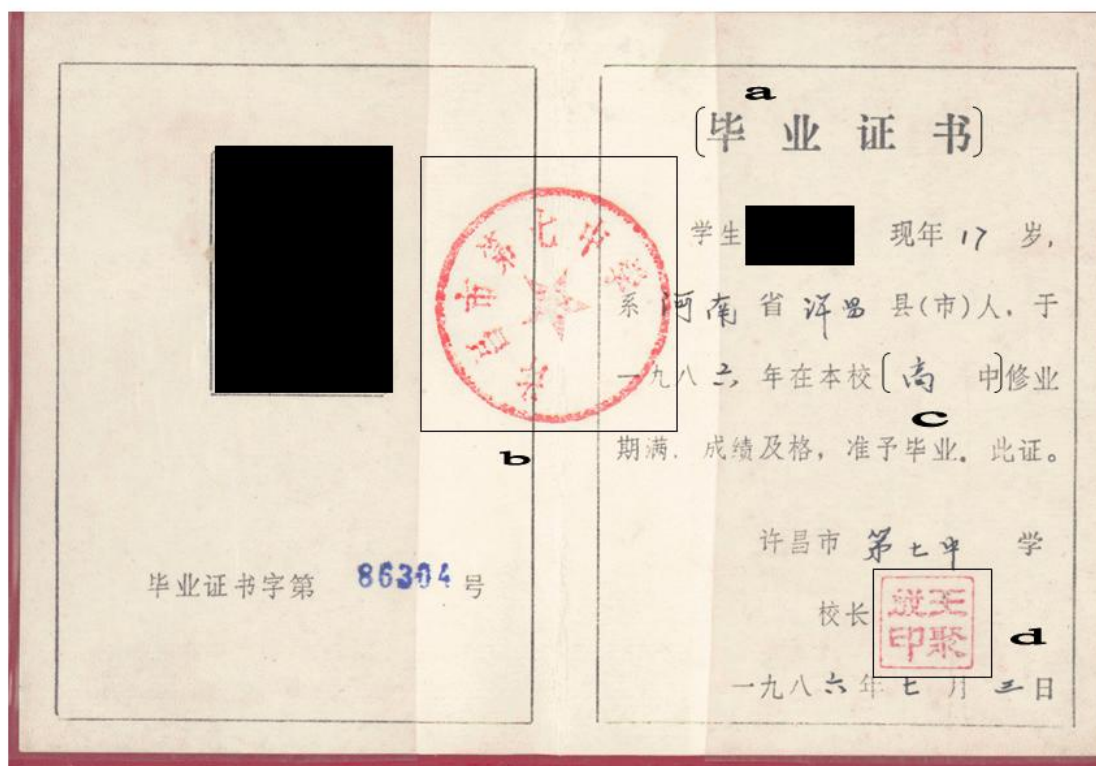
Certificate of Graduation from Senior Secondary School, 1986, Part 1

a: Certificate of Graduation

b: Printed by Xuchang Municipal Education Bureau

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Certificate of Graduation from Senior Secondary School, 1986, Part 2

a: Certificate of Graduation

b: Seal of Xuchang No. 7 Secondary School

c: Senior Secondary

d: Principal's Seal

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International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Country: China	Official Country Name: People's Republic of China	Region: China
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Status: Published	Date Entered: Apr 08, 2005
Category: Secondary School(academic)	Date Revised: Oct 12, 2005

Credential Actual Name: 普通高级中学毕业会考 高中会考	Credential English Name: General Senior Secondary Unified Graduation Examination
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Credential Alternate Actual Name(s):	Credential Alternate English Name(s): Joint Academic Upper Middle School Graduation Examination Provincial Examination
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Time Period Credential Offered: 1990-Current
Issuing Body: Provincial Educational Authorities
Admission Requirements:

- Completion of the compulsory component of senior secondary subjects.

Program Description:

- Senior Secondary Graduation Examination

Designed and administered by the provincial educational authorities (and therefore known as the "provincial exam"), the examination includes nine major subjects: Chinese, mathematics, foreign language (usually English), ideology and politics, physics, chemistry, biology, history and geography. Since 2003 some provinces have added a tenth subject, information technology. In addition to the major subjects, there are minor subjects such as physics lab, chemistry lab, biology lab, physical education, labour skills, music, and fine art.

Students sit for the examinations after completing the compulsory component of each subject. Generally speaking, Chinese, politics and foreign language are taken in year 3, mathematics in either year 2 or year 3, physics and chemistry in year 2, history and geography in year 1, and biology in year 1 or year 2. Each province has its own examination guidelines and may administer the examinations two or three times a year. Retakes are allowed.

The major subjects are marked in percentage grades (0-100) - 60 percent is the passing score - and usually converted to the four-level scale (A, B, C, D) in the grade report. The minor subjects are usually reported in the two-level scale of pass or fail. Students who have passed all courses will receive a passing certificate from the provincial examination authority that reports the examination results in letter grades. The examination results may also appear on the certificate of graduation from senior secondary school.

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Provides Access to in the Home Country:

- Eligibility to receive the certificate of graduation from general senior secondary school and write the NCEE (National College Entrance Examination).

To graduate from general/academic senior secondary schools, students must pass the unified graduation examination and meet additional political/ideological and social practice requirements. Though retakes are allowed, students must pass all subjects within a prescribed time - e.g. two years after the completion of all courses in Beijing - in order to get the certificate of graduation from senior secondary school.

In most provinces, students must pass the unified graduation examination in order to write the NCEE. Since 2000 some provinces have allowed all students to take the NCEE regardless of their performance in the unified graduation examination.

Placement Recommendations:

IQAS Recommendations for:

Employment

N/A

(Does not represent the completion of senior secondary school on its own.)

Post-secondary Admission

N/A

(Does not represent the completion of senior secondary school on its own.)

Course Equivalencies

Course Equivalency Based on Unified Graduation Examination Results Alone:

Chinese: Language Arts - Grade 12

Mathematics: Pure Math 30

English: ESL - Grade 12

Physics: Physics 20

Chemistry: Chemistry 20

Biology: Biology 20

IQAS Rationale:

Background

The General Senior Secondary Unified Graduation Examination (普通高中毕业会考) was introduced by the State Education Commission in 1990 and implemented across the country over the next two years. At that time the highly competitive NCEE (the rate of enrolment in college was less than 3%) was believed to be causing serious problems in the quality of general senior secondary education. Many senior secondary schools focused on preparing a small number of

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high-performing students for the NCEE to the neglect of providing an all-round education to all students. Schools might adopt low standards for the majority of students who would not be able to go to college, and curtail courses not included in the NCEE such as history and geography for students in the science track. The unified graduation examination was therefore introduced to maintain minimum standards for senior secondary education. By passing the unified graduation examination, students demonstrate that they have fulfilled the requirements of all compulsory courses according to the national syllabuses. They have to meet additional political/ideological and social practice requirements and physical education standards in order to receive the certificate of graduation from senior secondary school.

Though the unified graduation examination is designed for students at general/academic senior secondary schools, students at vocational-technical secondary schools and non-students may also take the exam to obtain a passing certificate. The passing certificate is accepted as proof of "educational competence" comparable to a general senior secondary graduate and allows the holder to write the NCEE.

In recent years, some people advocate abolishing the provincial unified graduation examination and relegating the administration of graduation examination to individual schools. In some provinces, key schools may be granted exemption from the unified examination. In March 2000 the Ministry of Education announced that it was up to the provinces to decide whether to continue or abolish the unified graduation examination. Since then the examination has been abolished, either completely or partially, in a few provinces including Shanghai, Hubei, Jiangsu, Shaanxi and Shandong.

Grade Distribution

Based on the limited information available, grade distribution seems to vary greatly depending on the province and the subject.

Fujian Province in 2004 (www.fjhc.com.cn):

Biology: A 18.47%, B 45.79%, C 23.15%, F 12.59%.

Physics: A 48.63%, B 35.06%, C 11.40%, F 4.91%

Chemistry: A 31.60, B 44.68%, C 16.44%, F 7.28%

Gansu Province in 2001 (www.gssedu.cn), excluding provincial and municipal key schools:

Biology: A 5.6%, F 11.7%

Physics: A 17.9%, F 10.2%

Chemistry: A 8.8%, F 11.7%

In Jilin Province, students who scored A's in all the nine major subjects represent 1.9%, 1.35% and 1.6% of the total examinees in 1999, 2000, and 2001 respectively.

Course Equivalency

Students sit for the unified examination after completing the compulsory component of each

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subject. Since the examination is based on the minimum requirement for senior secondary graduation, there is no distinction between the science track and the arts and humanities track. Generally speaking, Chinese, politics and foreign language (English) are taken in year 3, mathematics in year 3 (sometimes in year 2), physics and chemistry in year 2, history and geography in year 1, and biology in year 1 or year 2.

Following are some of the main subjects in the examination (along with the instructional hours for the compulsory components of the subjects based on the 1990 and 2000 curriculum) and the suggested Alberta high school course equivalency.

Chinese: Language Arts (Chinese) - Grade 12

392 (1990) and 384 (2000)

Mathematics: Pure Math 30

426 (1990) and 332 (2000)

Note: In provinces where it is common practice for senior secondary schools to complete the entire math curriculum in the first two years, the unified math exam is administered in the summer for second year students.

English: ESL - Grade 12

306 (1990) and 384 (2000)

Physics: Physics 20

204 (1990) and 158 (2000)

Chemistry: Chemistry 20

204 (1990) and 140 (2000)

Biology: Biology 20

102 (1990) and 105 (2000)

Note: Senior secondary biology courses (required plus elective components) correspond in content to Biology 20 and Biology 30 of the Alberta high school curriculum.

Grading:

Unified Graduation Examination is graded in percentage marks and reported in the four-level scale. Please note that the following grade conversion table applies to many but not all provinces.

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	IQAS %
85-100	优秀 or 优	A	90
70-84	良好 or 良	B	71
60-69	及格	C	56
0-59	不及格	F	Fail

Comments:

This template applies to the results of general senior secondary unified graduation examination. They often appear on the certificate of graduation from senior secondary school, but can also be issued in a separate certificate.

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a [普通高级中学会考成绩]

学 科	成 绩	学 科	成 绩
政治	A	物理实验	P
语文	B	化学实验	P
数学	B	生物实验	P
外语	C	劳动技术	P
物理	B		
化学	A		
生物	A		
历史	C		
地理	C		
体育	P		

General Senior Secondary Unified Graduation Examination, 1996

a: General Senior Secondary Unified Graduation Examination Results

* This is part of a Certificate of Graduation from Senior Secondary issued in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in 1996

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Country: China	Official Country Name: People's Republic of China	Region: China
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Status: Published	Date Entered: May 10, 2005
Category: Secondary School(tech/voc)	Date Revised: Oct 12, 2005

Credential Actual Name: 中等专业学校毕业证书 中专毕业证书	Credential English Name: Certificate of Graduation from Specialized Senior Secondary School
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Credential Alternate Actual Name(s):	Credential Alternate English Name(s): Certificate of Graduation from Specialized Upper Middle School
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Time Period Credential Offered: Current
Issuing Body: Ministry of Education, China
Admission Requirements:

- Completion of junior secondary school (9 years) and passing entrance examinations (pattern 1).

Pattern 1: The majority of applicants to specialized senior secondary schools are junior secondary graduates. They must pass provincially administered entrance examinations in six subjects (politics, Chinese, mathematics, physics, chemistry, and foreign language). In recent years some schools admit junior secondary graduates without any entrance exam. Programs last three to four years.

- Completion of senior secondary school (12 years) and passing entrance examinations (pattern 2).

Pattern 2: Many specialized senior secondary schools also recruit general senior secondary graduates who could not get into college or university with their NCEE scores. Popular in the 1980s, such programs are not very common today. Program length is usually two years. Currently most schools admit senior secondary graduates without any entrance exam.

Program Description:

Three-year (or four-year) combined secondary and professional program (pattern 1).

Pattern 1. This is the common pattern since the 1990s. The curriculum varies greatly from institution to institution. The program consists of general courses, specialty courses, and up to one year of practicum. The general courses usually include politics, Chinese, mathematics, foreign language, and physical education. The hours of instruction for those subjects may be the same as or lower than those at general senior secondary schools. Instead of the practicum, students may have the option to spend the last year in school preparing for the NCEE.

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Two-year (or one-year) professional program (pattern 2).

Pattern 2. This was popular in the 1980s. Since then, many specialized senior secondary schools that offered such programs have been upgraded to junior colleges. The curriculum varies greatly, depending on the institution and the time period, and usually focuses on specialty courses. Programs last one or two years (two or three years in the 1980s).

Provides Access to in the Home Country:

- Employment.

Introduced in the early 1950s to train technicians, specialized senior secondary education has always had a strong applied focus. Popular programs today include computer and applications, electronic commerce, automobile maintenance, English (foreign trade), tourism, hotel management, and fashion design.

- Further education in colleges/universities.

Before 2000, access to further education was somewhat limited. Specialized senior secondary graduates had to work for two or three years before they could write the NCEE. Or they could take examinations specially designed for graduates of specialized senior secondary schools, vocational senior secondary schools and skilled workers schools to be admitted into *zhuanke*-level technical/vocational programs. Since 2000 the Ministry of Education has allowed specialized senior secondary graduates to take the NCEE in the year of their graduation.

Placement Recommendations:

IERF 2004

Completion of high school.

NOOSR

N/A

PIER 2000

May be considered for freshman admission if vocational, technical, or specialized education is appropriate preparation.

UK NARIC 2005

[UK NARIC calls the credential "Diploma from a Specialized Secondary School (Zhixiao)"]

Is considered comparable to VGCSE (grades A*-C) / BTEC First Diploma / SQA Intermediate 2 standard.

IQAS Recommendations for:

Employment

Pattern 1: Three-year (or four-year) combined general and specialized senior secondary education:

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Generally compares to the completion of Grade Twelve, including vocational study in xxx.

Pattern 2: Two-year (or one-year) specialized senior secondary education.

Generally compares to the completion of two years (or one year) of vocational study in xxx.

Post-secondary Admission

Pattern 1: Three-year (or four-year) combined general and specialized senior secondary education:

Generally compares to the completion of Grade Twelve, including vocational study in xxx.

Pattern 2: Two-year (or one-year) specialized senior secondary education.

Generally compares to the completion of two years (or one year) of vocational study in xxx.

Course Equivalencies

It is difficult to provide course equivalencies for lack of national standards for general/academic courses taught in specialized senior secondary schools.

IQAS Rationale:

Background

Specialized senior secondary education based on the Soviet model was introduced in the early 1950s to train technicians. Programs were usually four years for junior secondary graduates and two years for senior secondary graduates. After the interruption during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), specialized senior secondary education was quickly revived. When the National College Entrance Examinations (NCEE) was restored in 1977, only a small number of graduates from general/academic senior secondary schools could get into colleges and universities. Specialized senior secondary schools therefore offered two- or three-year programs specially designed for senior secondary graduates whose NCEE scores were not high enough for postsecondary admission. Until about 1985, these students accounted for over half of the enrolment at specialized senior secondary schools. Furthermore, from the early to mid-1980s several hundred national key specialized senior secondary schools were upgraded to junior colleges offering *zhuanke*-level education in technical/vocational fields (an educational segment known as higher vocational education).

Since the 1990s, the proportion of general senior secondary graduates enrolled at specialized senior secondary schools has steadily decreased to below 10 percent. Most school now only recruit junior secondary graduates. At some specialized senior secondary schools, high-performing students may transfer, after three years of study, into two-year *zhuanke* programs at technical/vocational junior colleges - this is known as the 3+2 pattern of vocational higher education.

In special cases, certificates of graduation from specialized senior secondary school, pattern 2 may be considered *zhuanke*-level study in China. This usually happens at national key

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specialized senior secondary schools that are subsequently upgraded to junior colleges without a substantial change in their curriculums and teaching staff. For example, an IQAS applicant was able to complete a *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading program on the basis of her certificate of graduation from specialized senior secondary school (1990).

Two Program Patterns

Assessment of specialized senior secondary credentials depends on program pattern. There are two major patterns: programs for junior secondary graduates (pattern 1) and programs for senior secondary graduates (pattern 2). Generally speaking, pattern 1 consists of three or four years of study in both general and specialty subjects, whereas pattern 2 involves one or two years of study in specialty subjects only.

Pattern 1. This is the common pattern since the 1990s. Junior secondary graduates must pass provincially administered entrance examinations in six subjects (politics, Chinese, mathematics, physics, chemistry, and foreign language) to be admitted into specialized senior secondary schools. These examinations may be the same as the entrance examinations for general senior secondary schools. In recent years many schools admit students based on their scores in junior secondary graduation examinations, without any additional entrance examination. The program usually lasts three or four years, consisting of general courses, specialty courses, and up to one year of practicum. The general courses usually include politics, Chinese, mathematics, foreign language, and physical education. Compared with general senior secondary education, there might be fewer hours of instruction for the general courses as well as a lack of courses in both science (physics and chemistry) and humanities (history and geography). Instead of the practicum, students may have the option to spend the last year in school preparing for the NCEE.

Pattern 2. Programs that recruit general senior secondary graduates usually teach specialty subjects only. In the 1980s, such programs were quite popular. They admitted students by NCEE scores, and the length of study was two or three years. Currently many schools admit senior secondary graduates without any additional requirement, and the length of study can be one or two years.

Employment and Further Education

Specialized senior secondary education has a strong applied focus. Schools often have established relations with some employers where students can have their practicum. Curriculum usually includes special training courses to help students take standard tests to obtain technical certificates. This is to ensure that most students will receive "double certificates" - a certificate of graduation from specialized senior secondary school and a technical certificate in their chosen occupation.

Before 2000, access to further education was somewhat limited. Specialized senior secondary graduates had to work for two or three years before they could write the NCEE and get into college or university. Or they could take examinations specially designed for graduates of specialized senior secondary schools, vocational senior secondary schools and skilled worker

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schools to be admitted into *zhuanke*-level technical/vocational programs.

Since 2000 the Ministry of Education has allowed specialized senior secondary graduates to take the NCEE in the year of their graduation. To help their students pass the NCEE, some schools have revised the curriculum to allow more time for general subjects as opposed to specialty subjects and practicum.

Conclusion

For historical reasons, specialized senior secondary education has two major patterns that differ in admissions requirement and the length and content of study. Therefore a certificate of graduation from specialized senior secondary school will be assessed according to the pattern it follows and in the context of previous study (junior secondary or senior secondary).

Pattern 1: Three-year (or four-year) combined general and specialized senior secondary education. Such programs require junior secondary graduation for admission. The curriculum includes both general and specialized courses. Graduates can either seek employment or pursue further education, often in vocational fields at the *zhuanke* level. Based on the above information and placement recommendations from other evaluation resources, IQAS compares the certificate of graduation from specialized senior secondary school, pattern 1 to the completion of Grade Twelve, including vocational study in xxx.

Pattern 2: Two-year (or one-year) specialized senior secondary education. Such programs recruit general senior secondary graduates and mainly focus on specialty courses. Graduates can either seek employment or pursue further education. Based on the above information and placement recommendations from other evaluation resources, IQAS compares the certificate of graduation from specialized senior secondary school, pattern 2 to the completion of two years (or one year) of vocational study in xxx.

Grading:

Table 1. Percentage Scale

Chinese %	IQAS %
100	100
99	99
98	97
97	96
96	95
95	94
94	92
93	91
92	90
91	89
90	87
89	86
88	85
87	84
86	83
85	81

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84	80
83	79
82	78
81	76
80	75
79	74
78	73
77	71
76	70
75	69
74	68
73	66
72	65
71	64
70	63
69	61
68	60
67	59
66	58
65	56
64	55
63	54
62	53
61	51
60	50

Table 2. Five-Level Scale

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
90-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	94
80-89	良好 or 良	B	Very Good	82
70-79	中等 or 中	C	Good	69
60-69	及格	D	Pass	57
0-59	不及格	E/F	Fail	Fail

Table 3. Four-Level Scale (I)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
85-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	90
70-84	良好 or 良	B	Good	71
60-69	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	56
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 2. Four-Level Scale (II)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
86-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	91
76-85	良好 or 良	B	Good	75
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

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Table 5. Four-Level Scale (III)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
91-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	95
76-90	良好 or 良	B	Good	79
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Note: Pass 合格 /fail 不合格 grades may be assigned to some non-core courses.

Comments:

This template applies only to specialized senior secondary schools, which are one of the three main types of secondary technical-vocational schools in China:

Specialized senior secondary school (中等专业学校)

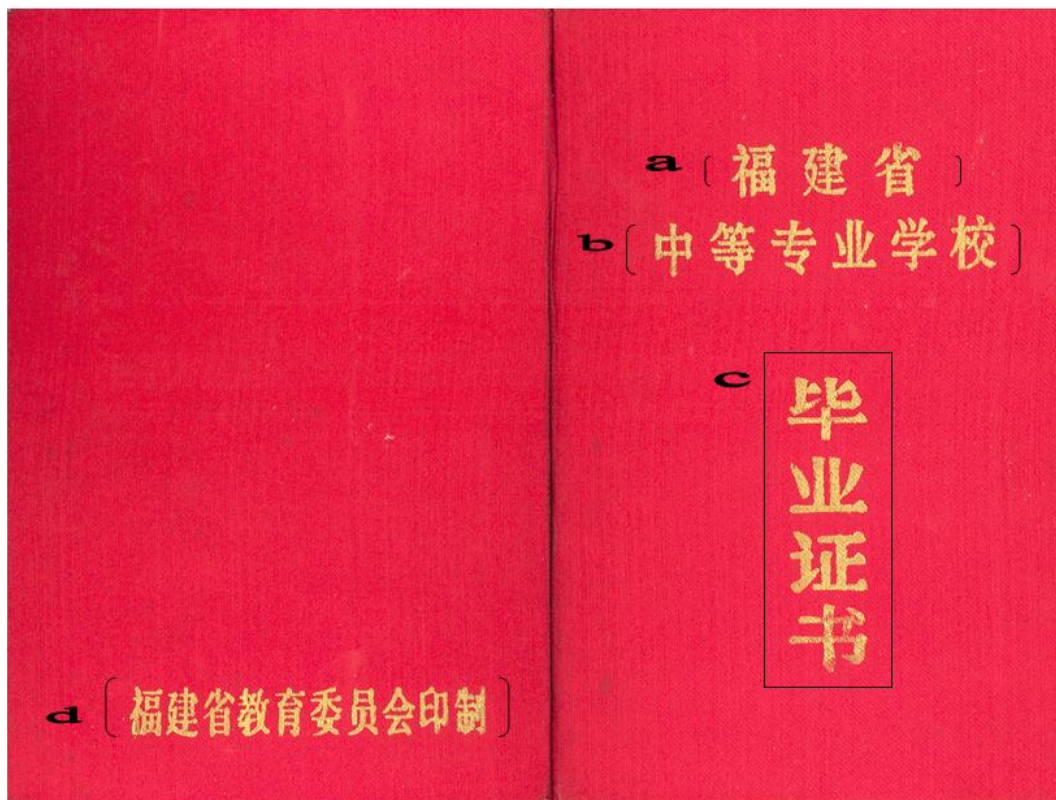
Vocational senior secondary school (职业高级中学)

Skilled workers school (技工学校)

Certificates of graduation from the other two types of schools are to be assessed on an individual basis. For more information, refer to *Technical-Vocational Education, China Country Profile*.

