



Verification of overseas academic qualifications in China

(Information as at July 2025)

Key Points

- While it is not compulsory, there are employment and social incentives for Chinese graduates to have their overseas academic qualifications formally verified.
- The China Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE) is responsible for verifying overseas academic qualifications in China.
- Applications are submitted online by individual graduates and cannot be submitted by a foreign provider on their graduates' behalf.
- The verification process is done on a case-by-case basis. The CSCSE cannot pre-emptively provide assurance to a student or foreign provider that an overseas qualification will be verified upon the student's graduation. The verification process will only begin once a student has completed their qualification and applied to the CSCSE for the verification statement.
- In evaluating applications for verification, the CSCSE may contact the overseas institution that provided the graduate applicant with their qualification.
- Not all qualifications received from an overseas institution are 'in scope' for CSCSE verification. The CSCSE will not, for example, verify qualifications delivered online.

Most Chinese students who study abroad return to China to seek employment or undertake further study. Whether they look for employment in the public or private sector, or apply for further study, returnees will generally be required to provide their prospective employer or education institute with a statement (officially known as the Overseas Credentials Evaluation Report) that confirms the legitimacy and validity of their overseas higher education qualification.

Graduates may also be able to access other social benefits associated with having a verified overseas qualification. So, while it is not compulsory for graduates to apply to have their qualifications verified, there are substantial incentives to do so.

The China Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE) is responsible for verifying overseas academic qualifications in China. The verification of overseas academic qualifications service has been available since the 1990s and is also referred to as the Overseas Credentials Evaluation Service (OCES). It currently operates under the 'Provision on the Evaluation of Overseas Credentials'.

In 2019, CSCSE transitioned its evaluation reports from paper-based documents to electronic formats, which are now integrated with several national databases, including the National Immigration Administration's exit-entry records system. By 2024, the service had been used by approximately 3.5 million individuals, with annual growth observed except for a temporary decline in 2022 due to the pandemic.

CSCSE's verification services covers academic qualifications from 174 countries and regions, involving more than 12,000 institutions. In 2024, around 40,000 verification applications were submitted for qualifications obtained in Australia, making it the third most common destination country, following the United Kingdom and the United States. This service is also available to foreign nationals, which sometimes is required for their entry into Chinese higher education.

Application process

To have an overseas qualification verified, returnee graduates must apply to the CSCSE through its online platform. Applications for the verification of overseas qualifications are made by individual graduates and cannot be made by a foreign institution on a student's behalf.

The CSCSE's verification of overseas qualifications evaluation is done on a case-by-case basis and takes into consideration the application materials submitted by each individual graduate. This means that application outcomes vary according to the details submitted by the graduate. It is possible for graduates from the same foreign institution to have different verification outcomes. The legal status of the foreign institution and its eligibility to award relevant qualifications only form part of the CSCSE's considerations.

This also means that the CSCSE cannot pre-emptively provide assurance to a student or foreign provider that a qualification will be verified upon the student's graduation. The verification process will only begin once a student has completed their qualification and applied to the CSCSE for the verification statement.

Materials required

Mainland Chinese residents need to upload the following documents on the official website of the CSCSE (<http://zwfw.cscse.edu.cn>).

- Foreign academic qualifications and degree certificates obtained.
- Passport and visa used during the period of study in the country.
- Academic transcripts and related documents.
- A recent standard photo of the applicant.
 1. An Authorisation Statement (to be downloaded from the CSCSE website, signed and uploaded as part of the application).

Scope of verification

Applicants are advised to review whether their academic qualifications fall within the scope of CSCSE's verification services before submitting an application. The following categories of qualifications fall within the scope of the CSCSE's verification services as outlined below:

- Degrees and diplomas obtained from foreign (offshore) universities or other higher education institutions.

- Degrees and diplomas obtained through Chinese-foreign Cooperation in Running School (CFCRS) education programs or institutions legally established within China.
- Degrees and diplomas obtained from universities or higher education institutions in Taiwan, Macao Special Administrative Region and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

The following qualifications are currently out of scope for CSCSE's verification service:

- Cross-border online degrees or diplomas.
- Foreign professional or occupational qualification certificates.
- Certificates from language training programs or other non-degree educational courses
- Proof of research experience for visiting scholars, advanced trainees, or postdoctoral researchers.
- Foundation or preparatory course certificates issued by foreign institutions.
- Non-higher education diplomas, honorary titles, or honorary degrees without corresponding academic or research experience.
- Degrees or diplomas obtained through illegal or non-compliant means, or those not recognised by the issuing country or region.

Qualifications delivered online

Qualifications obtained partially or wholly online with an overseas provider are not recognised by the CSCSE as they fall outside the scope of its current verification criteria. During the pandemic period, the CSCSE temporarily loosened restrictions on online delivery but restricted them again in early 2023 when pandemic travel restrictions were lifted.

Evaluation outcomes

After the applicant submits the materials, the verification process usually takes around 10-20 working days. In all cases, CSCSE provides a written explanation outlining the reason for the decision. CSCSE's evaluation outcomes generally fall into three categories:

- Overseas Credentials Evaluation Report (referred to in this paper more informally as a 'verification statement').
- Notice of Temporary Suspension of Evaluation (issued when the qualification is currently outside the scope of CSCSE's services, such as degrees obtained entirely through online study).
- Notice of non-evaluation (issued when the submitted materials are incomplete, problematic, or do not meet the necessary requirements).

Enhanced scrutiny

The CSCSE is strengthening reviews of degree verification applications from some overseas institutions where anomalies have been detected in authentication data provided by graduates from those institutions.



Enquiries

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

Further reading

Policy Updates published by Education and Research Section are available at [China Resources - Department of Education, Australian Government](#). For information on verification policies implemented during COVID, please see:

- [2023: China ends COVID-19 temporary measure on evaluation of online study](#), and
- [2020: Formal advice on degree verification for Chinese international students – online learning due to COVID-19](#)

Key terms

English translation	Chinese term
China Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE)	中国留学服务中心
Overseas Credentials Evaluation Service (OCES)	国（境）外学历学位认证
Provisions on the Evaluation of Overseas Credentials	国（境）外学历学位认证办法
Overseas Credentials Evaluation Report	认证书
Notice of Temporary Suspension of Evaluation	暂不认证通知单
Notice of Non-Evaluation	不予认证通知单