



CHINA – Transnational Higher Education Update

(Information current as at 24 August 2015)

In August 2015, the Chinese Ministry of Education updated their list of approved Sino-foreign joint venture programs. This update saw 32 new programs added at the undergraduate degree and above level, including two new Australian programs. Australia now has 115 active MoE approved joint programs at the degree and above level (with a further 33 programs that have ceased and not been renewed).

In addition to the new Australian programs, the United States saw 12 new programs added, Republic of Korea 3, the United Kingdom, France, Poland and Taiwan two each and one new program each for Sweden, Russia, Canada, Austria, Germany, Finland and Holland. One program was at the doctoral level, six at the masters level and 25 at the bachelor level.

While two Australian universities were successful in getting joint programs approved in the latest update, a further five Australian universities were unsuccessful, with their applications being refused for a number of reasons.

In some cases, the Australian universities had existing joint programs that had not yet been evaluated. The MoE has advised that foreign institutions that have existing approved joint programs with Chinese institutions need to have all of these programs successfully evaluated by the China Academic Degrees and Graduate Education Development Centre (CDGDC) before any further joint program applications will be considered.

In other cases, applications were for programs in disciplines considered by the MoE to be already at saturation point, like MBA programs. The MoE did approve one program in accounting, with a Chinese partner from the western regions of China, demonstrating the MoE's support for developing programs in provinces beyond the eastern seaboard.

In assessing new applications, the MoE continues to look closely at the number of existing joint programs that a foreign provider is operating in China, and the mix of programs being offered, to satisfy themselves that the foreign provider is able to fully comply with the Four One-Thirds Rule¹.

The MoE now also requires foreign institutions involved in applications for new joint programs to submit a quality evaluation report for the institution conducted by the foreign institution's national or state level quality evaluation agency (ie. TEQSA for Australia).

The Education and Research office in the Australian Embassy in Beijing continues to monitor MoE regulations on transnational education in order to keep Australian institutions up to date on developments.

For further enquiries, please contact the [Education and Research Section of the Australian Embassy](#) in Beijing.

¹ The Four One Thirds rule states that:

- the introduced foreign units shall account for more than 1/3 of all units for the Chinese-foreign cooperatively-run education program
- the introduced foreign specialisation core units shall account for more than 1/3 of all core units for the Chinese-foreign cooperatively-run education programs
- the number of the specialisation core units of the responsible teaching staff of the foreign education institution shall account for more than 1/3 of all the units of the Chinese-foreign cooperatively-run education program
- the academic hours of the responsible teaching staff of the foreign education institution shall account for more than 1/3 of all academic hours of the Chinese-foreign cooperatively run education program. he academic hours of the responsible teaching staff of the foreign education institution shall account for more than 1/3 of all academic hours of the Chinese-foreign cooperatively run education program.