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Certificate of Graduation from Specialized Senior Secondary School (1995), Part 1

a: Fujian Province

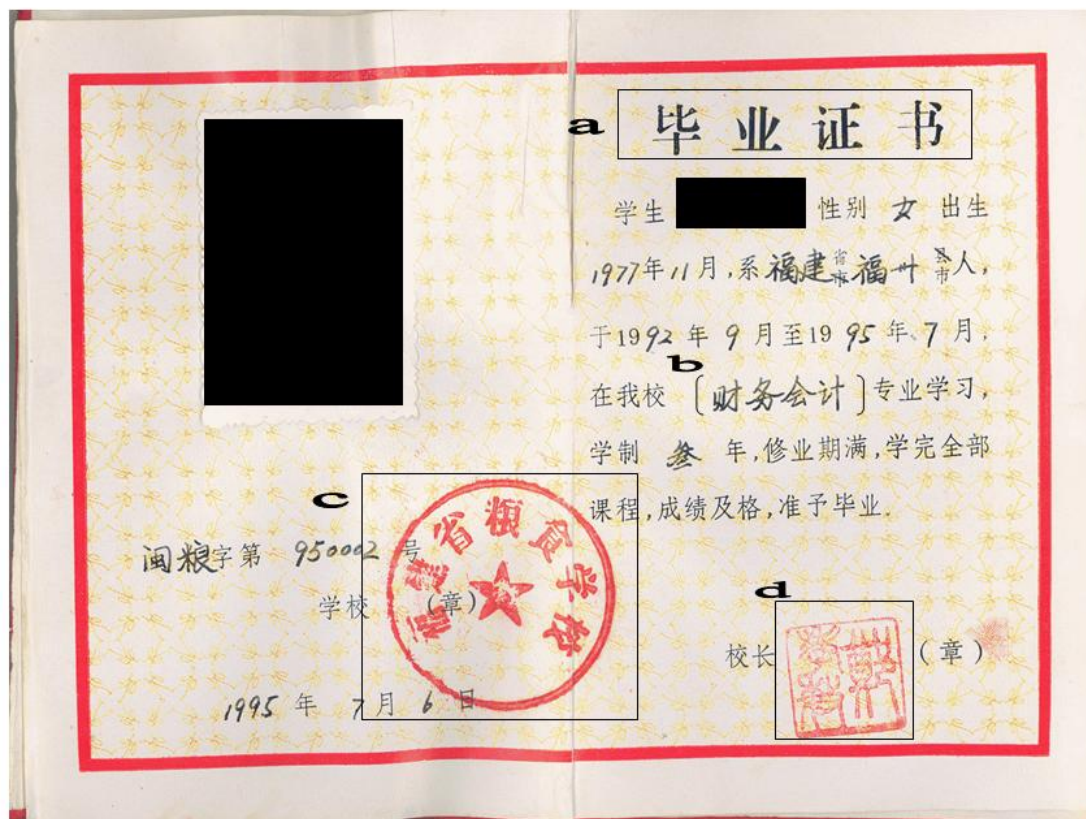
b: Specialized Senior Secondary School

c: Certificate of Graduation

d: Printed by Fujian Provincial Education Committee

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Certificate of Graduation from Specialized Senior Secondary School (1995), Part 2

- a: Certificate of Graduation
- b: Financial Accounting
- c: Seal of Fujian Grain School
- d: Principal's Seal

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Country: China	Official Country Name: People's Republic of China	Region: China
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Status: Published	Date Entered: Nov 25, 2004
Category: Post-secondary	Date Revised: Oct 12, 2005

Credential Actual Name: 专科毕业证书 专科毕业文凭 大专毕业证书	Credential English Name: Certificate of Graduation (2-3 year postsecondary program)
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Credential Alternate Actual Name(s):	Credential Alternate English Name(s): 'Zhuanke' Certificate of Graduation 'Zhuanke' Diploma Diploma (2-3 year postsecondary program)
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Time Period Credential Offered: 1979-Current
Issuing Body: Regular and Adult Universities and Colleges
Admission Requirements:

Regular Higher Education

- 1) Completion of senior secondary school (representing 12 years of schooling since the late 1980s), and 2) passing the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE).

The NCEE is held for three to four consecutive days in the summer. *Zhuanke* generally requires lower NCEE scores than *benke* (4-5 year undergraduate programs), though *zhuanke* programs in popular majors offered at prestigious institutions may require higher scores than some *benke* programs.

Most applicants to *zhuanke* programs have completed general/academic senior secondary school. Students who graduated from three types of non-academic senior secondary schools (specialized senior secondary schools, vocational senior secondary schools, and skilled workers schools) used to have limited access to regular higher education. They had to work for two or three years after graduation before they were allowed to take the NCEE, or they could take specially designed entrance examinations to get into *zhuanke*-level technical-vocational programs. Since 2000 the Ministry of Education has allowed such students to take the NCEE in the year of their graduation.

Adult Higher Education

- 1) Completion of senior secondary school (representing 12 years of schooling since the late 1980s) or over the age of 19, and 2) passing the National Adult College Entrance Examination (NACEE).

Before 1986, institutions or provincial educational authorities designed and administered the entrance examinations for adult higher education programs. Since 1986, applicants must take the

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NACEE. Before 2004, the NACEE was held in mid-May, and students started school in September, just like students in the regular higher education sector. Since 2004 the NACEE has been moved to October, with the academic year starting in spring the following year.

Program Description:

- Three-year (or two-year) postsecondary diploma program.

On a full-time basis, *zhuanke* (literal translation: specialized course) usually takes three years for programs in science, technology, medicine, and law, and two years for programs in arts and humanities, teacher education, agriculture, and business. Most institutions use the credit system, with one credit representing 16-18 class hours of coursework. The curriculum consists of public foundation courses, specialty foundation courses, and specialty courses. It may also include a practicum and graduation project or graduation thesis.

Regular Higher Education

Students generally study on a full-time basis, though they may be allowed up to six years to complete the program. Total credits of about 120 to 140 are required for graduation from a three-year program, or 90 to 100 credits from a two-year program. The programs are offered by regular higher education institutions. In recent years some prestigious institutions have curtailed their *zhuanke* programs to focus on *benke* and graduate education.

Adult Higher Education

Students may study either full-time or part-time. Total credits of about 100 to 110 are required for graduation from a three-year program, or 80 to 90 from a two-year program. Part-time study usually takes one more year (3-4 years instead of 2-3 years), or two more years in the case of correspondence programs. Programs are offered by some regular institutions (through their adult education or continuing education schools) and about 500 adult higher education institutions.

Provides Access to in the Home Country:

- Employment.

As a type of higher education qualifications, a *zhuanke* certificate of graduation entitles an individual to a prescribed level of salary and benefits if employed in the public sector. *Zhuanke* provides a fast track to employment as it usually requires three years of full-time study, compared with four years for *benke* programs. *Zhuanke* programs are available in many of the same fields of study as *benke* but have a more applied focus.

- Admission into *benke*/bachelor programs or even master's programs.

A *zhuanke* certificate of graduation gives individuals easy access to further academic study. They may take a *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading program, often through the adult higher education sector, to obtain a *benke* certificate of graduation and possibly a bachelor degree.

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A *zhuanke* certificate of graduation plus at least two years of related work experience entitles an individual to claim "educational competence" comparable to *benke* and take the entrance examinations for master degree programs.

Placement Recommendations:

IERF 2004

AA/AS/AAS [Associate of Arts/Associate of Science/Associate of Applied Science] with up to 90 semester credits of undergraduate coursework

NOOSR 2003

[two- or three-year programs offered by degree-granting institutions]

Comparable to the educational level of an AQF [Australian Qualification Framework] Diploma.

[two- or three-year evening or correspondence study programs from degree-granting institutions]
Comparable to the educational level of an AQF [Australian Qualification Framework] Diploma.

[two or three-year full-time programs from non-degree granting adult higher education institutions]

Comparable to the educational level of an AQF [Australian Qualification Framework] Certificate IV.

PIER 2000

May be considered for undergraduate admission, with transfer credit determined through a course-by-course analysis.

UK NARIC 2005

[regular higher education]

Is considered comparable to Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) / Year 2 of Bachelor degree standard

[adult higher education, two-year programs in science and technology subjects] Is considered comparable to BTEC Higher National Certificate (HNC) standard.

[There is no recommendation for three-year programs, or programs in arts and humanities subjects in adult higher education]

IQAS Recommendations for:

Employment

Generally compares to the completion of a three-year (or two-year) postsecondary Diploma with a focus in xxx.

Post-secondary Admission

Generally compares to the completion of a three-year (or two-year) postsecondary Diploma with a focus in xxx.

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Course Equivalencies

30-level courses (grade 12) if no secondary documents are presented.

IQAS Rationale:

Background

Zhuanke qualification programs existed before the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). The current system of *zhuanke* education began in 1977, and the first *zhuanke* certificates of graduation were issued two years later, in 1979.

Adult Higher Education

Adult higher education was established immediately after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, offering both qualification programs (mostly *zhuanke*) and non-qualification programs (short-term training classes). It was restored soon after the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). For many years, admission into adult higher education was administered by either institutions or provincial educational authorities. In 1986, the Ministry of Education unified admission standards for adult higher education by introducing the National Adult College Entrance Examinations (NACEE). The NACEE is administered at the same time across the country, and examination papers are designed by the Ministry of Education. There are three versions of the NACEE for admissions into three types of programs: *zhuanke*, *benke*, and *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading programs. Originally designed for mature students, the NACEE is currently open to all applicants, including senior secondary students graduating in the same year. In 2003, nearly 4 million students sat the NACEE.

Like the NCEE, the NACEE is based on the national curriculum and syllabuses for compulsory subjects for senior secondary schools, and has changed in format and content over the years. It is considered challenging, though less competitive than the NCEE. Before 2004, the NACEE was held in mid-May, and students started school in September just like students in the regular higher education sector. Since 2004 the NACEE has been moved to October, with the academic year starting in spring the following year. In 2004, examinees applying to *zhuanke* programs could choose the science track (Chinese, mathematics for science students, and foreign language) or the arts and humanities track (Chinese, mathematics for humanities students, and foreign language). Compared with the "3+x" pattern of the NCEE, the *zhuanke* version of NACEE does not have the "x" component (physics and chemistry for science students, or history and geography for humanities students).

A number of regular institutions offer adult education (both *zhuanke* and *benke*) through correspondence and evening as well as day-time programs. Most *zhuanke* programs in the adult higher education sector are offered by around 500 adult higher education institutions, which include radio and TV universities (which also operate in the regular higher education sector), spare-time universities, employees' universities (also translated as staff and workers universities), management cadres' colleges, colleges of education (different from teachers' colleges, which are regular institutions), teacher in-service training colleges, and independent correspondence

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colleges.

According to curriculum standards set by the State Education Commission in 1992, programs in science, engineering, medicine, and law usually last three years full time or four years part-time, with a total of 1800-2000 instructional hours. Programs in humanities, teacher education, agriculture, finance, and management usually last two years full time or three years part time, with a total of 1400-1600 instructional hours. Each year has about 40 school weeks, with 20-22 instructional hours per week for full-time study and about 12 instructional hours per week for part-time study.

Employment and Further Education

Employment policy in China is traditionally based on educational qualifications rather than academic degrees. Employers in the public sector and some private employers offer different levels of salary and benefits to holders of different educational qualifications (*zhuanke*, *benke*, graduate education at master's level, and graduate education at doctoral level). As the most basic higher education qualification, *zhuanke* provides a fast track to employment as it usually requires three years of full-time study, compared with four years for *benke* programs. Like postsecondary diploma programs in Canada, a *zhuanke* program has an applied focus, though it usually lasts longer (three instead of two years) and has a stronger theoretical component. *Zhuanke* programs are available in many of the same fields of study as *benke*. A *zhuanke* program generally follows a pattern similar to a *benke* program in the same specialty, though it does not have the same depth or breadth of study due to the short length and the lack of the graduation thesis requirement.

Individuals who have received *zhuanke* qualifications from adult higher education are entitled by law to the same level of salary and benefits as those with *zhuanke* qualifications obtained through the regular higher education sector, though regular higher education is more highly regarded than adult higher education in China.

A *zhuanke* certificate of graduation provides easy access to further study. At regular institutions, a small percentage (e.g. 15%) of top *zhuanke* students may be allowed to transfer into *benke* programs in the same field. A few provinces administer unified examinations that enable outstanding *zhuanke* students to transfer to *benke* programs at a different institution within the province. In such cases, students are admitted as *zhuanke* students but graduate with *benke* qualifications. Another popular option is for those who have a *zhuanke* certificate of graduation to take an upgrading program, often through the adult higher education sector, to obtain a *benke* qualification and possibly a bachelor degree. Such an upgrading program usually takes two years full-time or three years part-time.

A *zhuanke* certificate of graduation through adult education gives an individual about the same access to further education as a *zhuanke* certificate of graduation from regular higher education. The individual may upgrade to *benke* qualification and bachelor degree through self-study examinations or the adult higher education sector. The only restriction is that the individual will not be able to upgrade to *benke*/bachelor degree through the regular higher education sector.

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A *zhuanke* certificate of graduation plus at least two years of related work experience entitles an individual to claim "educational competence" comparable to a *benke* qualification and challenge the entrance examinations for master degree programs. To be admitted into a master degree program, such an individual has to meet additional requirements (as compared with someone with a *benke* qualification), which usually include passing additional examinations in a few core courses at the *benke* level. Anecdotal evidence suggests that few people with a *zhuanke* qualification can get into a master degree program as the entrance examinations are highly competitive even for *benke* graduates.

Conclusion

Admission into *zhuanke* programs requires the completion of senior secondary school (12 years of schooling) or equivalent and passing the NCEE or NACEE. The length of study is usually two to three years full time or three to four years part time, and the curriculum includes both academic and applied subjects. As a recognized higher education qualification, a *zhuanke* certificate of graduation entitles an individual to a prescribed level of salary and benefits if employed in the public sector. *Zhuanke* education is fully integrated with the rest of the higher education system and can lead to further education at the *benke*/bachelor and even master's levels. Though regular higher education is more highly regarded than adult higher education in China, and some evaluation resources give lower placement recommendations for *zhuanke* certificates issued by adult higher education institutions, IQAS does not make such a distinction because *zhuanke* from either the regular or the adult sector provides the same level of education and the same access to employment and further education. Based on the above information, IQAS compares the *zhuanke* certificate of graduation (regular or adult higher education) to the completion of a three-year (or two-year) postsecondary Diploma with a focus in xxx.

Grading:

Table 1. Percentage Scale

Chinese %	IQAS %
100	100
99	99
98	97
97	96
96	95
95	94
94	92
93	91
92	90
91	89
90	87
89	86
88	85
87	84
86	83
85	81
84	80
83	79

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82	78
81	76
80	75
79	74
78	73
77	71
76	70
75	69
74	68
73	66
72	65
71	64
70	63
69	61
68	60
67	59
66	58
65	56
64	55
63	54
62	53
61	51
60	50

Table 2. Five-Level Scale

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
90-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	94
80-89	良好 or 良	B	Very Good	82
70-79	中等 or 中	C	Good	69
60-69	及格	D	Pass	57
0-59	不及格	E/F	Fail	Fail

Table 3. Four-Level Scale (I)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
85-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	90
70-84	良好 or 良	B	Good	71
60-69	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	56
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 3. Four-Level Scale (II)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
86-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	91
76-85	良好 or 良	B	Good	75
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

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Table 5. Four-Level Scale (III)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
91-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	95
76-90	良好 or 良	B	Good	79
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

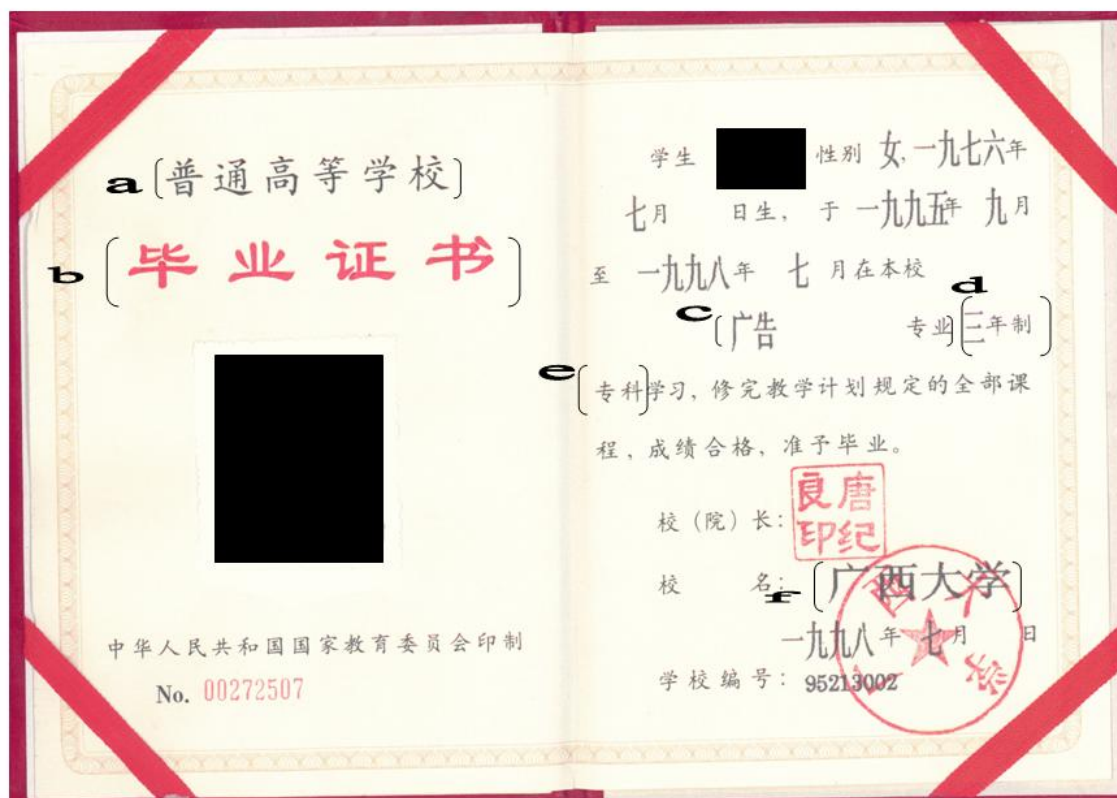
Note: Pass 合格 /fail 不合格 grades may be assigned to some non-core courses.

Comments:

This credential template applies to *zhuanke* certificates of graduation from the regular or adult higher education sector. The *zhuanke* certificate will indicate whether it is obtained through regular higher education, adult higher education, or higher education self-study examinations (see separate template).

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***Zhuanke* Certificate of Graduation, Regular Higher Education, 1998**

a: Regular Higher Education Institution

b: Certificate of Graduation

c: Major in Advertising

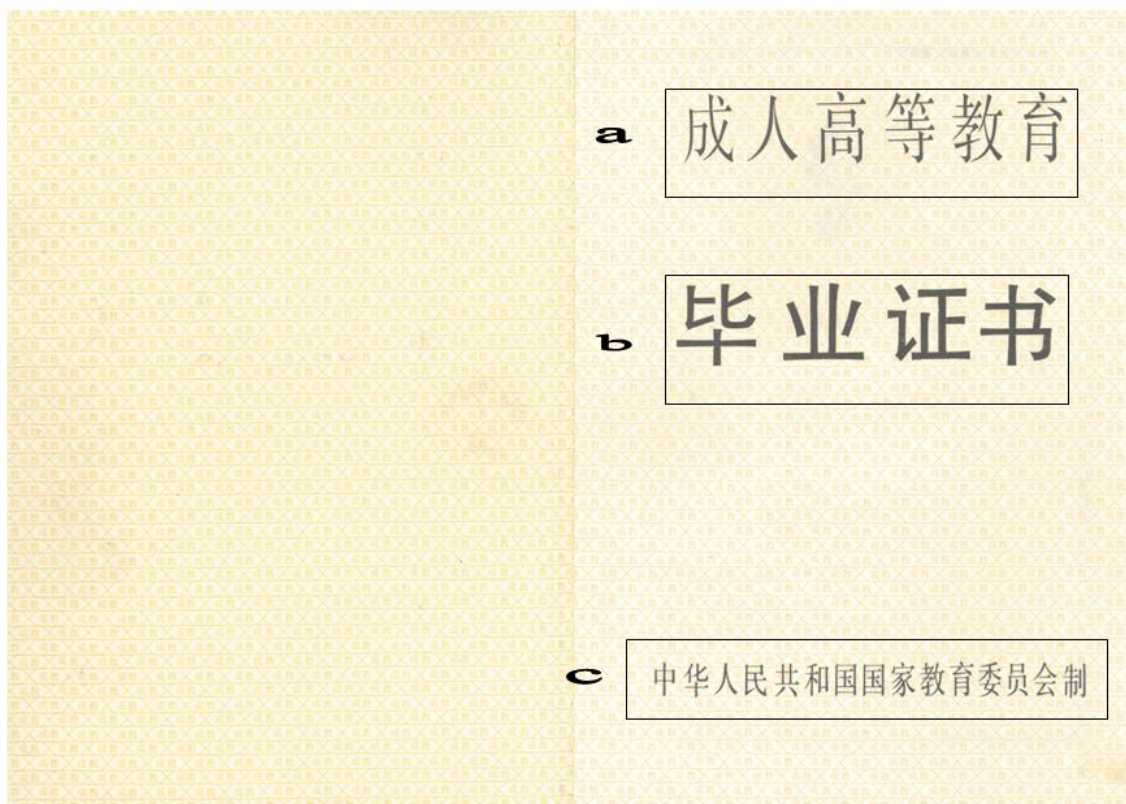
d: Three-year program

e: *Zhuanke*

f: Guangxi University

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***Zhuanke* Certificate of Graduation, Adult Higher Education, 1995, Part 1**

a: Adult Higher Education

b: Certificate of Graduation

c: Printed by the State Education Commission of the People's Republic of China

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***Zhuanke* Certificate of Graduation, Adult Higher Education, 1995, Part 1**

a: Major in Nursing

b: Half-time Study

c: Four-Year Program

d: *Zhuanke*

e: Red Seal of Harbin Medical University

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Country: China	Official Country Name: People's Republic of China	Region: China
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Status: Published	Date Entered: May 16, 2005
Category: Post-secondary	Date Revised: Oct 13, 2005

Credential Actual Name: 高等教育自学考试专科毕业证书	Credential English Name: Certificate of Graduation (2-3 year postsecondary program) through Self-Study
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Credential Alternate Actual Name(s):	Credential Alternate English Name(s): 'Zhuanke' Certificate of Graduation through Self-Study 'Zhuanke' Diploma through Self-Study Diploma (2-3 year postsecondary program) through Self-Study
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Time Period Credential Offered: 1984-Current

Issuing Body: Provincial Higher Education Self-Study Examinations Committee

Admission Requirements:

- There is no admissions requirement.

