

**Joint statement between
the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China and
the Department for Innovation, University and Skills
on behalf of the Government and Devolved Administrations of the
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,
regarding strengthening comprehensive cooperation and exchange**

1. The third China-UK Education Summit took place in Beijing on Oct 29th, 2007. The UK delegation was led by John Denham, the Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills and the Chinese delegation was led by Dr Zhou Ji, the Minister of Education.

UK-China Partners in Education

2. Both delegations were pleased with the healthy state of educational co-operation between the UK and China, and agreed to continue to work together to strengthen educational collaboration further. Both sides agreed that educational collaboration between China and the UK has gone from strength to strength. Both sides acknowledged the huge number of collaborative ventures initiated between Chinese and UK universities. Similarly, there has been an explosion of activity on school links. There has also been discussion on ways of strengthening cooperation on vocational education. It was also acknowledged that fresh impetus to educational collaboration has been provided by the establishment of annual Ministerial Education Summit meetings. These summits have provided important opportunities to discuss areas of mutual concern and have agreed joint action in a range of areas.

3. Nevertheless, both countries recognize that the time is right to consolidate their joint activities across the education spectrum by adopting a recognizable, branded UK-China Education Partnership Programme, with strategic importance. Officials from both sides will hold further discussions and, if agreed, to be worked up in time for the Prime Ministerial Summit scheduled for early in 2008.

4. The two Ministers discussed the current range of educational exchange and co-operation programmes between the two countries and identified key areas for future development including:

- Scholarships for Excellence
- Graduate Work Experience Programme
- HE Collaboration
- mutual recognition of degree qualifications
- Skills
- UK-China Cultural Exchanges

Scholarships for Excellence

5. Both sides welcomed the progress that had been made since the Scholarships for Excellence programme was launched at the first Education Summit in Beijing in February

2005. In this period approximately 100 Chinese PhD and post doctoral students have benefited from the scholarship programme with a pilot programme of 15 UK researchers studying in China during 2007/08. For 2008-2009, it was agreed that both countries would continue to fund up to 50 scholarship opportunities for Chinese students to go to UK and extending the scheme to UK scholars at an equivalent level.

6. In recognition of both countries' hosting and commitment to the Olympic Games in 2008 and 2012 respectively, the Ministers agreed to extend the scope of the existing scholarship programme by providing 5 additional scholarships specifically targeted at sports science researchers.

Graduate work experience

7. Both sides agreed that the two Graduate Work Experience pilot programmes during 2006/07 had been a useful preparatory phase and key learning points had been built into the design of a full scale roll out during 2007-08. They recognize the significance of the Graduate Work Experience programme that will allow young UK and Chinese graduates to gain experience of working and living in each other's countries and provide them with key, transferable employability skills.

8. Both sides agreed to sign a new MoU to continue the collaboration in this area. It is emphasized that with the signing of the GWEP MoU, an implementation mechanism will be formally established which, in turn, will bring a more systematic operational procedure to ensure the success of this programme. Both sides agree to review the outcomes from the programme at the next summit meeting.

Higher Education

9. It was reaffirmed that many changes and reforms had taken place in the higher education systems of both countries in the last decade. With the current MoU on Higher Education Collaboration expiring by the end of 2007, both sides agreed to sign a new MoU to continue to continue the collaboration in this area.

10. Both sides acknowledged the huge number of collaborative ventures initiated between Chinese and UK universities. These span areas such as health, genetics, information technology, business, management, agriculture, media, urbanization, law and art. These partnerships can take a variety of forms, including joint research; links in business management and communications; staff and student exchanges; and joint degree courses, foundation courses and distance learning. In future collaboration, both sides will support and encourage the universities to undertake joint research projects.

11. Both sides recognized that the quality of higher education collaboration is crucial, and will undertake discussions and cooperation on the quality assurance of Sino-UK jointly-run programmes in China.

12. In 2006 both sides launched the Sino-UK Science Networks Programme, providing post-Doctoral researchers with the opportunities to explore research cooperation and encouraging them to apply for other national or multinational research funds. Both sides are satisfied with the current development of this programme and will review it at the next education summit.

Mutual recognition of academic qualifications and institutions

13. The agreement on Mutual Recognition of Academic Degrees in Higher Education signed in 2000, led to the creation of a list of Chinese higher education institutions with degree-awarding powers for Bachelor, Master and Doctorate degrees and a list of the higher education institutions with degree-awarding powers for Bachelor, Master and Doctorate degrees in the UK. Both sides exchanged the latest list of degree-awarding higher education institutions in each country.

14. Both sides recognized that there are higher education institutions in each country which do not have degree-awarding authority themselves, but can deliver degree courses to students through collaboration with those higher education institutions which have degree-awarding authority. Discussions on their degree quality and comparability have been already undertaken and both sides will continue the discussion in this area.

Vocational Education and Training

15. Both sides agreed that the quality and skills of workforces is one of the most important challenges facing every modern industrial country. Both governments will make endeavours to develop a vocational education and training system for their respective workforces, to ensure that everyone in society has the opportunity to develop their talent and realise their full potential. That means supporting people to develop their skills and talents before employment, and in and out of work, including mastering basic literacy and numeracy skills and the skills that will provide people with good employment and career development prospects.

16. Both sides acknowledged that there is much to learn from each other and renewed their commitment to share experience and collaborate between the two countries under the partnership agreement. This collaboration -operation will include exchange of experience and information on topics including:

- design of national vocational education and training policies;
- curriculum development led by enterprises and professionals
- funding mechanisms for vocational education and training programmes;
- the role of labour market in vocational education development;
- workplace learning;
- basic skills;
- leadership and capacity building in vocational schools and centres;
- quality assessment of vocational education
- mutual recognition of vocational education qualifications

17. It was agreed that a workshop will be organized on Oct 29th to bring senior experts together to exchange information on national policies, understand the current development of the other side, and to identify the areas of common interests. It is expected that more substantial suggestions on next steps or areas/programmes for future collaboration will be made after this workshop.

UK-China Cultural Exchanges

18. Both sides agreed that it was to our mutual advantage to have a better understanding of each other's country, its people, history, language and culture. The UK attaches great importance to learning more about China that is based on in depth knowledge but which is also applicable to support more effective cooperation. It is this deeper understanding that needs to permeate all levels of our knowledge economies: from primary school, to colleges, universities, workplaces and into the business boardroom.

19. Both sides welcomed the contribution to this challenging agenda of the British Council and the Office of the Chinese Language Council International (HANBAN). Both sides agree to continue to implement the 2006 MoU agreed at the Sino-UK Seminar on Cooperation of Chinese Language Teaching and welcomed the increasing number of Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms supported by Hanban in the UK.

HE Summer School

20. Both delegations welcomed the 2007 summer school programme that had provided opportunities for 200 UK undergraduates to experience a taster of language, business and cultural activities in China. Initial feedback from participants had been extremely positive and it was hoped that a second summer school would be arranged for 2008 with the possibility of a reciprocal summer school in the UK for Chinese students.

Needham Institute

21. Both sides acknowledged the contribution that Joseph Needham made to an understanding of Chinese science and technology and cultural achievements. The Needham Institute provides a globally recognized resource on the history of science, technology and medicine in China. Both delegations expressed strong interest in a proposal submitted to both countries to utilize the Needham resource and expertise in order to facilitate research links between the two countries and to create materials for educational providers and business to spread a deeper understanding of China.

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