

### London School of Economics

The London School of Economics (LSE) Confucius Institute was founded in 2006 as a partnership with Tsinghua University.

There are very few details of Tsinghua's recruitment process online, and no recruitment form could be found.<sup>1</sup>

However, 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.<sup>2</sup> 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).<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

A response to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request sent to LSE reveals that, in 2019, LSE's legal team decided to change the terms of LSE's agreement with the Chinese government agency responsible for Confucius Institute. In particular, LSE decided:

"To place [the Confucius Institute's] operations within core School frameworks and values, primarily the Ethics Code and academic freedom

"To place UK operations in the context of English law"

Prior to this point, the agreement governing the LSE Confucius Institute clearly did not have such provisions. An agreement signed between LSE and Tsinghua in 2009 stated that:

"The Institute activities must be in accordance with the relevant Constitution and By-laws, respect different cultures and customs, and shall not contravene the laws and regulations of the UK and China."

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<sup>1</sup> <https://archive.vn/bH9OJ>

<sup>2</sup> (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>

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

<sup>4</sup> 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".

In response to a separate FOI request regarding the legal status of the LSE Confucius Institute's Chinese staff, LSE stated:

“CI teachers are recruited and employed by our partner institution in China. At LSE, they have associate staff status, which means they have access to email /campus/ VLE et c. These staff are on Tier 5 certificate of sponsorship arrangements.”