Higher Education Self-Study (also translated as Self-Taught) Examinations at the *zhuanke* level can be challenged by individuals of all educational backgrounds. A few restricted specialties only admit students who are already employed in related occupations.

Program Description:

- Postsecondary diploma program through self-study.

An individual may choose from many *zhuanke* specialties for which self-study examinations are administered in the province. Each specialty has standardized syllabuses and self-study textbooks for about 17 required courses totalling around 80 self-study credits. Students usually study on their own but may also enrol in exam-preparation programs offered at various higher education institutions. A student file will be set up after the individual has passed the first subject in their chosen specialty. A student may take exams in several subjects each time and receive a certificate listing all the subjects that have been passed. Retakes are allowed. It may take three or four years to complete all required courses. Examinations are designed at the national and provincial levels and administered by a number of well-known degree-granting institutions designated by the provincial self-study examinations committee. Certificates of graduation, issued twice a year in June and December, bear the stamps of both the provincial higher education self-study examinations committee and the exam-administering institution.

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Provides Access to in the Home Country:

- Employment.

As a type of higher education qualifications, a *zhuanke* certificate of graduation entitles an individual to a prescribed level of salary and benefits if employed in the public sector. Compared with *benke*, *zhuanke* provides a fast track to employment as it involves a shorter length of study and usually has a more applied focus. *Zhuanke* programs through self-study are generally offered in fields of study perceived to be in high demand in the local economy.

- Admission into *benke*/bachelor adult education programs and even master's programs.

A *zhuanke* certificate of graduation through self-study gives an individual about the same access to further education as a *zhuanke* certificate of graduation from the regular higher education sector. The individual may upgrade to a *benke* qualification and possibly a bachelor degree through self-study examinations or the adult higher education sector.

A *zhuanke* certificate plus at least two years of related work experience entitles an individual to claim "educational competence" comparable to *benke* and take the entrance examinations for master's programs.

Placement Recommendations:

IERF 2004

AA/AS/AAS (Associate of Arts/Associate of Science/Associate of Applied Science) with up to 90 semester credits of undergraduate coursework

NOOSR 2003

All self-study examination qualifications (except for Bachelor degrees) are assessed on a case-by-case basis.

PIER 2000

May be considered for undergraduate admission, with transfer credit determined through a course-by-course analysis.

UK NARIC 2005

[two year programs in science and technology subjects] Is considered comparable to BTEC Higher National Certificate (HNC) standard.

[There is no recommendation for programs in arts and humanities subjects through self-study]

IQAS Recommendations for:

Employment

Generally compares to the completion of a postsecondary Diploma with a focus in xxx.

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Post-secondary Admission

Generally compares to the completion of a postsecondary Diploma with a focus in xxx.

Course Equivalencies

30-level courses (grade 12) if no secondary documents are presented.

IQAS Rationale:

Background

Higher Education Self-Study (also translated as Self-Taught) Examinations allow people from all educational backgrounds to obtain recognized *zhuanke* and *benke* qualifications and bachelor degrees by challenging nationally standardized examinations. The Ministry of Education first introduced the examinations in Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin and Liaoning in 1981. Students had to pass a prescribed number of subjects in order to receive a certificate of graduation. The first batch of 133 students graduated in 1984. By 1985, all provinces had established self-study examination programs. The current system of self-study examinations has been formalized since the promulgation of the *Provisional Regulations on Higher Education Self-Study Examinations* on March 3, 1988. By 1999, 164, 900 and 2.28 million people had received *benke* and *zhuanke* qualifications respectively through self-study examinations. The *Higher Education Law* of 1999 reasserted the recognition status of higher education self-study examinations.

Administration

Several organizations in the Ministry of Education oversee the program at the national level. The Higher Education Self-Study Examination Guidance Committee is the leading body. The Higher Education Self-Study Examination Office oversees everyday work. The Higher Education Self-Study Examination Specialty Committee creates examination plans and syllabuses, organizes the compilation of self-study textbooks, and exercises overall quality assessment and control. The National Educational Examination and Self-Study Examination Research Committee conducts research on self-study examination policies and guidelines. The national bodies guide and supervise self-study examination committees and self-study examination offices at the provincial, prefecture and municipal levels. A number of regular full-time universities and colleges are selected in each province to participate in designing and administering the examinations. Examinations are administered two to four times a year depending on the province.

Program Description

Examinations are administered two or four times a year, depending on the province. The list published by the Ministry of Education in 1998 contains 224 specialties in 11 of the 12 major categories for academic degrees (excluding management). Of the 224 specialties, 141 are offered as *zhuanke* programs, 22 at the *benke* level, and 61 as *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading programs. In 2002, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health jointly decided to stop offering

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programs in medicine through self-study examinations and distance learning (correspondence, radio and TV, and online programs).

Individuals can take Higher Education Self-Study Examinations at the *zhuanke* level regardless of their educational background. They may choose from many *zhuanke* specialties for which self-study examinations are available in the province. A few restricted specialties only admit students who are already employed in related occupations. Each specialty has standardized syllabuses and self-study textbooks for about 17 required courses totalling around 80 credits. Students may study on their own or enrol in exam-preparation programs offered at various higher education institutions. In 2005 the Ministry of Education required regular institutions to stop offering full-time exam-preparation programs.

A student file will be set up after the individual has passed the first subject in their chosen specialty. A student may take exams in several subjects each time and receive a certificate listing all the subjects that have been passed. Retakes are allowed. It may take three or four years to complete all required courses. Examinations are designed at the national and provincial levels and administered by a number of well-known degree-granting institutions designated by the provincial self-study examinations committee. Certificates of graduation, issued twice a year in June and December, bear the stamps of both the provincial higher education self-study examinations committee and the exam-administering institution.

The majority of people who pursue higher education through self-study obtain a *zhuanke*-level credential first. Then they may take an upgrading program in adult higher education or through self-study to obtain a *benke*-level credential and possibly a bachelor's degree.

Employment and Further Education

Employment policy in China is traditionally based on educational qualifications rather than academic degrees. Employers in the public sector and some private employers offer different levels of salary and benefits to holders of different educational qualifications (*zhuanke*, *benke*, graduate education at master's level, and graduate education at doctoral level). As the most basic higher education qualification, *zhuanke* provides a fast track to employment as it involves a short length of study and usually has a more applied focus than *benke* programs.

Individuals who hold *zhuanke* qualifications through self-study are entitled by law to the same level of salary and benefits as those with *zhuanke* qualifications obtained through the regular higher education sector. In reality, credentials earned through full-time study at regular higher education institutions are more highly regarded than credentials obtained from the adult education sector or through self-study. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some employers receive self-study examination qualifications more favourably than those from the adult higher education sector because the examinations are considered very challenging, with standards set at the national level.

A *zhuanke* certificate of graduation through self-study gives an individual about the same access to further education as a *zhuanke* certificate of graduation from the regular higher education

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sector. The individual may choose to upgrade to a *benke* qualification and possibly a bachelor degree through self-study examinations or the adult higher education sector. The only restriction is that the individual will not be able to upgrade to *benke*/bachelor degree through the regular higher education sector. A *zhuanke* certificate plus at least two years of related work experience entitles an individual to claim "educational competence" comparable to a *benke* qualification and challenge the entrance examinations for master's programs. To be admitted into a master's program, such an individual has to meet additional requirements (as compared with a *benke* graduate) that usually include passing additional examinations in a few core courses at the *benke* level. Anecdotal evidence suggests that few people with a *zhuanke* qualification can get into a master degree program as the entrance examinations are highly competitive even for *benke* graduates.

Conclusion

Though there is no admissions requirement, *zhuanke*-level self-study examinations are considered challenging as they follow the same standards as *zhuanke* programs offered by regular higher education institutions. Individuals usually take three to four years to complete all required courses and receive the *zhuanke* certificate of graduation. The certificate entitles them to the same level of salary and benefits as those with *zhuanke* qualifications obtained through full-time study in the regular higher education sector. It also allows them to enrol in upgrading programs through self-study examinations or the adult higher education sector to get *benke* certificates of graduation and bachelor degrees. Though regular higher education in China is more highly regarded than alternative routes such as self-study examinations, and some evaluation resources give lower placement recommendations (or no recommendation at all) for *zhuanke* certificates obtained through self-study, IQAS does not make such a distinction because *zhuanke* through self-study provides the same level of education and the same access to employment and further education as *zhuanke* from regular higher education. Based on the above information, IQAS compares the *zhuanke* certificate of graduation through self-study to the completion of a postsecondary Diploma with a focus in xxx.

Grading:

Table 1. Percentage Scale

Chinese %	IQAS %
100	100
99	99
98	97
97	96
96	95
95	94
94	92
93	91
92	90
91	89
90	87
89	86
88	85
87	84

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86	83
85	81
84	80
83	79
82	78
81	76
80	75
79	74
78	73
77	71
76	70
75	69
74	68
73	66
72	65
71	64
70	63
69	61
68	60
67	59
66	58
65	56
64	55
63	54
62	53
61	51
60	50

Table 2. Five-Level Scale

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
90-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	94
80-89	良好 or 良	B	Very Good	82
70-79	中等 or 中	C	Good	69
60-69	及格	D	Pass	57
0-59	不及格	E/F	Fail	Fail

Table 3. Four-Level Scale (I)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
85-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	90
70-84	良好 or 良	B	Good	71
60-69	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	56
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 4. Four-Level Scale (II)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
86-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	91
76-85	良好 or 良	B	Good	75
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

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Table 5. Four-Level Scale (III)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
91-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	95
76-90	良好 or 良	B	Good	79
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Note: Pass 合格 /fail 不合格 grades may be assigned to some non-core courses.

Comments:

This template applies only to *zhuanke* certificate of graduation obtained through higher education self-study examinations. The certificate should bear the stamps of both the provincial higher education self-study examinations committee and the exam-administering institution.

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a [高等教育自学考试]
b [毕 业 证 书]

c [英语] **d** [专业] (专科) 高等教育自学考试, 于 二〇〇〇年六月 全部课程成绩合格, 经审定, 准予毕业。

e

f

黑龙江省高等教育自学考试委员会
自考证书登记第 0010086 号
身份证号 [REDACTED]

二〇〇〇年六月 三十日

Zhuanke Certificate of Graduation through Self-Study, 2000

a: Higher Education Self-Study Examinations

b: Certificate of Graduation

c: Major in English

d: *Zhuanke*

e: Red seal of Higher Education Self-Study Examinations Committee, Helongjiang Province

f: Red seal of Harbin Normal University

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Country: China	Official Country Name: People's Republic of China	Region: China
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Status: Published	Date Entered: Jan 20, 2005
Category: University	Date Revised: Oct 14, 2005

Credential Actual Name: 本科毕业证书 本科毕业文凭	Credential English Name: Certificate of Graduation (4-5 year undergraduate program)
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Credential Alternate Actual Name(s):	Credential Alternate English Name(s): 'Benke' Certificate of Graduation 'Benke' Graduation Diploma
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Time Period Credential Offered: 1981-Current
Issuing Body: Regular or Adult Universities and Colleges
Admission Requirements:

Regular Higher Education

- 1) Completion of senior secondary school (representing 12 years of schooling since the late 1980s), and 2) passing the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE).

The NCEE is held for three to four consecutive days in the summer. Based on their NCEE scores, students are admitted in several "batches" into key public institutions, ordinary public institutions, and private (*minban*) institutions. Prestigious institutions require much higher scores than ordinary institutions. *Benke* admission generally requires higher scores than *zhuanke* (2-3 year postsecondary programs).

Adult Higher Education

- 1) Completion of senior secondary school (representing 12 years of schooling since the late 1980s) or over the age of 19, and 2) passing the National Adult College Entrance Examination (NACEE).

Since 1986 applicants must take the NACEE to be admitted into adult higher education programs. Before that, institutions or provincial educational authorities designed and administered the entrance examinations. Before 2004, the NACEE was held in mid-May, and students started school in September, just like students in the regular higher education sector. Since 2004 the NACEE has been moved to October, with the academic year starting in spring the following year.

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Program Description:

- Four-year (or five-year) undergraduate program

Full-time *benke* (literal translation: essential course) takes four years, or five years in some fields such as certain types of technology programs. A typical four-year program has seven semesters of coursework, with the last semester mostly devoted to the graduation thesis or project. Many higher education institutions use the credit system, with one credit representing 16-18 class hours of coursework. Total credits of about 160-190 are required for graduation. Upon successful completion of a *benke* program, students receive a *benke* certificate of graduation. The certificate of graduation indicates that the student has fulfilled all requirements of the curriculum, passing the examinations of all required courses and the graduation thesis or project.

Regular Higher Education

Benke programs in regular higher education are the same as bachelor degree programs. Students generally study on a full-time basis. Upon successful completion of such a program, the majority of students (e.g. 90%) receive a bachelor degree in addition to the *benke* certificate of graduation.

Adult Higher Education

Benke programs in adult higher education are offered by both regular and adult universities and colleges. Students usually study on a part-time basis (evenings and weekends), and may take five years to complete a typical four-year program. Upon successful completion of such a program, only a small number of students (e.g. 30%) receive a bachelor degree in addition to the *benke* certificate of graduation.

Provides Access to in the Home Country:

- Employment.

Employment policy in China has traditionally been based on educational qualifications rather than academic degrees. Employers in the public sector and some private employers offer different levels of salary and benefits to holders of different educational qualifications (*zhuanke*, *benke*, graduate education at master's level, and graduate education at doctoral level). Many employers view a *benke* certificate of graduation the same as a bachelor degree. Professional entry-level positions in the central and provincial governments typically require a *benke* qualification. Among employers, regular education is more highly regarded than adult education.

- Admission into master's programs.

A *benke* certificate of graduation also gives an individual the same access to further education as a bachelor degree. To be admitted to a master's degree program, an applicant must have a *benke* certificate of graduation and pass the graduate entrance examinations at both national and institutional levels. Please note that a bachelor degree is not needed for admission into master's

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programs in China.

Placement Recommendations:

IERF 2004

Up to 180 semester credits of undergraduate coursework/professional coursework, depending on length and content of studies.

NOOSR 2003

[Degree-granting institutions]

Comparable to the educational level of an AQF (Australian Qualifications Framework) Advanced Diploma.

PIER 2000

May be considered for undergraduate admission, with transfer credit determined through a course-by-course analysis.

UK NARIC 2005

[regular higher education]

N/A

[adult higher education, science and technology subjects]

Is considered comparable to BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) standard

May be considered for credit transfer purposes for entry onto second or third year of degree courses, subject to course relevance and English language proficiency.

[adult higher education, other subjects]

Is considered comparable to Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) / Year 2 of Bachelor degree standard

May be considered for credit transfer purposes for entry onto second or third year of degree courses, subject to course relevance and English language proficiency.

IQAS Recommendations for:

Employment

Generally compares to the completion of four years (or five years) of undergraduate study in xxx.

Post-secondary Admission

Generally compares to the completion of four years (or five years) of undergraduate study in xxx.

Course Equivalencies

30-level courses (grade 12) if no secondary documents are presented.

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IQAS Rationale:

General Background

First introduced in China in 1912, *benke* has been a major form of higher education since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. *Benke* education was discontinued during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), when universities were either closed down or only offered shortened programs. The current system of *benke* education began in 1977, with students admitted through the NCEE (National College Entrance Examination), and the first *benke* certificates of graduation were issued four years later, in 1981.

Chinese higher education used to be under heavy Soviet influence, with students trained in narrow specializations in order to fulfill the perceived manpower needs of the economy. A restructuring of *benke* programs took place in the mid-1980s to broaden the specializations, expand the knowledge base of the students, and encourage interdisciplinary studies. The total number of specialties or majors has been reduced from 1,400 in the mid-1980s to around 200 in 2005.

Adult Higher Education

Adult higher education was established immediately after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, offering both qualification programs (*zhuanke* and *benke*) and non-qualification programs (short-term training classes). It was restored soon after the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). In the early years, admission into adult higher education was administered by either institutions or provincial educational authorities. In 1986 the Ministry of Education introduced the National Adult College Entrance Examinations (NACEE). The NACEE is administered at the same time across the country, and examination papers are designed by the Ministry of Education. There are three versions of the NACEE for admissions into three types of programs: *zhuanke*, *benke*, and *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading programs. In 2003, nearly 4 million people sat the NACEE.

Like the NCEE, the NACEE is based on the national curriculum and syllabuses of the compulsory subjects in senior secondary schools. It is considered challenging, though less competitive than the NCEE. Before 2004, the NACEE was held in mid-May, and students started school in September just like students in the regular higher education sector. Since 2004 the NACEE has been moved to October, with the academic year starting in spring the following year. In 2004, applicants for *benke* programs in the adult higher education sector could choose to take the examinations in the science track (Chinese, mathematics for science students, foreign language, and combined physics and chemistry) or the humanities track (Chinese, mathematics for arts and humanities students, foreign language, and combined history and geography).

In the adult higher education sector, full-length *benke* programs are less common than *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading programs. Institutions offering *benke* programs through the adult higher education sector fall into two major categories: adult higher education institutions and regular

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institutions. Adult higher education institutions include radio and TV universities, spare-time universities, employees' universities (also translated as staff and workers universities), management cadres' colleges, colleges of education (different from teachers' colleges, which are regular institutions), teacher in-service training colleges, and independent correspondence colleges. Until the early 1990s, almost all adult higher education institutions only offered *zhuanke* programs. Several hundred regular institutions, including some of the most prestigious universities in China, offer adult education in three forms: correspondence, evening study, and full-time day programs. Regardless of the type of institution offering the program, the *benke* certificate of graduation (and the bachelor degree certificate if there is one) always bears the wording "adult higher education". Compared with the regular higher education sector, *benke* programs in the adult higher education sector have fewer specialties, and some specialties such as medicine and nursing only recruit students who already hold professional licenses.

Difference between *Benke* and Bachelor Degree

Benke refers to a level of educational qualification, which has a very specific meaning and a much longer history than academic degrees (introduced in 1981) in the Chinese higher education system. For more information, refer to the China Country Profile. An individual who has received a *benke* certificate of graduation must meet additional requirements in order to be awarded a bachelor degree, and such additional requirements vary from province to province and from institution to institution. Generally speaking, students have to achieve high scores in core subjects and pass the foreign language proficiency test, and must not have suffered any disciplinary action during the course of their study. Please note that the thesis requirement is not a criterion to differentiate between the *benke* certificate and bachelor degree; all *benke* graduates must successfully complete their graduation thesis/project.

The *Regulations on Academic Degrees of the People's Republic of China* stipulates that to receive a bachelor degree, students must 1) be approved for graduation from a *benke* program by fulfilling all requirements of the curriculum, and 2) demonstrate through their grades in coursework and graduation thesis (or graduation project) that they have learned the basic theory, specialized knowledge and basic skills of the discipline and are capable of scientific research or specialized technical work. The provincial academic degree committees and degree-granting institutions prescribe specific requirements for awarding bachelor degrees to *benke* graduates. The foreign language requirement can usually be met by passing CET (College English Test) Band 4, which is designed and administered at the national level, or by passing the English "degree exam" administered by the province. An institution may designate a number of specialty courses as "degree courses" for a particular *benke* program and require students to achieve a high average grade (such as 70% or 75% and above) in these courses in order to apply for a bachelor degree. Students may also be denied a bachelor degree if they have suffered a disciplinary action (for academic dishonesty, political activism, etc.) and have not been able to have the disciplinary action revoked before their graduation.

As noted before, in regular higher education, most *benke* graduates receive bachelor degrees; in adult higher education, most *benke* graduates only receive certificates of graduation.

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Documentation

The *benke* certificate and bachelor degree certificate were combined into a single certificate for a number of years (1985-1991/1992). Otherwise they are issued as separate certificates. The *benke* certificate of graduation may contain more information than the degree certificate, such as specialty of the program, department, period of study, etc. The most current list of *benke* specialties, published by the Ministry of Education in 1998, includes 249 specialties in 11 major categories. (The 12th category, military science, is offered at military institutions.) The degree certificate is named after 12 major categories. For more information, refer to the credential template: Bachelor's Degree in xxx.

Employment and Further Education

Employment policy in China has traditionally been based on educational qualifications rather than academic degrees. Employers in the public sector and some private employers offer different levels of salary and benefits to holders of different educational qualifications (*zhuanke*, *benke*, graduate education at master's level, and graduate education at doctoral level). To many employers, a *benke* certificate of graduation is not much different from a bachelor degree. Professional entry-level positions in the central and provincial governments typically require a *benke* qualification. Individuals who have received *benke* qualifications from adult higher education are entitled by law to the same level of salary and benefits as those with *benke* qualifications obtained through the regular higher education sector, though regular higher education is more highly regarded than adult higher education in China.

A *benke* certificate of graduation gives an individual about the same access to further education as a bachelor degree. To be admitted into a master's program, an applicant must have a *benke* certificate of graduation and pass the graduate entrance examinations at both national and institutional levels. Please note that a bachelor degree is not needed for admission into master's programs. Nevertheless, since graduate admission in China is highly competitive, *benke* graduates who fail to get a bachelor degree due to low academic performance have little chance of being admitted into a master's program. Some institutions prescribe additional requirements for applicants with *benke* certificates from adult higher education, asking them to write additional exams in a few core courses at the *benke* level and submit references from two professors in their proposed field of study.

Conclusion

Admission into *benke* programs requires the completion of senior secondary school (12 years of schooling) or equivalent and passing the NCEE or NACEE, the length of study is usually four years full time or five years part time, and the curriculum includes both academic and applied subjects. Students may apply for bachelor degrees by meeting additional requirements. As a recognized higher education qualification, a *benke* certificate of graduation entitles an individual to a prescribed level of salary and benefits if employed in the public sector. It also allows the individual to write the entrance examination for master's programs. Though regular higher education is more highly regarded than adult higher education in China, and some evaluation

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resources give lower placement recommendations for *benke* certificates issued by adult higher education institutions, IQAS does not make such a distinction because *benke* from either the regular or the adult sector provides the same level of education and the same access to employment and further education. Based on the above information, IQAS compares the *benke* certificate of graduation (regular or adult higher education) to the completion of four years of undergraduate study in xxx.

Grading:

Table 1. Percentage Scale

Chinese %	IQAS %
100	100
99	99
98	97
97	96
96	95
95	94
94	92
93	91
92	90
91	89
90	87
89	86
88	85
87	84
86	83
85	81
84	80
83	79
82	78
81	76
80	75
79	74
78	73
77	71
76	70
75	69
74	68
73	66
72	65
71	64
70	63
69	61
68	60
67	59
66	58
65	56
64	55
63	54
62	53
61	51
60	50

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Table 2. Five-Level Scale

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
90-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	94
80-89	良好 or 良	B	Very Good	82
70-79	中等 or 中	C	Good	69
60-69	及格	D	Pass	57
0-59	不及格	E/F	Fail	Fail

Table 3. Four-Level Scale (I)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
85-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	90
70-84	良好 or 良	B	Good	71
60-69	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	56
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 5. Four-Level Scale (II)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
86-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	91
76-85	良好 or 良	B	Good	75
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 5. Four-Level Scale (III)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
91-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	95
76-90	良好 or 良	B	Good	79
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Note: Pass 合格 /fail 不合格 grades may be assigned to some non-core courses.

