

Liverpool University

Liverpool University's Confucius Institute was set up as a partnership with Xi'an Jiaotong University (XJU) in 2009.

A notice on XJU's website states that applicants for roles at the Confucius Institute must have "good professional and political qualities" and "love the ancestor-land [China]".¹ In addition, a recruitment form hosted on the page and translated by UK-China Transparency states that applicants must:

- Provide details of their "political characteristics" and "ethnicity"
- Provide details of their immediate family members and their "political characteristics"

Although this is not stated explicitly by XJU, the Chinese government agency responsible for Confucius Institutes (formerly Hanban, now Centre for Language Exchange and Cooperation, CLEC) states in publicly available material that staff from Chinese universities going to work at Confucius Institutes in other countries must fill in the 'National Application Form for Teachers Going Abroad' (国家公派出国教师申请表), which is available online.² UK-China Transparency has translated and reproduced both the form and the order mandating its use.

The form demands that applicants:

- Provide details of their "political characteristics" and "ethnicity"
- Promise to abide by the laws of the PRC (while abroad)
- Promise not to have a child whilst working in the UK
- Be evaluated by a Communist Party Committee
- Have their current employer give a reference detailing their:
 - "Political attitude"
 - Ability to comply with CCP *Discipline for Foreign Affairs* (外事纪律) guidelines

The *Discipline* guidelines demand, amongst other things, that individuals "act in strict accordance with the CCP's policies in all foreign activities" and "strictly implement the request and report system" (the system is referred to as 请示报告制度).³ In CCP terminology, this refers to the system whereby CCP members pass information to their superiors: it mandates authoritarian practices such as peer surveillance, peer intimidation and informing.⁴

Liverpool University's response to a Freedom of Information (FOI) asking about the legal status of the Chinese staff at the University's Confucius Institute states:

"These staff are not employed by the University and have no terms linked with the University. [...] We have not received legal advice about the issue."

In response to a separate FOI request asking whether "the staff from the PRC at the University's Confucius Institute have to abide by Chinese law on campus" and whether the University had entered agreements demanding this, the University stated:

"No information held."

¹ <https://archive.vn/5ftU2>

² (NB that opening these pages may entail security risks): CLEC's letter can be found here

<http://www.yxnu.net/info/1426/23573.htm> – the 'National Application form' itself can be found here <https://archive.vn/15FsF>

³ See Baidu Baike, <https://baike.baidu.com/item/党的外事纪律/9640843>

⁴ See, for example, <https://archive.vn/unmso> This CCP announcement from 2019 states that the 'request and report system' is "an important way for our Party to maintain political discipline".