Comments:

This template applies *benke* certificate of graduation from the regular or adult higher education sector. The *benke* certificate always indicates whether it is obtained through regular higher education, adult higher education, or higher education self-study examinations.

***Benke* Certificate of Graduation Only**

If no bachelor degree is presented, the certificate of graduation is compared to the completion of four years (or five years) of undergraduate study in xxx.

***Benke* Certificate of Graduation plus Bachelor Degree**

If both the bachelor degree certificate and the *benke* certificate of graduation are presented, the two credentials will be combined (even if they are issued by different institutions) and compared to the completion of a (four-year) Bachelor's degree with a focus in xxx. There is no separate

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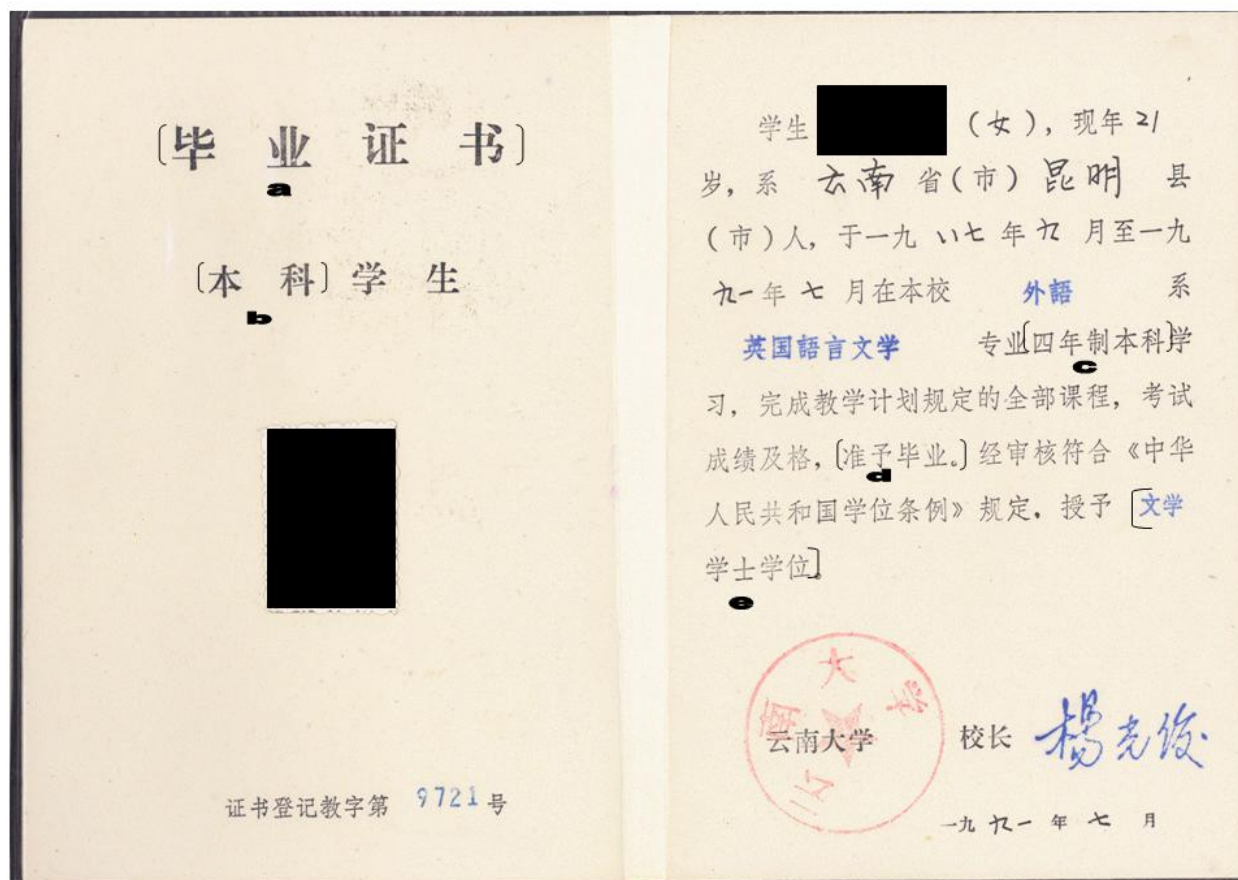
comparative statement for the *benke* certificate of graduation. This also applies to combined degree and graduation certificates issued between 1985 and 1991/1992. For more information, refer to the credential template: Bachelor's degree in xxx.

Bachelor Degree only

If only a bachelor degree is presented, the applicant should be asked to provide the *benke* certificate of graduation. **In China, a bachelor degree certificate is always accompanied by a *benke* certificate of graduation.** (Please note that a master's degree can be issued without the accompanying certificate of graduation.) The two certificates can be issued by different institutions, but are almost always issued in the same year. The certificate of graduation may contain more information about the program than the bachelor degree certificate. In addition, credential authentication in China centers on educational qualifications (documented by certificates of graduation) rather than academic degrees (documented by degree certificates). The MOE-designated website for online credential authentication (<http://www.chsi.com.cn>) can authenticate certificates of graduation issued since 1991.

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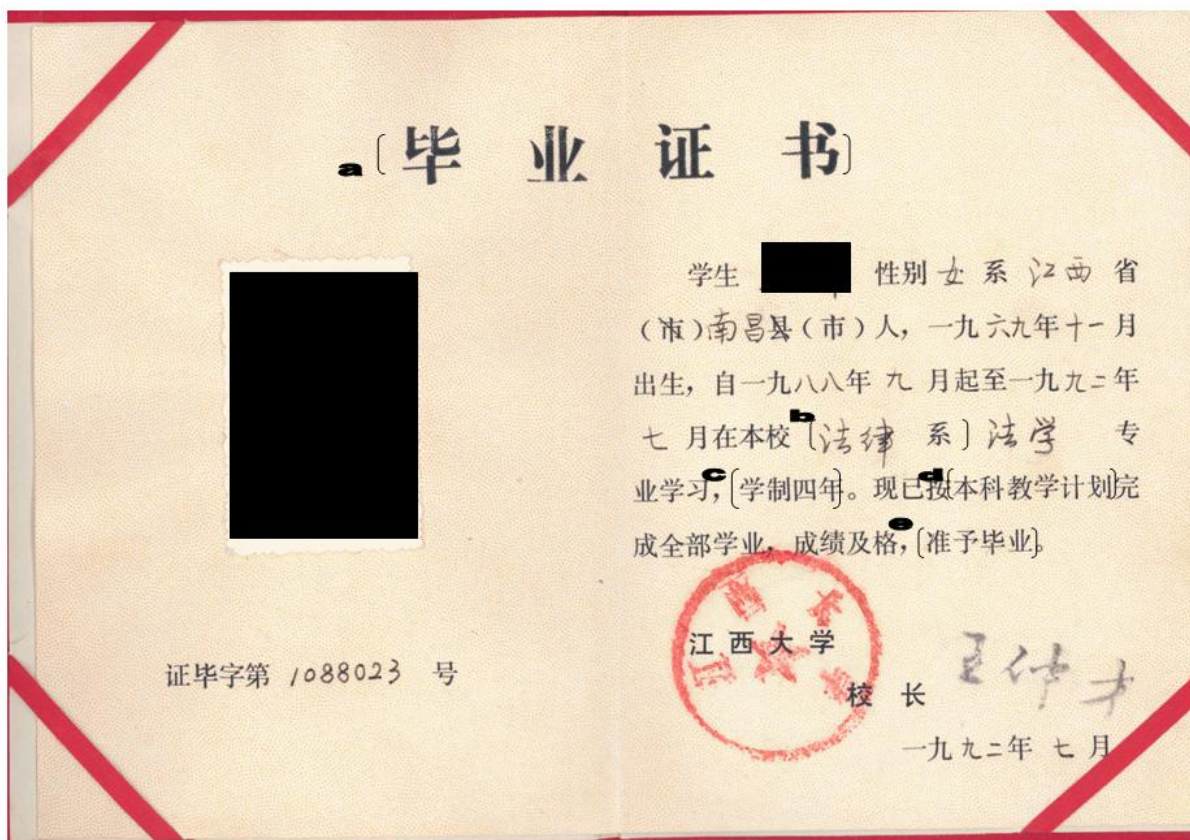


Combined *Benke* Certificate of Graduation and Bachelor's Degree in Arts, 1991

- a: Certificate of Graduation
- b: *Benke*
- c: Four-year *benke*
- d: Approved for graduation
- e: Bachelor's Degree in Arts

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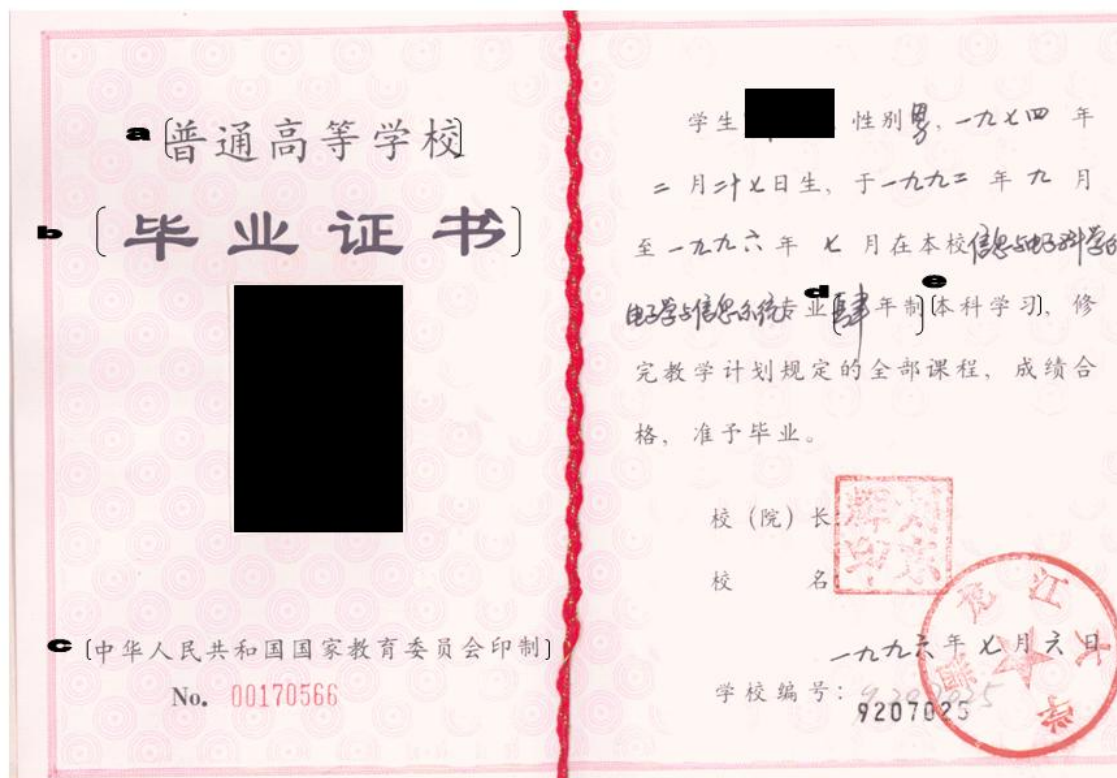


***Benke* Certificate of Graduation, Regular Higher Education, 1992**

- a: Certificate of Graduation
- b: Department of Law
- c: Four-year program
- d: *Benke* curriculum
- e: Approved for graduation

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Benke Certificate of Graduation, Regular Higher Education, 1996

a: Regular Higher Education Institutions

b: Certificate of Graduation

c: Printed by the State Education Commission of the People's Republic of China

d: Four-year program

e: Benke study

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Country: China	Official Country Name: People's Republic of China	Region: China
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Status: Published

Date Entered: Feb 05, 2005

Category: University

Date Revised: Oct 13, 2005

Credential Actual Name:

高等教育自学考试本科毕业证书

Credential English Name:

Certificate of Graduation (4-year undergraduate program) through Self-Study

Credential Alternate Actual Name(s):

Credential Alternate English Name(s):

'Benke' Graduation Diploma through Self-Study

'Benke' Certificate of Graduation through Self-Study

Time Period Credential Offered: 1982-Current

Issuing Body: Provincial Self-Study Examinations Committee

Admission Requirements:

- There is no admissions requirement.

Except for a few specialties that only admit students who are already employed in related occupations, full-length *benke* programs through self-study examinations can be taken by individuals regardless of their educational background.

Program Description:

- Undergraduate program through self-study.

Each program has standardized syllabuses, self-study textbooks and reference materials for about 20 required courses, with a total of around 100 self-study credits. Students either study on their own or enrol in exam-preparation programs offered at various higher education institutions. Exams are held two to four times a year. A student may challenge exams in several subjects each time and receive a certificate listing subjects that have been passed. Retakes are allowed. It may take four to five years to complete all required courses and the graduation thesis or project. Exams are designed at the national and provincial levels and administered by a number of well-known degree-granting institutions designated by the provincial self-study examinations committee. Certificates of graduation, issued twice a year in June and December, bear the stamps of both the provincial higher education self-study examinations committee and the exam-administering institution. Students may apply to the exam-administering institution for bachelor's degrees by meeting additional requirements.

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Provides Access to in the Home Country:

- Employment.

Individuals who have obtained *benke* qualifications through self-study examinations are entitled by law to the same level of salary and benefits as those with *benke* qualifications from the regular higher education sector. Professional entry-level positions in the central and provincial governments typically require a *benke* certificate of graduation.

- Admission into master's programs.

A *benke* certificate of graduation through self-study also gives individuals the same access to further education as a *benke* certificate of graduation from regular higher education. Individuals with such a credential may be admitted into master's programs by passing the entrance examinations at both national and institutional levels. Please note that a bachelor degree is not needed for admission into master's programs in China.

Placement Recommendations:

IERF 2004

Up to 180 semester credits of undergraduate coursework/professional coursework, depending on length and content of studies

NOOSR 2003

All self-study examination qualifications (except for Bachelor degrees) are assessed on a case-by-case basis.

PIER 2000

May be considered for undergraduate admission, with transfer credit determined through a course-by-course analysis.

[Note: PIER makes no distinction between *Benke* Certificate of Graduation through Self-Study and *Benke* Certificate of Graduation through Self-Study (Upgrading).]

UK NARIC 2005

[In science and technology subjects]

Is considered comparable to BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) standard

May be considered for credit transfer purposes for entry onto second or third year of degree courses, subject to course relevance and English language proficiency.

[In other subjects]

Is considered comparable to Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) / Year 2 of Bachelor degree standard

May be considered for credit transfer purposes for entry onto second or third year of degree courses, subject to course relevance and English language proficiency.

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

IQAS Recommendations for:

Employment

Generally compares to the completion of four years of undergraduate study in xxx.

Post-secondary Admission

Generally compares to the completion of four years of undergraduate study in xxx.

Course Equivalencies

30-level courses (grade 12) if no secondary documents are presented.

IQAS Rationale:

Background

Higher Education Self-Study (or Self-Taught) Examinations allow people from all educational backgrounds to obtain recognized *zhuanke* and *benke* qualifications and bachelor degrees by challenging nationally standardized examinations. The Ministry of Education first introduced the examinations in Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin and Liaoning in 1981. By 1985, all provinces had established their own self-study examination programs. The current system of self-study examinations has been formalized since the promulgation of the *Provisional Regulations on Higher Education Self-Study Examinations* on March 3, 1988. By 1999, 164, 900 and 2.28 million people had received *benke* and *zhuanke* qualifications respectively through self-study examinations. The *Higher Education Law* of 1999 reasserted the recognition status of higher education self-study examinations.

Administration

Several organizations in the Ministry of Education oversee the program at the national level. The Higher Education Self-Study Examination Guidance Committee is the leading body. The Higher Education Self-Study Examination Office oversees everyday work. The Higher Education Self-Study Examination Specialty Committee creates examination plans and syllabuses, organizes the compilation of self-study textbooks, and exercises overall quality assessment and control. The National Educational Examination and Self-Study Examination Research Committee conducts research on self-study examination policies and guidelines. The national bodies guide and supervise self-study examination committees and self-study examination offices at the provincial, prefecture and municipal levels. A number of regular full-time universities and colleges are selected in each province to participate in designing and administering the examinations. Examinations are usually administered two to four times a year in each province.

Program Description

Examinations are administered two or four times a year, depending on the province. The list published by the Ministry of Education in 1998 contains 224 specialties in 11 of the 12 major categories of academic degrees (excluding management). Of the 224 specialties, 141 are offered

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

as *zhuanke* programs, 22 at the *benke* level, and 61 as *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading programs. In 2002, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health jointly decided to stop offering programs in medicine through self-study examinations and distance learning (correspondence, radio and TV, and online programs).

An individual may choose from many specialties for which self-study examinations are available in the province. Each specialty has standardized syllabuses and self-study textbooks for about 20 required courses, with a total of around 100 credits. (There is usually no credit value for the graduation thesis.) Students may choose to study on their own or enrol in exam-preparation programs offered at various higher education institutions. In 2005 the Ministry of Education required regular institutions to stop offering full-time exam-preparation programs.

A student file is set up after an individual has passed the first subject in their chosen specialty. A student may write exams in several subjects each time and receive a certificate listing all the subjects that have been passed. Retakes are allowed. It may take four to five years to complete all required courses and the graduation thesis or project. Examinations are designed at the national and provincial levels and administered by a number of well-known degree-granting institutions designated by the provincial self-study examinations committee. Certificates of graduation, issued twice a year in June and December, bear the stamps of both the provincial higher education self-study examinations committee and the exam-administering institution. Students may apply to the exam-administering institution for bachelor's degrees by meeting additional requirements.

This template applies to full-length *benke* programs. The vast majority of people who pursue higher education through self-study obtain a *zhuanke*-level credential first. Then they can take an upgrading program to obtain a *benke*-level credential. For more information, refer to the relevant credential templates: *Zhuanke* Certificate of Graduation through Self-Study and *Benke* Certificate of Graduation through Self-Study (Upgrading).

Employment and Further Education

A *benke* certificate of graduation through self-study entitles an individual to the same level of salary and benefits as those with *benke* qualifications obtained through the regular higher education sector. Though credentials earned through full-time study at regular higher education institutions are the most highly regarded in China, anecdotal evidence suggests that self-study examination credentials generally enjoy a good reputation among employers because the examinations are considered very challenging, with standards set at the national level.

A *benke* certificate of graduation through self-study gives individuals the same access to further education as a *benke* certificate of graduation from the regular higher education sector. These individuals may apply to the examination-administering institution for bachelor's degrees by meeting additional requirements. They can get into master's programs by passing the entrance examinations. Please note that a recognized *benke* certificate rather than a bachelor degree is needed for admission into master's programs in China.

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Conclusion

Though there is no admissions requirement for full-length *benke* programs through self-study, the examinations are considered very challenging as they follow the same standards as *benke* programs at regular higher education institutions. Individuals usually take four to five years to complete around 20 required courses totalling about self-study 100 credits plus the graduation thesis or graduation project to receive the *benke* certificate of graduation. The certificate entitles them to the same level of salary and benefits as those with *benke* qualifications obtained through the regular higher education sector. It also allows them to take the entrance examinations for master's degree programs. Though regular higher education is more highly regarded in China than the alternative routes such as higher education self-study examinations, and some evaluation resources give lower placement recommendations for *benke* certificates obtained through self-study, IQAS does not make such a distinction because *benke* through self-study represents the same level of education and provides the same access to employment and further education as *benke* from the regular higher education sector. Based on the above information, IQAS compares the *benke* certificate of graduation through self-study to the completion of four years of undergraduate study in xxx.

Grading:

Table 1. Percentage Scale

Chinese %	IQAS %
100	100
99	99
98	97
97	96
96	95
95	94
94	92
93	91
92	90
91	89
90	87
89	86
88	85
87	84
86	83
85	81
84	80
83	79
82	78
81	76
80	75
79	74
78	73
77	71
76	70
75	69
74	68
73	66

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72	65
71	64
70	63
69	61
68	60
67	59
66	58
65	56
64	55
63	54
62	53
61	51
60	50

Table 2. Five-Level Scale

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
90-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	94
80-89	良好 or 良	B	Very Good	82
70-79	中等 or 中	C	Good	69
60-69	及格	D	Pass	57
0-59	不及格	E/F	Fail	Fail

Table 3. Four-Level Scale (I)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
85-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	90
70-84	良好 or 良	B	Good	71
60-69	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	56
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 4. Four-Level Scale (II)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
86-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	91
76-85	良好 or 良	B	Good	75
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 5. Four-Level Scale (III)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
91-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	95
76-90	良好 or 良	B	Good	79
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Comments:

This credential template applies only to full-length *benke* programs through self-study. In higher

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education self-study examinations, *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading programs are much more common than full-length *benke* programs. Since the term "upgrading" is not commonly used in self-study examinations, it is often necessary to look at the total number of courses to determine whether the certificate represents a full-length *benke* or *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading program. For more information, refer to the credential template: Certificate of Graduation (4-year undergraduate program) through Self-Study (Upgrading).

Certificate of Graduation Only

If no bachelor degree is presented, the certificate of graduation is compared to the completion of four years of undergraduate study in xxx.

Certificate of Graduation plus Bachelor Degree

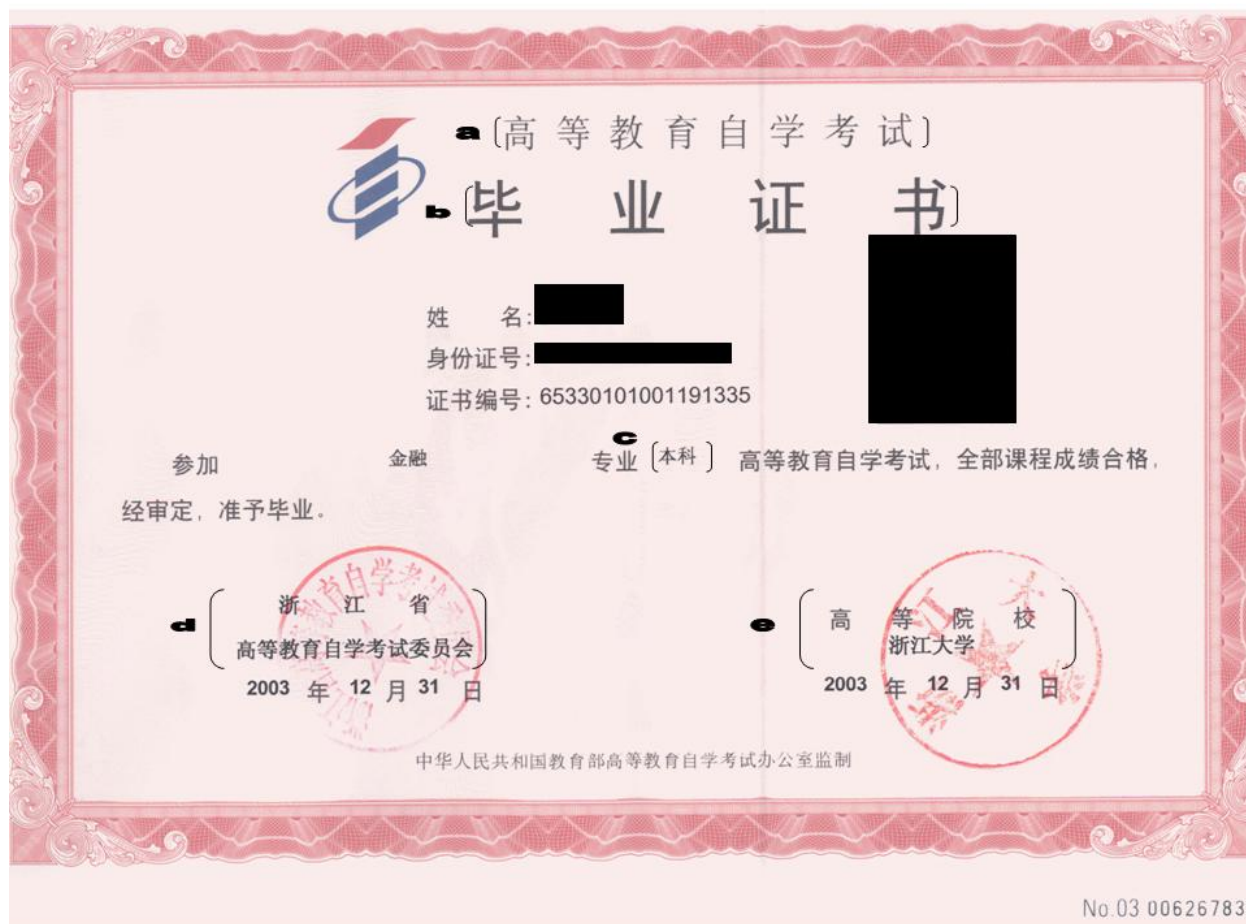
If both the bachelor degree certificate and the *benke* certificate of graduation are presented, the two credentials will be combined and compared to the completion of a Bachelor's degree with a focus in xxx. There is no separate comparative statement for the *benke* certificate of graduation through self-study.

Bachelor Degree only

If only a bachelor degree is presented, the applicant should be asked to provide the *benke* certificate of graduation. **In China, a bachelor degree certificate is always accompanied by a *benke* certificate of graduation.** (Please note that a master's degree can be issued without the accompanying certificate of graduation.) The certificate of graduation may contain more information about the program than the bachelor degree certificate. In addition, credential authentication in China centers on educational qualifications (documented by certificates of graduation) rather than academic degrees (documented by degree certificates). The MOE-designated website for online credential authentication (<http://www.chsi.com.cn>) can authenticate certificates of graduation issued since 1991. The bachelor degree certificate through self-study, issued by the exam-administering institution, should indicate that the student has completed a *benke* program through self-study.

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***Benke* Certificate of Graduation through Self-Study, 2003**

a: Higher Education Self-Study Examinations

b: Certificate of Graduation

c: *Benke*

d: Higher Education Self-Study Examinations Committee, Zhejiang Province

e: Higher Education Institution – Zhejiang University

Note: The self-study certificate usually does not indicate whether it is a full-length *benke* or *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading program. That has to be determined by looking at the examination records.

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Country: China	Official Country Name: People's Republic of China	Region: China
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Status: Published	Date Entered: May 05, 2005
Category: University	Date Revised: Oct 13, 2005

Credential Actual Name: 专升本毕业证书 大专后毕业证书	Credential English Name: Certificate of Graduation (2-year university upgrading program)
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Credential Alternate Actual Name(s):	Credential Alternate English Name(s): 'Benke' Certificate of Graduation (upgrading) 'Benke' Graduation Diploma (upgrading)
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Time Period Credential Offered: 1982-Current
Issuing Body: Regular and Adult Universities and Colleges
Admission Requirements:

- *Zhuanke* certificate of graduation (14-15 years of schooling in total) and entrance examinations.

Most *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading programs are offered through the adult higher education sector. Applicants must have a recognized *zhuanke* qualification from regular higher education, adult higher education, or higher education self-study examinations. They must also take the NACEE, which has three formats for *zhuanke*, full-length *benke*, and *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading programs respectively. Before 2004, the NACEE was held in mid-May, and students started school in September, just like students in the regular higher education sector. Since 2004 the NACEE has been moved to October, with the academic year starting in spring the following year.

Program Description:

- University upgrading program.

Most programs are offered through the adult higher education sector. They involve two years of full-time or three years of part-time study (evenings or weekends), with 80-90 credits of coursework plus a graduation thesis or project. Applicants usually choose a specialty similar to their *zhuanke* study. The certificate of graduation usually indicates it is an upgrading program without specifying the field of study of the original *zhuanke* credential. Upon graduation, an individual may apply for a bachelor degree by meeting additional requirements, such as high grades in core courses and passing an English proficiency test. Only a small number of graduates (e.g. 30%) receive bachelor degrees.

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Provides Access to in the Home Country:

- Employment.

Employment policy in China has traditionally been based on educational qualifications rather than academic degrees. Employers in the public sector and some private employers offer different levels of salary and benefits to holders of different educational qualifications (*zhuanke*, *benke*, graduate education at master's level, and graduate education at doctoral level). A *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) gives an individual the same access to employment as a certificate of graduation from a full-length (four- or five-year) *benke* program. Many employers view a *benke* certificate of graduation the same as a bachelor degree. Professional entry-level positions in the central and provincial governments typically require a *benke* qualification.

- Admission into master's programs.

A *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) gives an individual the same access to further education as a bachelor degree. To be admitted into a master's program, an applicant must have a *benke* certificate of graduation and pass the entrance examinations at both the national and institutional levels. Please note that a bachelor degree is not needed for admission into master's programs in China.

Placement Recommendations:

IERF 2004

Up to 90 semester credits of upper division undergraduate coursework.

NOOSR

N/A

PIER 2000

May be considered for undergraduate admission, with transfer credit determined through a course-by-course analysis.

UK NARIC 2005

N/A

IQAS Recommendations for:

Employment

- Generally compares to the completion of two years of senior undergraduate study in xxx.

Note to assessor: The *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) should always be assessed in combination with the preceding *zhuanke* certificate of graduation.

Post-secondary Admission

- Generally compares to the completion of two years of senior undergraduate study in xxx.

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Note to assessor: The *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) should always be assessed in combination with the preceding *zhuanke* certificate of graduation.

Course Equivalencies

- 30-level courses (grade 12) if no secondary documents are presented.

IQAS Rationale:

Background

Programs designed for holders of *zhuanke* qualification to upgrade their education to the *benke* level were first offered on a trial basis in Shanghai in 1980. Until the late 1990s, university admission was extremely competitive. Many students studied in a *zhuanke* program because they did not score high enough in NCEE to get into a similar program at the *benke* level. *Zhuanke* education has an applied focus and is considered a fast track to employment, but as more employers start requiring *benke* qualifications for administrative as well as professional and management positions, *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading programs have become increasingly popular.

In the regular higher education sector, a small percentage of high-performing *zhuanke* students may have the option to transfer into *benke* programs during their study. It is more common for students to seek employment after their *zhuanke* graduation and enrol in an upgrading program through the adult higher education sector, studying in the evenings or on weekends. Please note that the adult higher education sector does not necessarily refer to adult higher education institutions. Many regular degree-granting institutions offer upgrading programs through their adult education school, continuing education school or individual departments. Such programs recruit students through the NACEE and are considered part of the adult higher education sector.

In order to get into an upgrading program, applicants must write the National Adult College Entrance Examination (NACEE). The NACEE has three versions for *zhuanke*, full-length *benke*, and *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading programs respectively. The version for *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading programs includes three national subjects (politics, foreign language and a designated specialty subject). The foreign language can be English, Japanese, or Russian. The national specialty subject is determined by program category. For example, in 2005 the specialty subject is "college Chinese" for programs in philosophy, literature, history or Chinese medicine; "educational theory" for programs in education; and "introduction to ecology" for programs in agriculture. The Ministry of Education is responsible for designing the examinations for all the national subjects except civil law (designed by the Ministry of Justice) and foreign languages other than English (usually designed by provincial educational authorities). Each examination is 150 minutes in length (compared with 120-minute examinations for *zhuanke* and full-length *benke* programs). Additional specialty-related examinations may be administered at the provincial level or by the institutions.

Program Description

Zhuanke to *benke* upgrading programs are sometimes translated as undergraduate upper division programs. Most programs are offered through the adult higher education sector. They usually

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involve two years of full-time or three years of part-time study (evenings or weekends), with 80-90 credits of coursework plus a graduation thesis or project. Applicants usually, but not always, choose a specialty similar to their *zhuanke* study. It is possible for an individual to have two completely different fields of study, such as a *zhuanke* major in science and a *benke* major in arts and humanities or business. The certificate of graduation usually indicates it is an upgrading program without specifying the field of study of the original *zhuanke* credential. By meeting additional requirements such as high grades in core courses and passing an English proficiency test, a *benke* graduate may apply for a bachelor degree. Only a small number of graduates (e.g. 30%) receive bachelor degrees.

Employment and Further Education

Employment policy in China has traditionally been based on educational qualifications rather than academic degrees. Employers in the public sector and some private employers offer different levels of salary and benefits to holders of different educational qualifications (*zhuanke*, *benke*, graduate education at master's level, and graduate education at doctoral level). To most employers, a *benke* certificate of graduation is not much different from a bachelor degree. Professional entry-level positions in the central and provincial governments typically require a *benke* qualification.

A *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) plus the preceding *zhuanke* certificate of graduation is considered equivalent to a full-length *benke* that involves four or five years of full-time study. Since regular higher education is more highly regarded than adult higher education, and *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading programs are mostly offered through the adult higher education sector, a *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) may not be as favourably received by employers as a *benke* certificate of graduation from the regular higher education sector.

A *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) gives an individual about the same access to further education as a bachelor degree. To be admitted into a master's program, an applicant must have a *benke* qualification (documented by a *benke* certificate of graduation) and pass the entrance examinations at both the national and institutional levels. Please note that a bachelor degree is not needed for admission into master's programs in China. Some institutions may prescribe additional requirements for applicants with *benke* certificates obtained through an upgrading program. Such applicants may have to pass additional exams in a few core courses at the *benke* level and submit references from two professors in their proposed field of study.

Conclusion

Applicants must hold a recognized *zhuanke* certificate of graduation (comparable to a two- or three-year postsecondary Diploma) and pass national entrance examinations to be admitted into *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading programs. Programs usually last two years full time or three years part time, involving 80-90 credits of coursework and a graduation thesis or project. The certificate of graduation entitles them to the same level of salary and benefits as those with *benke* qualifications obtained through a conventional four- or five-year program. Students who have achieved high grades in the core courses and passed the foreign language proficiency test may

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apply for a bachelor degree. The certificate of graduation also allows them to take the entrance examinations for master's degree programs. Based on the above information and placement recommendations from other evaluation resources, IQAS compares the *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) to the completion of two years of senior undergraduate study in xxx.

Grading:

Table 1. Percentage Scale

Chinese %	IQAS %
100	100
99	99
98	97
97	96
96	95
95	94
94	92
93	91
92	90
91	89
90	87
89	86
88	85
87	84
86	83
85	81
84	80
83	79
82	78
81	76
80	75
79	74
78	73
77	71
76	70
75	69
74	68
73	66
72	65
71	64
70	63
69	61
68	60
67	59
66	58
65	56
64	55
63	54
62	53
61	51
60	50

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Table 2. Five-Level Scale

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
90-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	94
80-89	良好 or 良	B	Very Good	82
70-79	中等 or 中	C	Good	69
60-69	及格	D	Pass	57
0-59	不及格	E/F	Fail	Fail

Table 3. Four-Level Scale (I)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
85-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	90
70-84	良好 or 良	B	Good	71
60-69	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	56
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 6. Four-Level Scale (II)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
86-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	91
76-85	良好 or 良	B	Good	75
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 5. Four-Level Scale (III)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
91-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	95
76-90	良好 or 良	B	Good	79
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Note: Pass 合格 /fail 不合格 grades may be assigned to some non-core courses.

Comments:

This template applies to *benke* certificates of graduation obtained through an upgrading program. The applicant should always be asked for the preceding *zhuanke* certificate of graduation.

***Zhuanke* (post-secondary program) certificate of graduation + *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading):**

The Certificate of Graduation (*post-secondary program*) generally compares to the completion of a two-year (or three-year) post-secondary Diploma with a focus in xxx.

The Certificate of Graduation (*upgrading program*) generally compares to the completion of two years of senior undergraduate study in xxx.

Note: The certificate of graduation (2-year university upgrading program) is a university bridging program. Such bridging programs are designed specifically for holders of certificates of

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graduation (2-3 year post-secondary program).

Zhuanke (post-secondary program) certificate of graduation + benke certificate of graduation (upgrading) + bachelor degree:

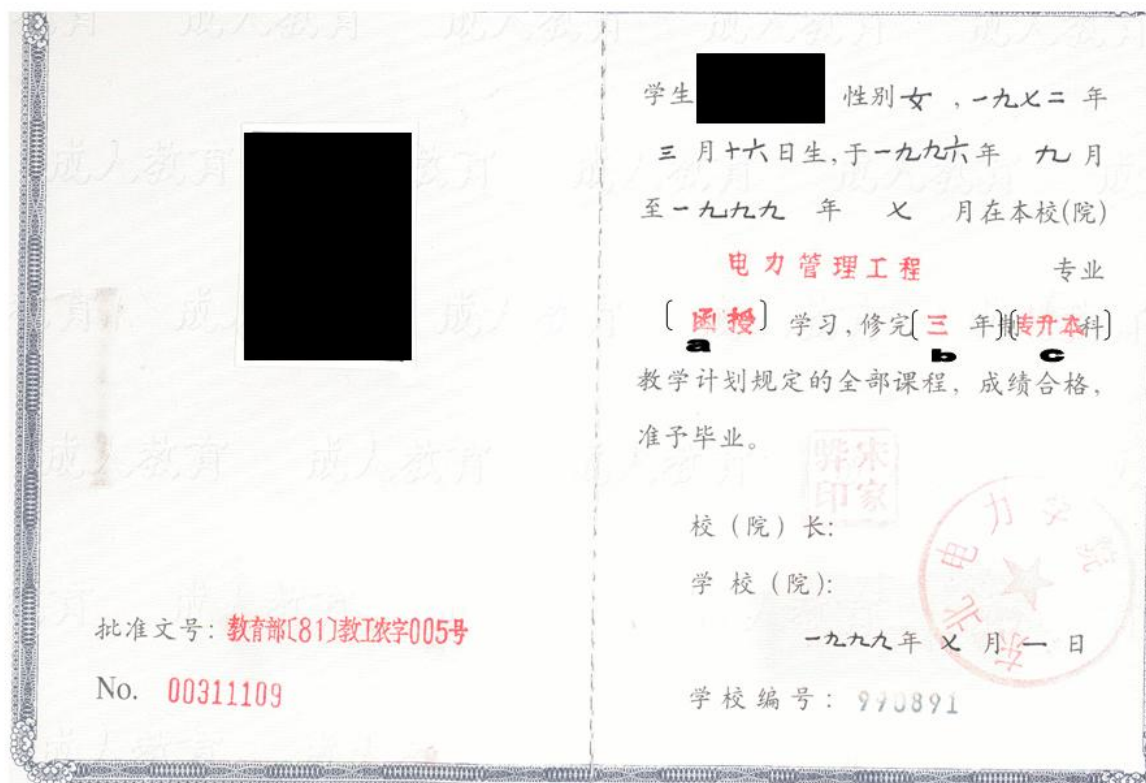
The Certificate of Graduation (*post-secondary program*) generally compares to the completion of a two-year (or three-year) post-secondary Diploma with a focus in xxx.

The Bachelor's degree, obtained through a university bridging program, generally compares to the completion of a Bachelor's degree with a focus in xxx.

Note: The Bachelor's degree is obtained through a university bridging program. Such bridging programs are designed specifically for holders of certificates of graduation (2-3 year post-secondary programs).

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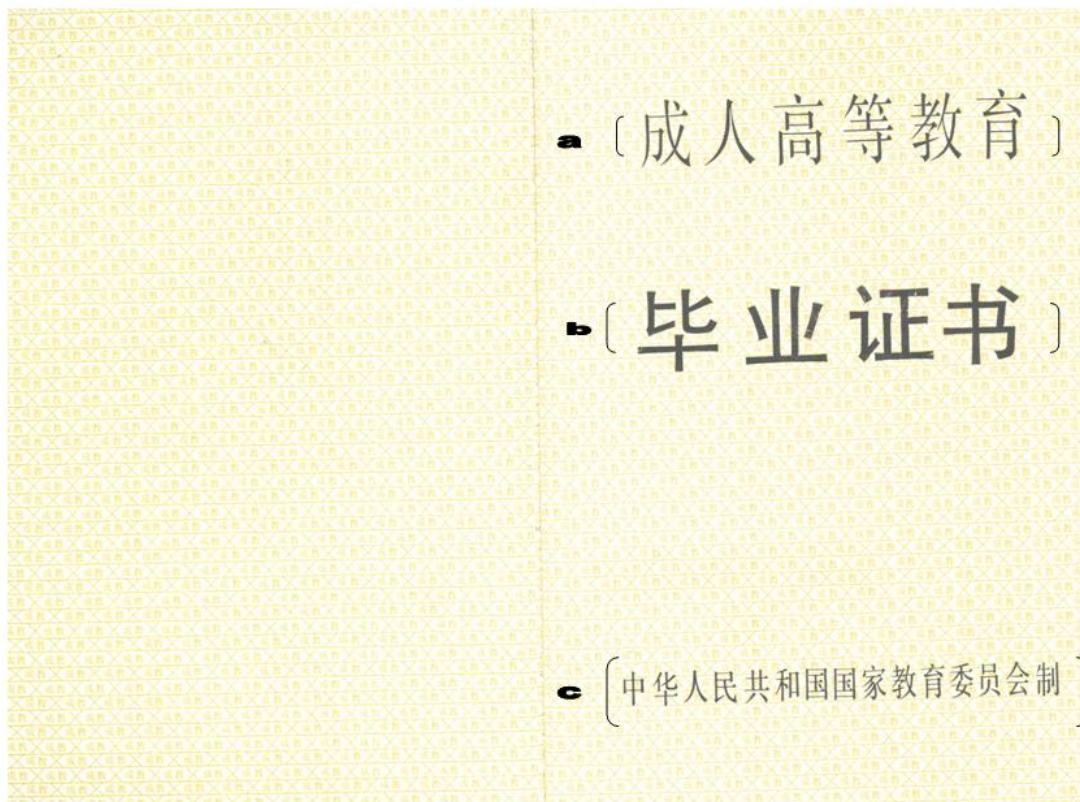


Benke Certificate of Graduation (Upgrading), 1999

- a: Correspondence program
- b: Three-year
- c: *Zhuanke* to *Benke* upgrading

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International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education



***Benke* Certificate of Graduation (Upgrading), 1998, Part 1**

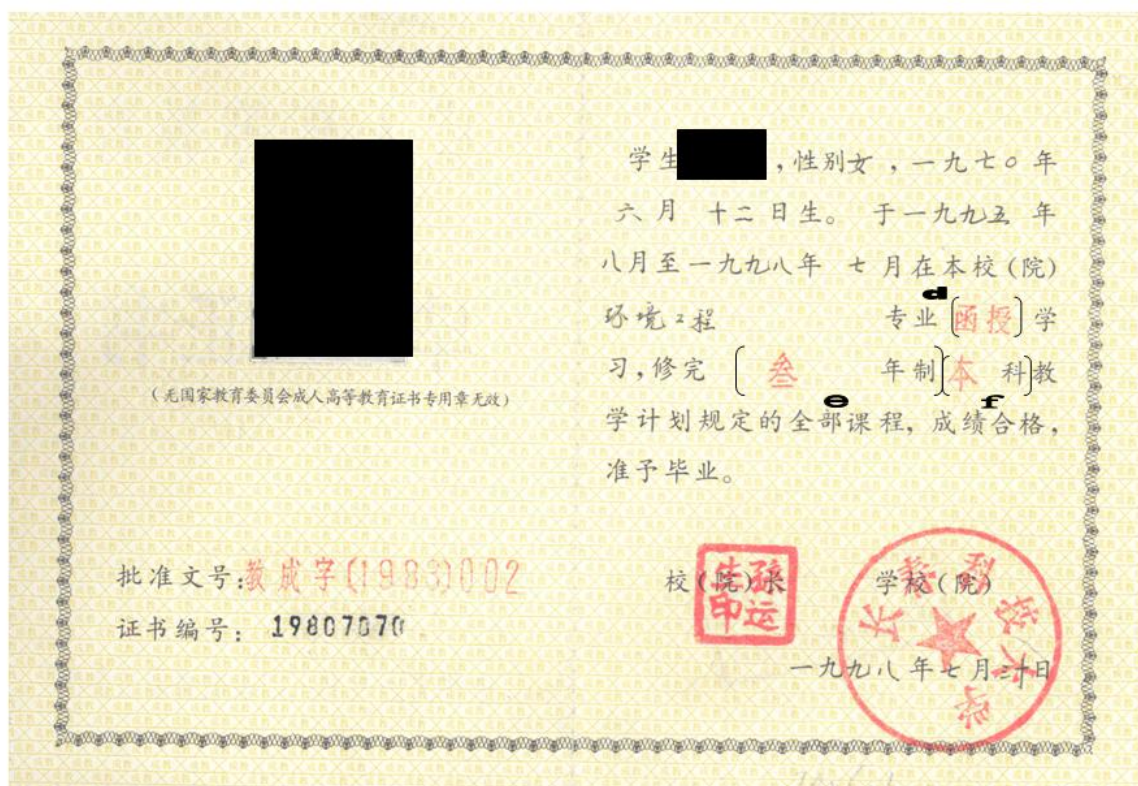
a: Adult Higher Education

b: Certificate of Graduation

c: Printed by the State Education Commission of the People's Republic of China

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International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education



Benke Certificate of Graduation (Upgrading), 1998, Part 2

d: Correspondence program

e: Three-year program

f: *Benke**

* Though the wording “*Zhuanke* to *Benke* upgrading” (专升本) is not used here, it is obviously an upgrading program judging by its length (three-year by correspondence).

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International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Country: China	Official Country Name: People's Republic of China	Region: China
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Status: Published

Date Entered: Apr 05, 2005

Category: University

Date Revised: Oct 14, 2005

Credential Actual Name:

高等教育自学考试本科毕业证书

Credential English Name:

Certificate of Graduation (2-year university upgrading program) through Self-Study

Credential Alternate Actual Name(s):

Credential Alternate English Name(s):

'Benke' Certificate of Graduation (upgrading) through Self-Study

'Benke' Graduation Diploma (upgrading) through Self-Study

Time Period Credential Offered: 1982-Current

Issuing Body: Provincial Higher Education Self-Study Examinations Committee

Admission Requirements:

- *Zhuanke* certificate of graduation (14-15 years of schooling in total).

Individuals who have a *zhuanke* certificate of graduation (through regular higher education, adult higher education or self-study examinations) can choose from various specialties available in the province, except for a few specialties that only admit those who are already employed in related occupations. A student who chooses a *benke* specialty different from that of their *zhuanke* qualification may be required to take additional courses during their study.

Program Description:

- University upgrading program through self-study.

Each program has standardized syllabuses, self-study textbooks and reference materials for about 12 required courses, with a total of around 70 academic credits, plus a graduation thesis or graduation project. Those who choose a specialty different from their *zhuanke* qualification may be required to write exams in up to five additional *zhuanke*-level courses. Students either study on their own or enrol in exam-preparation programs offered at various higher education institutions. A student may challenge exams in several subjects each time and receive a certificate listing subjects that have been passed. Retakes are allowed. In some provinces, the credits earned for completed courses remain valid for eight years. Students typically study for two or three years on a part-time basis to complete the program. Exams are held two to four times a year. They are designed at the national and provincial levels and administered by a number of well-known degree-granting institutions designated by the provincial self-study examinations committee. Certificates of graduation, issued twice a year in June and December,

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bear the stamps of both the provincial higher education self-study examinations committee and the exam-administering institution. Students may apply to the exam-administering institution for bachelor's degrees by meeting additional requirements.

Provides Access to in the Home Country:

- Employment.

Employment policy in China has traditionally been based on educational qualifications rather than academic degrees. Employers in the public sector and some private employers offer different levels of salary and benefits to holders of different educational qualifications (*zhuanke*, *benke*, graduate education at master's level, and graduate education at doctoral level). A *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) through self-study gives an individual the same access to employment as a certificate of graduation from a full-length (four- or five-year) *benke* program. Many employers view a *benke* certificate of graduation the same as a bachelor degree. Professional entry-level positions in the central and provincial governments typically require a *benke* qualification.

- Admission into master's programs.

A *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) through self-study gives an individual the same access to further education as a bachelor degree. To be admitted into a master's program, an applicant must have a *benke* certificate of graduation and pass the entrance examinations at both the national and institutional levels. Please note that a bachelor degree is not needed for admission into master's programs in China.

Placement Recommendations:

IERF 2004

Up to 90 semester credits of upper division undergraduate coursework.

NOOSR 2003

All self-study examination qualifications (except for Bachelor degrees) are assessed on a case-by-case basis.

PIER 2000

May be considered for undergraduate admission, with transfer credit determined through a course-by-course analysis.

UK NARIC 2005

[In science and technology subjects]

Is considered comparable to BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) standard

May be considered for credit transfer purposes for entry onto second or third year of degree courses, subject to course relevance and English language proficiency.

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[In other subjects]

Is considered comparable to Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) / Year 2 of Bachelor degree standard

May be considered for credit transfer purposes for entry onto second or third year of degree courses, subject to course relevance and English language proficiency.

IQAS Recommendations for:

Employment

Generally compares to the completion of two years of senior undergraduate study in xxx.

Note to assessor: This credential should always be assessed in combination with the preceding *zhuanke* certificate of graduation.

Post-secondary Admission

Generally compares to the completion of two years of senior undergraduate study in xxx.

Note to assessor: This credential should always be assessed in combination with the preceding *zhuanke* certificate of graduation.

Course Equivalencies

30-level courses (grade 12) if no secondary documents are presented.

IQAS Rationale:

Background

Higher Education Self-Study (or Self-Taught) Examinations allow people from all educational backgrounds to obtain recognized *zhuanke* and *benke* qualifications and bachelor degrees by challenging nationally standardized examinations. The Ministry of Education first introduced the examinations in Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin and Liaoning in 1981. By 1985, all provinces had established their own self-study examination programs. The current system of self-study examinations has been formalized since the promulgation of the *Provisional Regulations on Higher Education Self-Study Examinations* on March 3, 1988. By 1999, 164, 900 and 2.28 million people had received *benke* and *zhuanke* qualifications respectively through self-study examinations. The *Higher Education Law* of 1999 reasserted the recognition status of higher education self-study examinations.

Administration

Several organizations in the Ministry of Education oversee the program at the national level. The Higher Education Self-Study Examination Guidance Committee is the leading body. The Higher Education Self-Study Examination Office oversees everyday work. The Higher Education Self-Study Examination Specialty Committee creates examination plans and syllabuses, organizes the compilation of self-study textbooks, and exercises overall quality assessment and control. The

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National Educational Examination and Self-Study Examination Research Committee conducts research on self-study examination policies and guidelines. The national bodies guide and supervise self-study examination committees and self-study examination offices at the provincial, prefecture and municipal levels. A number of regular full-time universities and colleges are selected in each province to participate in designing and administering the examinations. Examinations are usually administered two to four times a year in each province.

Program Description

Examinations are administered two or four times a year, depending on the province. The list published by the Ministry of Education in 1998 contains 224 specialties in 11 of the 12 major categories of academic degrees (excluding management). Of the 224 specialties, 141 are offered as *zhuanke* programs, 22 at the *benke* level, and 61 as *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading programs. In 2002, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health jointly decided to stop offering programs in medicine through self-study examinations and distance learning (correspondence, radio and TV, and online programs).

Benke programs through self-study (upgrading), sometimes referred to as "independent *benke* section", are designed for those who already hold *zhuanke* qualifications to upgrade to the *benke* level through self-study. Students usually choose a specialty that is the same or closely related to that of their *zhuanke*-level study. Each specialty has a nationally approved curriculum that includes about 12 courses totalling about 70 academic credits plus a graduation thesis or project. Students who choose a specialty different from their *zhuanke* qualification may be required to pass exams in up to five additional *zhuanke*-level courses in their chosen specialty. There are standardized syllabuses and self-study textbooks for all the courses. Students may choose to study on their own or enrol in exam-preparation programs offered at various higher education institutions. In 2005 the Ministry of Education required regular institutions to stop offering full-time exam-preparation programs.

A student file is set up after an individual has passed the first subject in their chosen specialty. A student may write exams in several subjects each time and receive a certificate listing all the subjects that have been passed. Retakes are allowed. In some provinces, the credits earned for completed courses remain valid for eight years. Examinations are designed at the national and provincial levels and administered by a number of well-known degree-granting institutions designated by the provincial self-study examinations committee. Certificates of graduation, issued twice a year in June and December, bear the stamps of both the provincial higher education self-study examinations committee and the exam-administering institution. Students may apply to the exam-administering institution for bachelor's degrees by meeting additional requirements.

Please note that the wording "*zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading" commonly used in adult higher education is typically not used in higher education self-study examinations. The upgrading program is simply called *benke*, or sometimes "independent *benke* section".

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Employment and Further Education

A *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) through self-study entitles an individual to the same level of salary and benefits as those with *benke* qualifications obtained through the regular higher education sector. Though credentials earned through full-time study at regular higher education institutions are the most highly regarded in China, anecdotal evidence suggests that self-study examination credentials generally enjoy a good reputation among employers because the examinations are considered very challenging, with standards set at the national level.

A *benke* certificate of graduation through self-study (upgrading) gives individuals the same access to further education as a *benke* certificate of graduation from the regular higher education sector. These individuals may apply to the examination-administering institution for bachelor's degrees by meeting additional requirements. They can get into master's programs by passing the entrance examinations.

Conclusion

Individuals must have a recognized *zhuanke* certificate of graduation in order to sit self-study examinations for *benke* upgrading programs. The examinations are considered very challenging as they follow the same standards as *benke* programs at regular higher education institutions. Students must pass exams in around 12 subjects totalling about 70 self-study credits and complete a graduation thesis or project to receive the *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading). Students who choose a specialty different from their *zhuanke* qualification are generally required to pass exams in additional *zhuanke*-level courses in their chosen specialty. The certificate of graduation entitles them to the same level of salary and benefits as those with *benke* qualifications obtained through the regular higher education sector. It also allows them to take the entrance examinations for master's degree programs. Though regular higher education in China is more highly regarded than alternative routes such as self-study examinations, and some evaluation resources give lower placement recommendations (or no recommendation at all) for *benke* certificates obtained through self-study, IQAS does not make such a distinction because *zhuanke* through self-study provides the same level of education and the same access to employment and further education as *zhuanke* from regular higher education. Based on the above information, IQAS compares the *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) through self-study to the completion of two years of senior undergraduate study in xxx.

Grading:

Table 1. Percentage Scale

Chinese %	IQAS %
100	100
99	99
98	97
97	96
96	95
95	94
94	92

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93	91
92	90
91	89
90	87
89	86
88	85
87	84
86	83
85	81
84	80
83	79
82	78
81	76
80	75
79	74
78	73
77	71
76	70
75	69
74	68
73	66
72	65
71	64
70	63
69	61
68	60
67	59
66	58
65	56
64	55
63	54
62	53
61	51
60	50

Table 2. Five-Level Scale

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
90-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	94
80-89	良好 or 良	B	Very Good	82
70-79	中等 or 中	C	Good	69
60-69	及格	D	Pass	57
0-59	不及格	E/F	Fail	Fail

Table 3. Four-Level Scale (I)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
85-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	90
70-84	良好 or 良	B	Good	71
60-69	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	56
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

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Table 7. Four-Level Scale (II)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
86-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	91
76-85	良好 or 良	B	Good	75
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 5. Four-Level Scale (III)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
91-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	95
76-90	良好 or 良	B	Good	79
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Note: Pass 合格 /fail 不合格 grades may be assigned to some non-core courses.

Comments:

This template only applies to certificates of graduation (upgrading) through self-study. Please note that the term "upgrading" is not commonly used in higher education self-study examinations. It is often necessary to look at the total number of courses to determine whether the certificate represents a full-length *benke* (about 20 courses) or *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading program (about 12 courses). For more information, refer to the credential template: Certificate of Graduation (4-year undergraduate program) through Self-Study.

An applicant who presents the *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) through self-study should always be asked for the preceding *zhuanke* certificate of graduation.

***Zhuanke* certificate of graduation + *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) through self-study:**

The Certificate of Graduation (*post-secondary program*) generally compares to the completion of a two-year (or three-year) post-secondary Diploma with a focus in xxx.

The Certificate of Graduation (*upgrading program*) generally compares to the completion of two years of senior undergraduate study in xxx.

Note: The certificate of graduation (2-year university upgrading program) is a university bridging program. Such bridging programs are designed specifically for holders of certificates of graduation (2-3 year post-secondary program).

***Zhuanke* certificate of graduation + *benke* certificate of graduation (upgrading) through self-study + bachelor degree:**

The Certificate of Graduation (*post-secondary program*) generally compares to the completion

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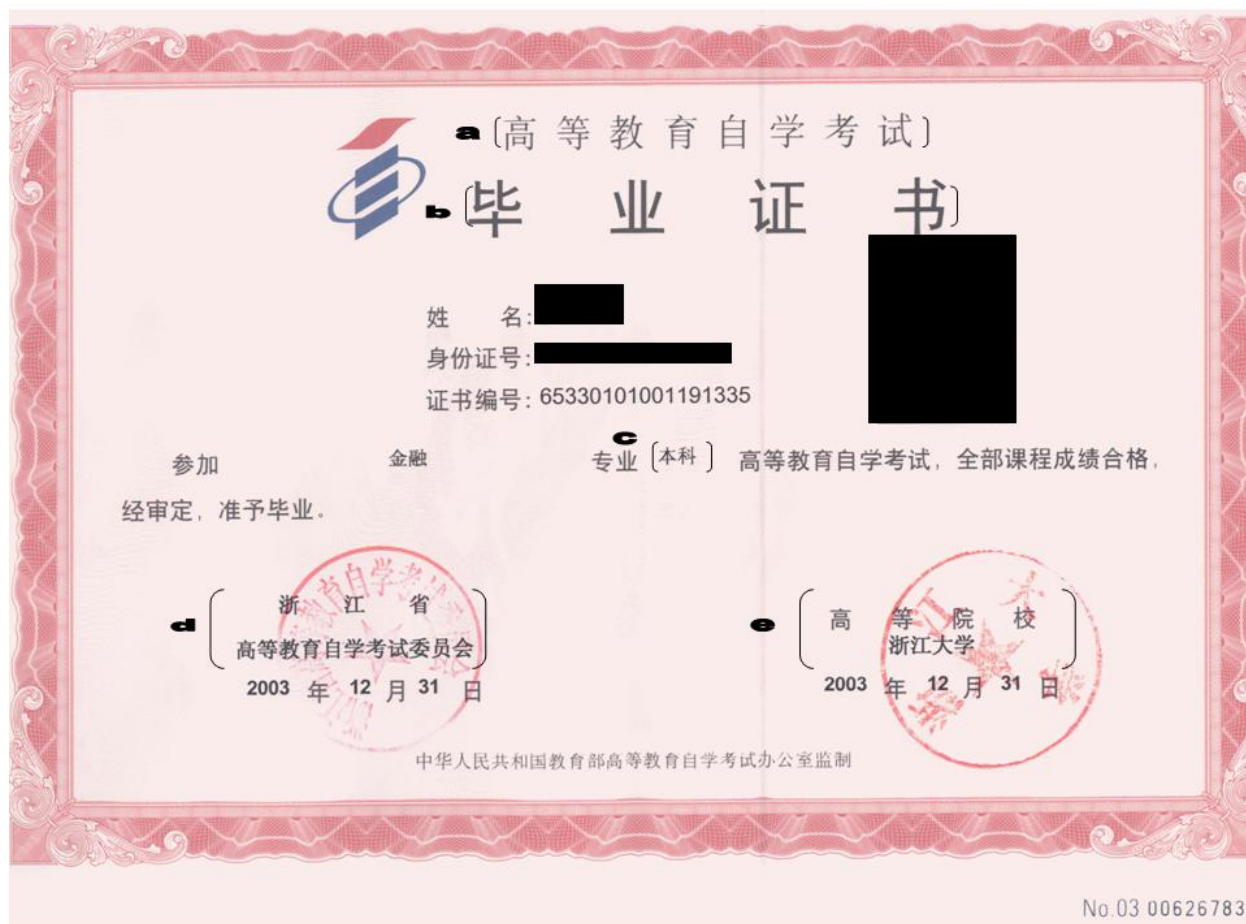
of a two-year (or three-year) post-secondary Diploma with a focus in xxx.

The Bachelor's degree, obtained through a university bridging program, generally compares to the completion of a Bachelor's degree with a focus in xxx.

Note: The Bachelor's degree is obtained through a university bridging program. Such bridging programs are designed specifically for holders of certificates of graduation (2-3 year post-secondary program).

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***Benke* Certificate of Graduation through Self-Study, 2003**

a: Higher Education Self-Study Examinations

b: Certificate of Graduation

c: *Benke**

d: Zhejiang Provincial Higher Education Self-Study Examinations Committee

e: Higher Education Institution – Zhejiang University

* The self-study certificate of graduation usually does not indicate whether it is a full-length *benke* or *zhuanke* to *benke* upgrading program. This has to be determined by looking at the examination records.

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Country: China	Official Country Name: People's Republic of China	Region: China
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Status: Published	Date Entered: Apr 25, 2005
Category: University	Date Revised: Oct 14, 2005

Credential Actual Name: xxx 学士学位	Credential English Name: Bachelor's Degree in xxx
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Credential Alternate Actual Name(s): 农学学士学位 文学学士学位 经济学学士学位 教育学学士学位 史学学士学位 法学学士学位 管理学学士学位 军事学学士学位 哲学学士学位 理学学士学位 工学学士学位	Credential Alternate English Name(s): Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture Bachelor's Degree in Arts Bachelor's Degree in Economics Bachelor's Degree in Education Bachelor's Degree in History Bachelor's Degree in Law Bachelor's Degree in Management Bachelor's Degree in Military Science Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy Bachelor's Degree in Science Bachelor's Degree in Technology
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Time Period Credential Offered: 1981-Current

Issuing Body: Universities and Colleges

Admission Requirements:

• Graduation from a four- or five-year undergraduate program (*benke*) and meeting additional requirements prescribed by the degree-granting institution.

Program Description:

• Four-year (or five-year) undergraduate degree program.

Bachelor degrees are awarded to students who have successfully graduated from a *benke* program and who meet additional requirements. Generally speaking, the institution offering *benke* programs will also be awarding the bachelor degrees. If not, its *benke* graduates may apply for bachelor degrees from another, degree-granting institution. In either case, students have to meet the additional requirements for awarding bachelor degrees stipulated by the degree-granting institution.

Additional requirements for awarding bachelor degrees to *benke* graduates usually include:

1. Achieve good grades (e.g. 70% or 75%) on several (e.g. four) core courses designated as "degree courses";

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2. Receive at least B for graduation thesis or graduation project;

3. Pass a foreign language proficiency test;

Note: Foreign language (English) is one of the degree courses. All students must pass an English proficiency test administered at the institutional, provincial or national level. At the national level, the test is known as CET (College English Test). English majors must pass a test in a second foreign language.

4. Have limited number of retakes (e.g. fewer than 25 credits);

5. Have not suffered any disciplinary action (due to academic dishonesty etc.).

Bachelor degrees (and also master and doctoral degrees) are named after one of the 12 major categories:

Philosophy	哲学
Economics	经济学
Law	法学
Education	教育学
Arts	文学
History	史学
Science	理学
Technology	工学
Agriculture	农学
Medicine	医学
Management	管理学
Military Science	军事学

Among the 12 categories, "military science" was added in 1983, and "management" in 1997. Since 1990 a few professional degrees have been introduced, including Bachelor's degree in Architecture and Bachelor's degree in Veterinary Medicine. Most professional degrees are master's degrees. “工学” (technology) is often mistranslated into “engineering”.

Provides Access to in the Home Country:

•Employment.

Every bachelor degree holder in China also has a *benke* certificate of graduation. A bachelor degree gives an individual about the same access to employment as a *benke* qualification. In some cases it may provide a small advantage over a *benke* qualification.

Employment policy in China has traditionally been based on educational qualifications (documented by certificates of graduation, such as a *benke* certificate of graduation) rather than academic degrees (documented by degree certificates, such as a bachelor degree certificate). Employers in the public sector and some private employers offer different levels of salary and benefits to holders of different educational qualifications (*zhuanke*, *benke*, graduate education at master's level, and graduate education at doctoral level). For example, professional entry-level

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positions in the central and provincial governments typically require a *benke* qualification. A small number of employers may require a bachelor degree in addition to the *benke* certificate of graduation.

- Admission into master's programs.

To be admitted into a master's program, an applicant must have a *benke* qualification (which every bachelor degree holder has) and pass entrance examinations at both national and institutional levels.

An individual with a bachelor degree and at least six years of related work experience may claim educational competence comparable to a master degree holder and take the entrance examinations for doctoral programs. Such an individual is required to write additional examinations in core courses at the master's level. This option is not available to those who have a *benke* qualification but no bachelor degree.

Placement Recommendations:

IERF 2004

BA/BS/BEng

[This placement recommendation applies to bachelor's degree in arts, agriculture, education, science, technology, economics, history, philosophy and military science.]

Bachelor's degree

[This placement recommendation applies to bachelor's degree in law. "A bachelor's degree without identified major is recommended since there is no equivalent U.S. discipline.]

NOOSR 2003

Comparable to the educational level of an Australian Bachelor degree.

PIER 2000

May be considered for graduate admission.

UK NARIC 2005

Is considered comparable to British Bachelor degree standard.

Students from "national" universities may be considered for postgraduate study. Candidates from other universities with overall grading of 85% may be considered for postgraduate study, subject to course relevance and English language proficiency.

IQAS Recommendations for:

Employment

Generally compares to the completion of a four-year Bachelor's degree with a focus in xxx.

Note to assessor: This statement applies only to full-length *benke* programs whose normal length of study is four, sometimes five years.

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Post-secondary Admission

Generally compares to the completion of a (four-year) Bachelor's degree with a focus in xxx.

Note to assessor: This statement applies only to full-length *benke* programs whose normal length of study is four, sometimes five years.

Course Equivalencies

30-level courses (grade 12) if no secondary documents are presented.

IQAS Rationale:

Background

Academic degrees are a relatively recent phenomenon in China, formally introduced on Jan 1, 1981 with the promulgation of the *Regulations on Academic Degrees of the People's Republic of China* in Feb 1980. The State Council (the central government), working through its Academic Degrees Committee, decides which higher education institutions can award bachelor degrees. China awarded its first bachelor degrees in 1981.

Relationship between Bachelor Degree and *Benke*

As a type of educational qualification, *benke* (four- or five-year undergraduate programs) is considered a separate credential from the bachelor degree. For more information, refer to Higher Education, China Country Profile. The history of *benke* dates back to 1912, whereas bachelor degrees were introduced in 1981. In the early 1980s, *benke* programs operated almost exclusively in the regular higher education sector, and there was no distinction between *benke* and bachelor degree programs. Students were admitted into a *benke*/bachelor program with the understanding that, upon successful completion of the program, they would receive both a *benke* certificate of graduation and a bachelor degree certificate - for a number of years (1985-1992) the two documents were combined into a single certificate. There are certain additional requirements the students must meet in order to receive the bachelor degree. In regular higher education, only a small number of students (e.g. 10%) fail to meet such additional requirements.

The *Regulations on Academic Degrees of the People's Republic of China* stipulates that to receive a bachelor degree, students must 1) be approved for graduation from a *benke* program by fulfilling all requirements of the curriculum, and 2) demonstrate through their grades in coursework and graduation thesis (or graduation project) that they have learned the basic theory, specialized knowledge and basic skills of the discipline and are capable of scientific research or specialized technical work. The provincial academic degree committees and degree-granting institutions prescribe specific requirements for awarding bachelor degrees to *benke* graduates. The institution usually designates a number of core courses as "degree courses" for a particular *benke* program and requires students to achieve a high average grade (such as 70% or above) in these courses in order to apply for a bachelor degree. The foreign language (English for non-English majors and a second foreign language for English majors) is one of the degree courses. To meet the foreign language requirement, students can take the English "degree exam"

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administered by the province or CET (College English Test), a national English proficiency test. Students may also be denied a bachelor degree if they have suffered a disciplinary action (for academic dishonesty, political activism, etc.) and have not been able to have the disciplinary action revoked before their graduation. Please note that the graduation thesis is not a criterion to differentiate between the *benke* certificate and bachelor degree; all *benke* graduates must successfully complete their graduation thesis or project.

Since the mid-1980s, there has been rapid growth in *benke* programs offered through the non-regular higher education sectors such as adult higher education, higher education self-study examinations, and distance learning. The majority of these students only receive *benke* certificates of graduation. A small number of students (e.g. 30%) are able to meet the additional requirements and receive bachelor degrees. The additional requirements for awarding bachelor degrees to non-regular students may be different from those for students in the regular higher education sector.

Conclusion

Bachelor degrees are awarded only to those who have completed a *benke* program, which usually involves four or five years of full time university study. A bachelor degree gives an individual the same access to employment as a *benke* certificate of graduation. For the purpose of further education, a *benke* qualification is needed to sit for the entrance examinations for master's programs. However, only a bachelor degree holder can obtain a master's degree through an alternate route by claiming "comparable educational competence". Based on the above information and placement recommendations from other evaluation resources, IQAS compares a bachelor degree in xxx obtained through full time study to the completion of a four-year Bachelor's degree with a focus in xxx. If the length of the program is difficult to determine (e.g. self-study examinations and correspondence programs), IQAS compares the bachelor degree to the completion of a Bachelor's degree with a focus in xxx. For more information, refer to the credential templates for different types of *benke* certificates of graduation (4-5 year undergraduate program).

Grading:

Table 1. Percentage Scale

Chinese %	IQAS %
100	100
99	99
98	97
97	96
96	95
95	94
94	92
93	91
92	90
91	89
90	87
89	86
88	85

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87	84
86	83
85	81
84	80
83	79
82	78
81	76
80	75
79	74
78	73
77	71
76	70
75	69
74	68
73	66
72	65
71	64
70	63
69	61
68	60
67	59
66	58
65	56
64	55
63	54
62	53
61	51
60	50

Table 2. Five-Level Scale

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
90-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	94
80-89	良好 or 良	B	Very Good	82
70-79	中等 or 中	C	Good	69
60-69	及格	D	Pass	57
0-59	不及格	E/F	Fail	Fail

Table 3. Four-Level Scale (I)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
85-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	90
70-84	良好 or 良	B	Good	71
60-69	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	56
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 8. Four-Level Scale (II)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
86-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	91
76-85	良好 or 良	B	Good	75

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60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 5. Four-Level Scale (III)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
91-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	95
76-90	良好 or 良	B	Good	79
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Note: Pass 合格 /fail 不合格 grades may be assigned to some non-core courses.

Comments:

This is a generic bachelor degree template. Since a bachelor degree is awarded upon completion of a *benke* program, the assessment depends on the nature of the *benke*. The placement recommendations given in this template only applies to full-length *benke* programs (as opposed to upgrading programs). For more information about the assessment of various *benke* - bachelor degree combinations, refer to the templates for different types of *benke* certificates of graduation.

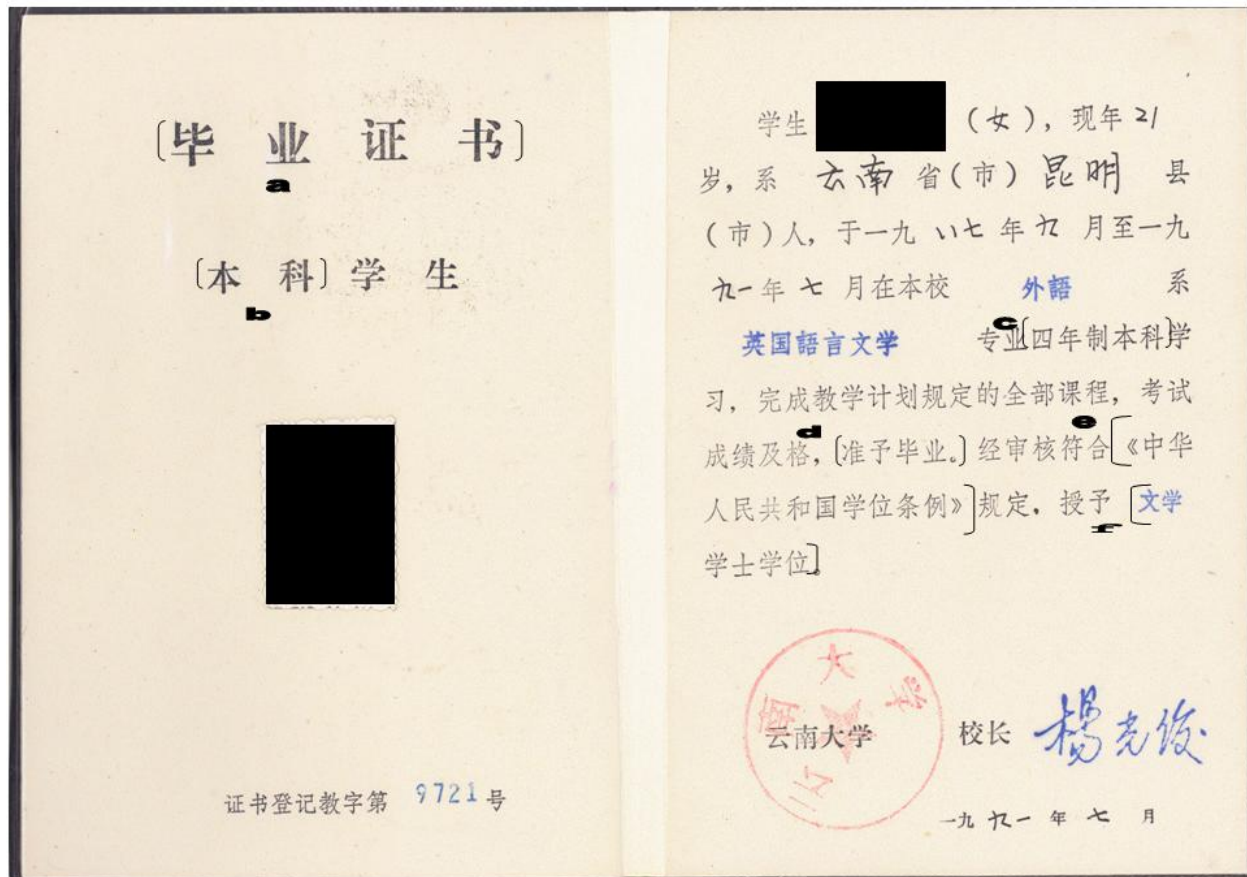
Bachelor degrees may be entered in the following format:

Bachelor's Degree in x (y)

"X" refers to one of the 12 major categories of academic degrees in China. If the name of the degree does not match any of the 12 categories, there are three possibilities: (1) It is a mistranslation; (2) The document is fraudulent; and (3) It is one of the very few "specialty degrees" such as Bachelor's Degree in Architecture or Bachelor's Degree in Veterinary Medicine. "Y" refers to the specialty or major of the program, which usually appears on the degree certificate and is always indicated on the *benke* certificate of graduation.

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Combined *Benke* Certificate of Graduation and Bachelor's Degree Certificate, 1991

a: Certificate of Graduation

b: *Benke*

c: Four-year *benke*

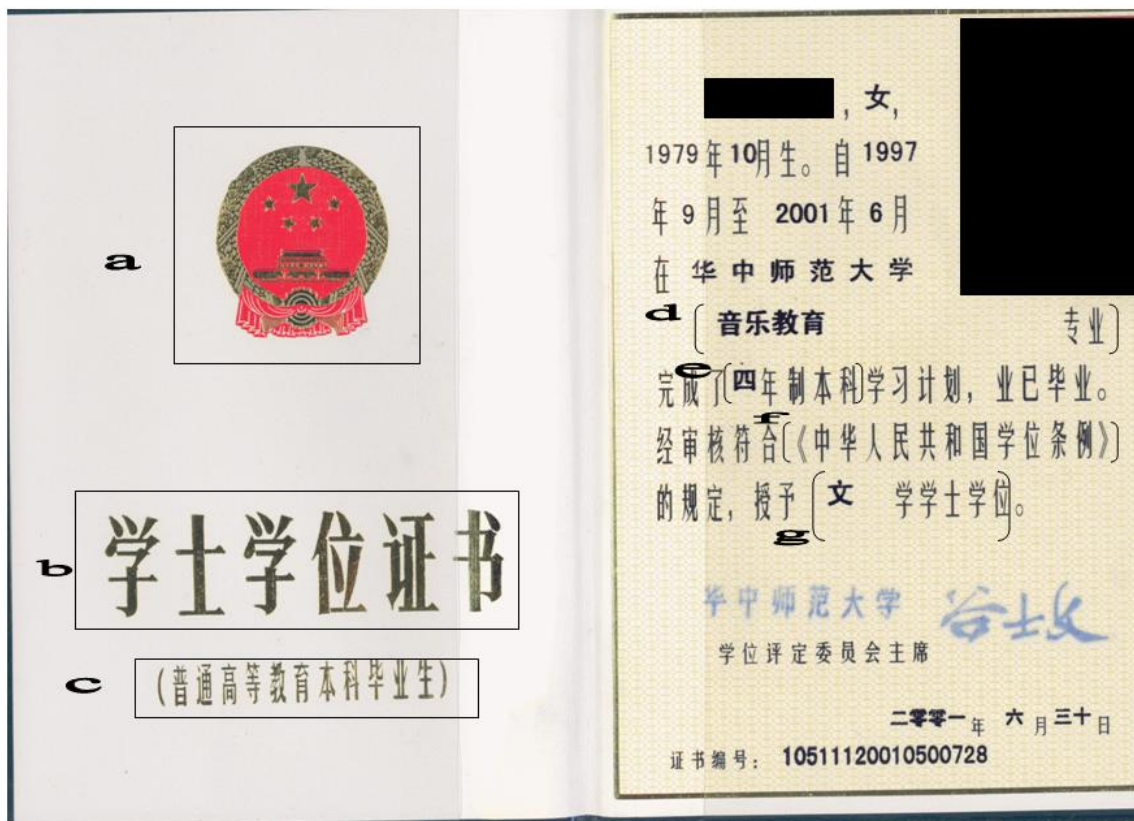
d: Approved for graduation

e: Regulations on Academic Degrees of the People's Republic of China

f: Bachelor's Degree in Arts

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Bachelor's Degree, 2001

a: National emblem of the People's Republic of China

b: Bachelor's Degree Certificate

c: Regular Higher Education *Benke* Graduate

d: Major in Music Education

e: Four-year benke

f: Regulations on Academic Degrees of the People's Republic of China

g: Bachelor's Degree in Arts

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Country: China	Official Country Name: People's Republic of China	Region: China
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Status: Published	Date Entered: Mar 06, 2005
Category: University	Date Revised: Oct 12, 2005

Credential Actual Name: 医学学士学位	Credential English Name: Bachelor's Degree in Medicine
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Credential Alternate Actual Name(s): 医学学士学位(临床医学专业) 医学学士学位(医学专业) 医学学士学位(口腔医学专业) 医学学士学位(兽医学专业)	Credential Alternate English Name(s): Bachelor's Degree in Medicine (Clinical Medicine) Bachelor's Degree in Medicine (Medicine) Bachelor's Degree in Medicine (Dentistry) Bachelor's Degree in Medicine (Veterinary Medicine)
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Time Period Credential Offered: 1983-Current

Issuing Body: Universities and Colleges

Admission Requirements:

- Completion of senior secondary school (representing 12 years of schooling since the late 1980s) and passing the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE).

Program Description:

- Five-year university degree program.

Most programs last five years full time, including four years of instruction and one year (about 45 weeks) of internship. There are some six-year programs that spend the first year on intensive training in a foreign language (e.g. English or Japanese). Some universities (such as China Medical University) offer combined bachelor/master degree programs that involve seven years of full-time study.

Provides Access to in the Home Country:

- Employment.

A five-year bachelor's degree in medicine (clinical medicine, medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine) entitles an individual to work in the medical profession. After a one-year probationary period under the supervision of a licensed physician, the individual may take the licensing examination administered by the Ministry of Health and become a licensed physician.

- Further education.

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

A bachelor's degree in medicine entitles an individual to sit national entrance examinations to be admitted into a master's program in medicine. No entrance program is needed for students enrolled in a combined bachelor/master program.

Placement Recommendations:

IERF 2004

[Medicine] MD

[Veterinary Medicine] DVM

[Traditional Chinese Medicine] Bachelor's Degree

[Stomatology] DDM/DDS

NOOSR

N/A

PIER

N/A

UK NARIC

N/A

[Note: Only IERF has specific recommendations for Chinese medical degrees.]

IQAS Recommendations for:

Employment

Generally compares to the completion of a first university professional degree in medicine.

Note: Medical degrees in China generally require five years of continuous study in the Faculty of Medicine. The degree is followed by a one-year supervised internship and then a licensing exam. In Canada, medical degrees require in general at least two years of undergraduate study in science followed by four years of professional medical studies.

Post-secondary Admission

Generally compares to the completion of a first university professional degree in medicine.

Note: Medical degrees in China generally require five years of continuous study in the Faculty of Medicine. The degree is followed by a one-year supervised internship and then a licensing exam. In Canada, medical degrees require in general at least two years of undergraduate study in science followed by four years of professional medical studies.

Course Equivalencies

30-level courses (grade 12) if no secondary documents are presented.

IQAS Rationale:

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Background

China has a long history in its traditional medical practices. The first classic on traditional Chinese medicine, *Yellow Emperor's Internal Canon of Medicine*, was published about two thousand years ago. Western medicine gained influence in China in the late nineteenth century. One of the first Western-style medical schools in China was Boji Medical School established in 1866, which later became Sun Yat-sen Medical University in 1985 and merged into Sun Yat-sen University in October 2001. Beijing Specialized Medical School, established in 1912 by the newly founded Republic of China (ROC), evolved into Beijing Medical University in 1985 and merged into Peking University in April 2000. In 2000, there were 177 postsecondary medical schools and 489 medical schools at the secondary level. Most medical schools teach both Western and Chinese medicine.

Medical education in China fall into four broad categories: medicine (for training doctors), nursing (for training nursing specialists), pharmacy (for training pharmacists), and medicine-related disciplines (for training technicians and therapists). This template only applies to the first category.

Program Description

Most programs last five years full time. There are some six-year programs that spend the first year on intensive training in a foreign language (e.g. English or Japanese). Some universities (such as China Medical University) offer combined bachelor/master degree programs that involve seven years of full-time study. Students in the seven-year program are considered to have entered graduate study in the sixth year.

A typical five-year program includes four years of instruction and one year (about 45 weeks) of internship. Students have to complete the courses prescribed in the curriculum and pass graduation examinations in both theory and practice in order to receive the *benke* certificate of graduation. They must meet additional requirements such as high scores in core courses and passing a foreign language proficiency test in order to receive the bachelor's degree in medicine. Students may be allowed to complete the five-year program in four to eight years.

According to the Ministry of Education's list of 1998, a bachelor's degree in medicine may be awarded in about 30 majors or specialties such as basic medicine, preventive medicine, clinical medicine, dental medicine, traditional Chinese medicine, acupuncture, Tibetan medicine, nursing, and pharmacy. Programs in nursing and pharmacy are typically four years, and students may receive a bachelor's degree in science instead of in medicine. This template only applies to five-year bachelor's degrees in medicine.

Employment and Further Education

A bachelor's degree in medicine (medical category) entitles an individual to work in the medical profession. After a one-year probationary period under the supervision of a licensed physician, an individual with a bachelor's degree in medicine may take the examination administered by the

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Ministry of Health to become a licensed physician. By comparison, an individual with a *zhuanke* certificate of graduation in medicine may take the licensing examination to become a licensed assistant physician after a one-year probationary period, then work for another two years in order to sit for the examination to become a licensed physician.

As note before, this template does not apply to four-year bachelor's degrees in medicine (basic medicine, preventive medicine, etc.), which may lead to research, management and teaching positions in the medical field.

According to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta, the medical education requirement for registration for foreign-trained nationals is graduation from a school of medicine that is listed in the directory of the World Health Organization and that has carried on a medical education program for more than 10 years and offers a medical training program of at least 48 months in duration. The latest WHO list includes 150 Chinese medical schools.

A bachelor's degree in medicine also entitles an individual to sit the national graduate entrance examinations to be admitted into a master's program in medicine. Admissions are highly competitive. No entrance program is needed for students enrolled in a combined bachelor/master program.

Conclusion

A bachelor's degree in medicine (medical category) requires the completion of senior secondary school (12 years of schooling) and passing the NCEE for admission, and the length of study is five years full time including one year of internship. It allows an individual to work in the medical profession and take the licensing exam after one year of supervised internship. Based on the above information and placement recommendations from other evaluation resources, IQAS compares the Bachelor's Degree in Medicine (clinical medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine) to the completion of a first university professional degree in medicine (or dentistry or veterinary medicine). A note is appended to explain the difference in structure and length of study from the Canadian medical degree programs.

Grading:

Table 1. Percentage Scale

Chinese %	IQAS %
100	100
99	99
98	97
97	96
96	95
95	94
94	92
93	91
92	90
91	89
90	87
89	86

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

88	85
87	84
86	83
85	81
84	80
83	79
82	78
81	76
80	75
79	74
78	73
77	71
76	70
75	69
74	68
73	66
72	65
71	64
70	63
69	61
68	60
67	59
66	58
65	56
64	55
63	54
62	53
61	51
60	50

Table 2. Five-Level Scale

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
90-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	94
80-89	良好 or 良	B	Very Good	82
70-79	中等 or 中	C	Good	69
60-69	及格	D	Pass	57
0-59	不及格	E/F	Fail	Fail

Table 3. Four-Level Scale (I)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
85-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	90
70-84	良好 or 良	B	Good	71
60-69	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	56
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 9. Four-Level Scale (II)

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
86-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	91
76-85	良好 or 良	B	Good	75
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 5. Four-Level Scale (III)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
91-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	95
76-90	良好 or 良	B	Good	79
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Note: Pass 合格 /fail 不合格 grades may be assigned to some non-core courses.

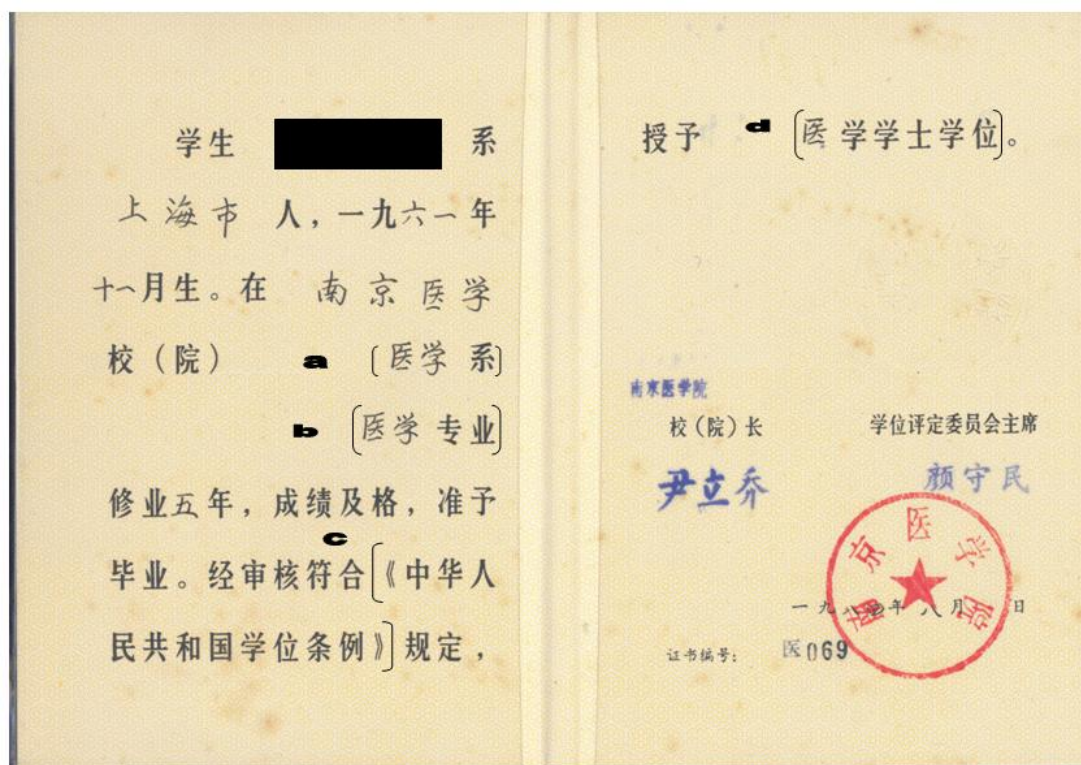
Comments:

This template applies to the five-year bachelor's degree in medicine (clinical medicine, medicine, dentistry, or veterinary medicine) plus a *benke* certificate of graduation, or the combined *benke*/bachelor certificate (1985-1991/1992).

Four-year bachelor's degrees in medicine (basic medicine, preventive medicine, pharmacy, etc.) and four- or five-year bachelor's degree in medicine (traditional Chinese medicine) are not compared to medical degrees in Canada. For information about other Chinese bachelor degrees, refer to the credential templates: "Certificate of Graduation (4-5 year undergraduate program)" and "Bachelor's Degree in xxx".

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education



Bachelor's Degree in Medicine (Medicine), 1984

a: Department of Medicine

b: Major in Medicine

c: Regulations on Academic Degrees of the People's Republic of China

d: Bachelor's Degree in Medicine

* This is a combined *Benke* Certificate of Graduation and Bachelor Degree Certificate

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Country: China	Official Country Name: People's Republic of China	Region: China
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Status: Published	Date Entered: Apr 27, 2005
Category: University	Date Revised: Oct 14, 2005

Credential Actual Name: xxx 硕士学位	Credential English Name: Master's Degree in xxx
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Credential Alternate Actual Name(s): 农学硕士学位 文学硕士学位 经济学硕士学位 教育学硕士学位 史学硕士学位 法学硕士学位 管理学硕士学位 军事学硕士学位 哲学硕士学位 理学硕士学位 工学硕士学位	Credential Alternate English Name(s): Master's Degree in Agriculture Master's Degree in Arts Master's Degree in Economics Master's Degree in Education Master's Degree in History Master's Degree in Law Master's Degree in Management Master's Degree in Military Science Master's Degree in Philosophy Master's Degree in Science Master's Degree in Technology
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Time Period Credential Offered: 1981-Current
Issuing Body: Universities, Colleges, and Research Institutes
Admission Requirements:

•Certificate of graduation from a four- or five-year undergraduate program (*benke*) (16-17 years of schooling in total) and passing national entrance examinations.

Applicants must have a *benke* certificate of graduation, usually be under the age of 40, and pass the graduate entrance examination and an interview. The age limit does not apply to self-sponsored applicants. The Ministry of Education is responsible for setting and grading papers for English, Russian, Japanese, political theory, and a few basic specialty subjects in the first round of entrance examination. The institutions set and grade the specialty subject papers in the second round of examination and conduct interviews. Students with first class standing in their undergraduate study may be offered direct admission into a master's program.

Applicants who do not have a *benke* certificate of graduation may claim "comparable educational competence" if they have a *zhuanke* qualification plus at least two years of work experience, or if they have a *benke* certificate of completion. To be admitted, they have to pass additional examinations in at least two core courses at the *benke* level.

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Program Description:

- Three-year (or two-and-a-half-year) graduate degree program.

Most programs comprise two and a half years of full-time study, including about 30 credits of coursework and the preparation and defence of a thesis. Each student will be assigned a thesis supervisor. Upon successful completion of the program, students receive a certificate of graduation from master's program. They have to meet additional requirements set by the institution in order to be awarded a master's degree.

Master's degrees are named after the 12 major categories. The latest list of specialties for graduate study, published by the Ministry of Education in 1997, has 388 specialties in 12 major categories including military science. These are the same 12 categories for bachelor degrees:

Philosophy	哲学
Economics	经济学
Law	法学
Education	教育学
Arts	文学
History	史学
Science	理学
Technology	工学
Agriculture	农学
Medicine	医学
Management	管理学
Military Science	军事学

Since 1990 China has introduced a number of professional degrees, mostly at the master level. These include MBA, Master's degree in Architecture, Master's degree in Clinical Medicine, MPA (Master in Public Administration), Master's degree in Veterinary Medicine, Master's degree in Agricultural Promotion, and Master's degree in Engineering. This template does not cover professional master's degrees. Please note that “工学” (technology) is often mistranslated into “engineering”. The Chinese word for engineering is 工程 or 工程学. Master's degree in technology (工学硕士) is far more common than Master's degree in engineering (工程硕士).

Provides Access to in the Home Country:

- Employment.

Employment policy in China is traditionally based on educational qualifications (documented by certificates of graduation) rather than academic degrees (documented by degree certificates). After successful completion of a regular master's program (comprising two and a half years to three years of full-time study), an individual will receive both a certificate of graduation from a

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

master's program and a master's degree certificate. The qualification and degree at the master's level give an individual access to various academic and professional positions. For example, a *benke* certificate of graduation is the minimum requirement to teach at a higher education institution according to the *Teachers Law* (1993), but many institutions expect their teachers to have at least master's level education.

- Admission into doctoral programs.

A master's degree is the standard requirement for taking the entrance examinations for doctoral programs. (Please note that a *benke* certificate of graduation rather than a bachelor's degree is needed for admission into master's programs.)

Placement Recommendations:

IERF 2004

MA/MS

[This applies to all 12 categories of master's degrees, including medicine.]

PIER 2000

May be considered comparable to a U.S. master's degree.

NOOSR 2003

Comparable to the educational level of an Australian Master degree.

UK NARIC 2005

Is considered comparable to British Master's degree standard.

IQAS Recommendations for:

Employment

Generally compares to the completion of a Master's degree with a focus in xxx.

Post-secondary Admission

Generally compares to the completion of a Master's degree with a focus in xxx.

Course Equivalencies

N/A

IQAS Rationale:

Background

China first introduced academic degrees in 1935 under the Republic of China (ROC) government. By 1949, when the People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded, 232 individuals had received master's degrees.

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Graduate education was introduced in the PRC in 1950, with a total enrolment of 22, 700 between 1950 and 1965. It was stopped during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) and restored in 1978. The first master's degrees were awarded in 1981. Before that, those who successfully completed graduate programs received certificates of graduation but no degree. From 1981 to 1995, the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council (the central government) decided which higher education institutions and research institutes could award master's degrees and also approved the disciplinary areas and specialties in which a master's degree could be awarded by any issuing body. Since 1995 the approval procedure has been adjusted to give institutions more autonomy. The Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council is still responsible for authorizing an institution to start awarding master's degrees; the authority to approve existing master-degree granting institutions to offer new master's programs has been delegated to provincial academic degree committees and a number of prestigious institutions.

Program Description

Most programs comprise two and a half years of full-time study, including about 30 credits of coursework and the preparation and defence of a thesis. Coursework is usually completed in the first three semesters (one and a half years) and typically includes 10 credits of required general courses, 15 credits of required specialty courses, and a few elective courses. The final year is spent on the preparation and defence of the thesis, which must present new ideas on the research topic. Each student will be assigned a thesis supervisor, who must be an associate professor or full professor authorized by the institution to supervise master's students. Upon successful completion of the coursework and thesis, students receive a certificate of graduation from master's program. They have to meet additional requirements set by the institution (e.g. grades of 70 % or higher in all specialty courses) in order to be awarded a master's degree certificate.

The above description only applies to traditional master's programs that involves two to three years of full-time study and awards "double certificates" - both a certificate of graduation from master's program and a master's degree certificate.

Employment and Further Education

A master's degree certificate from a regular two and a half year to three year program is always accompanied by a certificate of graduation from master's program, indicating that the individual has been awarded both the master's degree and master-level qualification. This gives the individual access to various academic and professional positions. For example, though a *benke* certificate of graduation is the minimum requirement to teach at a higher education institution according to the *Teachers Law* (1993), many institutions expect their teachers to hold or be working toward a master's degree. Since doctoral programs in China had very small enrolments until the late 1990s, master degree holders have been the mainstay of advanced research personnel for over twenty years.

A master's degree is the standard requirement for taking the entrance examinations for doctoral programs. (By contrast, a *benke* certificate of graduation rather than a bachelor's degree is needed for admission into master's programs.)

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Conclusion

Master's degree programs require applicants to have a *benke* certificate of graduation and pass the entrance examinations administered at both the national and institutional levels. They comprise two and a half years to three years of full time study including both coursework and the preparation and defence of a thesis. A master's degree gives an individual access to academic and professional employment as well as further education in doctoral programs. Based on the above information and placement recommendations from other evaluation resources, IQAS compares the master's degree (plus the accompanying certificate of graduation from master's program) to the completion of a Master's degree with a focus in xxx.

Grading:

Table 1. Percentage Scale

Chinese %	IQAS %
100	100
99	99
98	97
97	96
96	95
95	94
94	92
93	91
92	90
91	89
90	87
89	86
88	85
87	84
86	83
85	81
84	80
83	79
82	78
81	76
80	75
79	74
78	73
77	71
76	70
75	69
74	68
73	66
72	65
71	64
70	63
69	61
68	60
67	59
66	58

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

65	56
64	55
63	54
62	53
61	51
60	50

Table 2. Five-Level Scale

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
90-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	94
80-89	良好 or 良	B	Very Good	82
70-79	中等 or 中	C	Good	69
60-69	及格	D	Pass	57
0-59	不及格	E/F	Fail	Fail

Table 3. Four-Level Scale (I)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
85-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	90
70-84	良好 or 良	B	Good	71
60-69	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	56
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 10. Four-Level Scale (II)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
86-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	91
76-85	良好 or 良	B	Good	75
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Table 5. Four-Level Scale (III)

Percentage	Chinese Descriptor	Letter Grade	English Descriptor	IQAS %
91-100	优秀 or 优	A	Excellent	95
76-90	良好 or 良	B	Good	79
60-75	及格 or 中	C	Pass/Satisfactory	60
0-59	不及格 or 差	D/F	Fail	Fail

Note: Pass 合格 /fail 不合格 grades may be assigned to some non-core courses.

Comments:

This template only applies to **master's degree plus certificate of graduation from master's program**. If both the master's degree certificate and the certificate of graduation from master's program are presented, the two credentials will be combined (even if they are issued by different institutions) and compared to the completion of a master's degree with a focus in xxx. There is no separate comparative statement for the certificate of graduation from master's program.

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

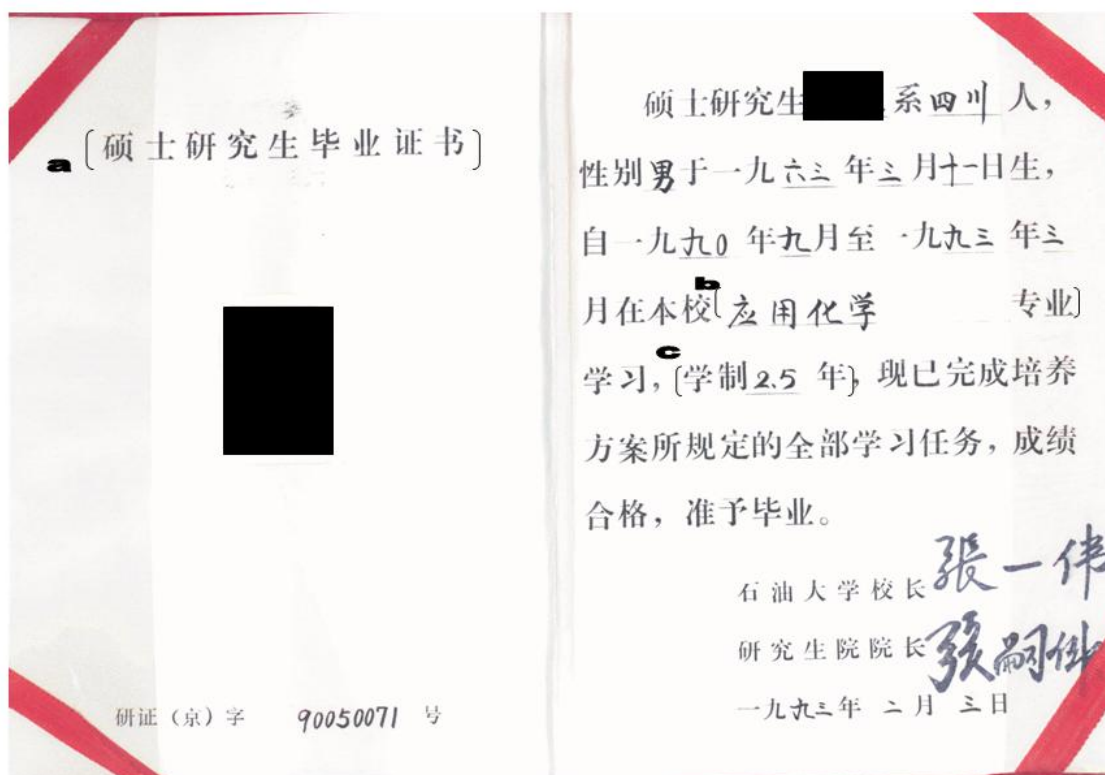
International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

An applicant who presents **master's degree only** should be asked to provide the certificate of graduation from master's program. An applicant who does not have the certificate of graduation from master's program must have obtained the master's degree through an alternative route. Such credentials will be assessed on an individual basis.

It is rare for an individual to receive **certificate of graduation from master's program only**, without being awarded a master's degree. Please verify the translation of the name of the certificate, bearing in mind that a "certificate of completion" is not a fully recognized credential, and that "graduate training courses" belong to the non-qualification education sector.

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education



Certificate of Graduation from Master's Program, 1993

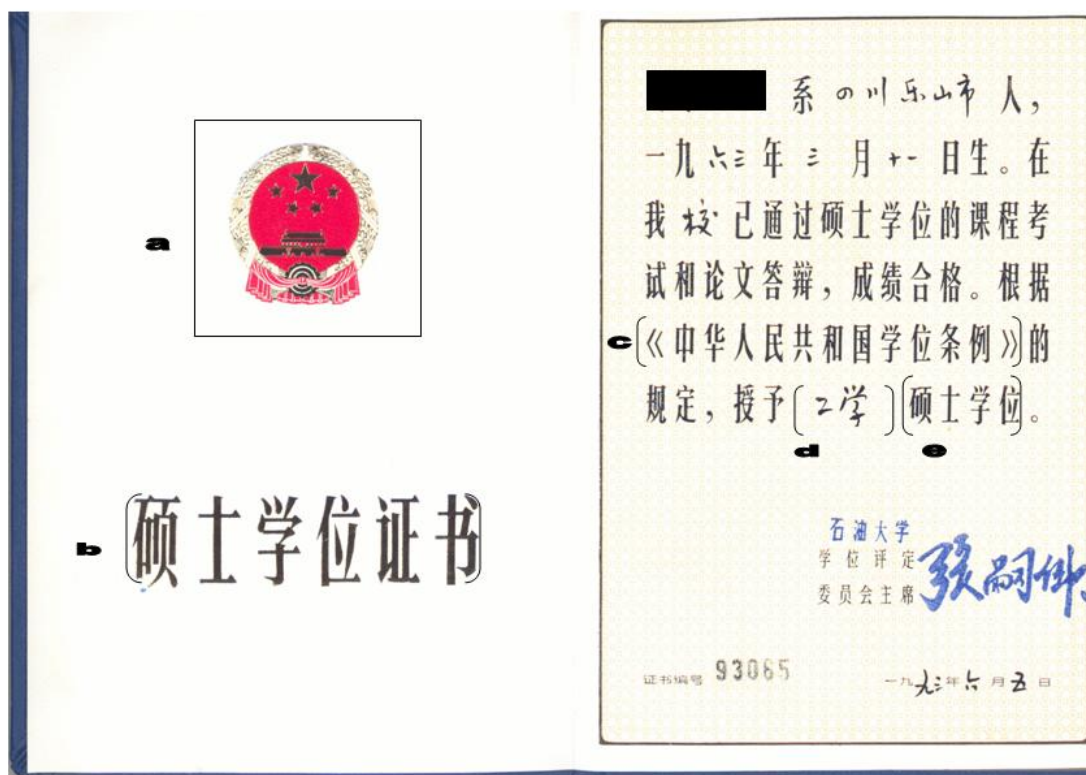
a: Master's Graduate Student Certificate of Graduation

b: Major in Applied Chemistry

c: 2.5-year program

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education



Master's Degree Certificate, 1993

a: National emblem of the People's Republic of China

b: Master's Degree Certificate

c: Regulations on Academic Degrees of the People's Republic of China

d: Technology (often translated as engineering)

e: Master's Degree

* The above two credentials, the certificate of graduation and the degree certificate, were issued for the same program to the same student.

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Country:

China

Official Country Name:

People's Republic of China

Region:

China

Status: Published

Date Entered: Jun 17, 2005

Category: University

Date Revised: Oct 12, 2005

Credential Actual Name:

xxx 博士学位

Credential English Name:

Doctor's Degree in xxx

Credential Alternate Actual Name(s):

农学博士学位

文学博士学位

经济学博士学位

教育学博士学位

史学博士学位

法学博士学位

管理学博士学位

医学博士学位

军事学博士学位

哲学博士学位

理学博士学位

工学博士学位

Credential Alternate English Name(s):

Doctor's Degree in Agriculture

Doctor's Degree in Arts

Doctor's Degree in Economics

Doctor's Degree in Education

Doctor's Degree in History

Doctor's Degree in Law

Doctor's Degree in Management

Doctor's Degree in Medicine

Doctor's Degree in Military Science

Doctor's Degree in Philosophy

Doctor's Degree in Science

Doctor's Degree in Technology

Time Period Credential Offered: 1983-Current

Issuing Body: Universities, Colleges and Research Institutes

Admission Requirements:

- A master's degree and entrance examinations.

Applicants to a doctoral program are required to hold a master's degree, be under 45 years of age, and pass entrance examinations that include a foreign language and at least two specialty subjects. They must also submit two recommendation letters from associate professors or professors who are experts in the proposed area of study.

The majority of doctoral students are state-sponsored. They do not pay any tuition and receive a monthly stipend. There are also some employer-sponsored and self-sponsored students; they may exceed the age limit and may have entrance examination scores lower than those of state-sponsored students.

Applicants with a bachelor degree and at least six years of work experience may claim educational competence comparable to a master degree holder and be admitted into doctoral programs by passing additional specialty subject exams at the master's level. Some institutions also require such applicants to hold a senior academic/professional title.

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Outstanding students enrolled in master's programs may be admitted directly into a doctoral program by passing institution-administered examinations. They are not required to complete their master's thesis, and will not receive master's degrees. Students enrolled in combined master/doctor programs are also required to pass institution-administered examinations before proceeding to doctoral level study.

Program Description:

- Advanced research-based graduate degree program.

A doctoral program involves three to four years of full-time study. In the first two or three semesters, students usually complete around 15 credits of coursework. By the end of the first year, they have to sit for a qualifying comprehensive examination, submit their research proposal, and then begin the preparation and defence of the dissertation. Only full professors may be authorized to supervise doctoral students. In their doctoral dissertation, candidates must demonstrate they have acquired a broad theoretical foundation in the discipline, in-depth knowledge of the specialty, and the ability to undertake independent research, and have made original contribution in science or technology. Upon successful completion of the program, they receive a certificate of graduation from doctoral program and a doctor's degree certificate.

Provides Access to in the Home Country:

- Employment

Individuals with doctor's degrees typically choose academic and research positions at higher education institutions, research institutes, governments, and corporations. They may also conduct further research as postdoctoral fellows at research centers within universities or research institutes. Though a *benke*/bachelor's degree entitles an individual to teach at higher education institutions according to the *Teacher's Law*, many prestigious universities require a doctor's degree when hiring new academic staff.

Placement Recommendations:

IERF 2004

PhD

NOOSR 2003

All Doctoral degrees are assessed on a case-by-case basis.

PIER 2000

May be considered comparable to an earned U.S. doctorate.

UK NARIC 2005

Is considered comparable to British Doctor of Philosophy degree (PhD) standard

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

IQAS Recommendations for: Employment

Generally compares to the completion of a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree with a focus in xxx. As part of his/her degree program, he/she completed a dissertation entitled _____.

Post-secondary Admission

N/A

Course Equivalencies

N/A

IQAS Rationale: Background

China first introduced academic degrees in 1935 under the Republic of China (ROC) government. By 1949, when the People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded, 232 individuals had received master's degrees, but no doctoral degree had been conferred.

Graduate education was introduced in the PRC in 1950, with a total enrolment of 22, 700 between 1950 and 1965. It was stopped during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) and restored in 1978. Academic degrees (bachelors, masters and doctors) were formally introduced in the PRC on Jan 1, 1981 with the promulgation of the *Regulations on Academic Degrees of the People's Republic of China* in Feb 1980. China awarded its first doctoral degrees to 18 individuals in 1983. In 2004, more than 50,000 doctoral students were admitted, and total enrolment amounted to over 130,000.

The Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council (the central government) decides which higher education institutions and research institutes can award doctor's degrees and also approves the disciplinary areas in which doctor's degrees can be awarded by any given issuing body. Over 300 colleges, universities and research institutes are authorized to award doctor's degrees.

Categories and Specialties/Majors

Like bachelor and master degrees, doctoral degrees are also named after the 12 major categories. Please note that the degree certificate does not always specify the specialty or major of the program, which is indicated on the certificate of graduation. The latest list of specialties for graduate study, published by the Ministry of Education in 1997, has 388 specialties in 12 major categories:

Philosophy	哲学
Economics	经济学
Law	法学
Education	教育学
Arts	文学

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

History	史学
Science	理学
Technology	工学
Agriculture	农学
Medicine	医学
Management	管理学
Military Science	军事学

Quality Issues

When first introduced in the early 1980s, doctoral education was generally considered to be of very high quality; many doctoral candidates were already leading experts in their fields. Since 2000, the rapid expansion of doctoral programs has raised quality concerns among Chinese educators. The number of doctoral degrees awarded grew from 12,000 in 2001 to over 30,000 in 2004. In a 2005 article, Yang Wei, Director General of the Department of Academic Degrees and Graduation Education of the Ministry of Education, acknowledged that there is much room for improvement in the quality of doctoral education in China and suggested four possible reasons: 1) lack of creativity of students coming out of the current basic and higher education system; 2) lack of investment in scientific research as compared with more developed countries; 3) lack of fully qualified doctoral student supervisors, resulting in high student/supervisor ratios at some institutions; 4) structural problems of graduate education.

It is difficult to differentiate doctoral programs in China based on quality indicators. The designation "national key institution" is no longer in official use. In terms of funding priority, 38 higher education institutions belong to Project 985 (aiming for world-class status), 95 belong to Project 211 (first class national institutions), and 72 are directly administered by the Ministry of Education. The above three categories are not mutually exclusive. Please refer to the China Country Profile for those lists in both Chinese and English. There is yet no widely accepted ranking of Chinese graduate schools. In addition, doctoral programs are offered at both higher education institutions and research institutes, and many of the research institutes are not included in the university or graduate school ranking systems.

Conclusion

Doctoral programs in China require a master's degree and passing entrance examinations at the national and institutional levels for admission. The program usually comprises three years of full-time study, including both coursework and the preparation and defence of a doctoral dissertation based on advanced original research. A doctor's degree gives an individual access to academic, research and other positions at higher education institutions, government agencies and corporations. Based on the above information and the placement recommendations from other evaluation resources, IQAS compares a doctor's degree in xxx to the completion of a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree with a focus in xxx, with a note indicating the title of the dissertation.

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education

Grading:

N/A

Comments:

This template applies to the Doctor's Degree Certificate plus the Certificate of Graduation from a Doctoral Program. An applicant who only has the Doctor's Degree Certificate without the accompanying Certificate of Graduation may have obtained the degree through an alternative route. Such a credential should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education



Certificate of Graduation from a Doctoral Program, 2000

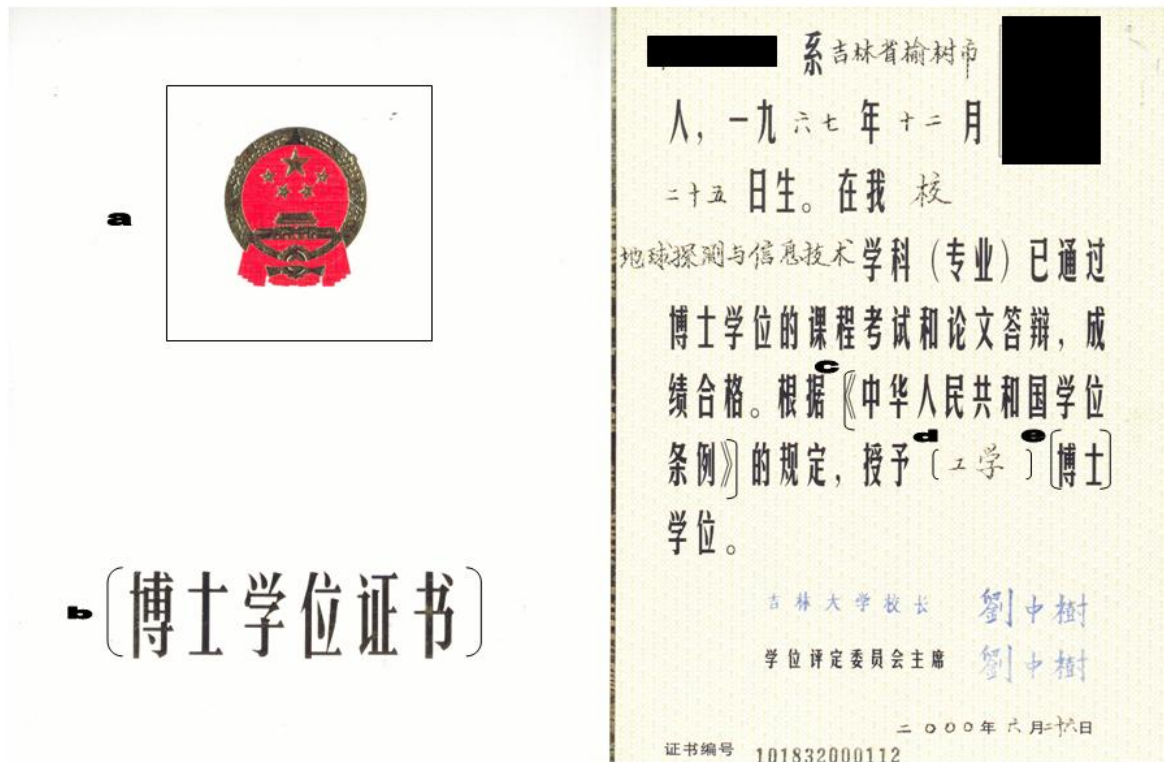
a: Doctoral Student

b: Certificate of Graduation

c: Three-year program

Credential Templates, People's Republic of China

International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), Alberta Advanced Education



Doctor's Degree in Technology, 2000

a: National emblem of the People's Republic of China

b: Doctor's Degree Certificate

c: *Regulations on Academic Degrees of the People's Republic of China*

d: Technology

e: Doctor

* The above two credentials, the certificate of graduation and the degree certificate, were issued for the same program to the same student.