

## Manchester University

Manchester University's Confucius Institute was set up as a partnership with Beijing Normal University (BNU) in 2007.

On its website, BNU details the recruitment process for Chinese staff going to the Confucius Institute at UCL.<sup>1</sup> The webpage states that applicants must not have any record of breaching Communist Party discipline. No recruitment form with detailed recruitment criteria could be found.

Although this is not stated explicitly by BNU, 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.<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>

In response to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request asking for details of the legal status of the Confucius Institute staff, Manchester University stated:

"The Chinese co-director and Chinese language teachers are given the Visiting Academic status and they enjoy the rights of the University associated with this category of visitors such as use of university email account, access to the University library. They are not employed by the University nor receive any salary or financial remuneration during their stay."

The University refused to state whether it had received legal status about these staff and their roles.

In response to a separate FOI request, the University shared a document detailing its relationship with the UK office of the Chinese government agency responsible for Confucius Institute, which acts as visa sponsor for Chinese staff who work at the Confucius Institute. This document states that the University and its Confucius Institute are responsible for the "Day to Day Management" of the staff, and that Confucius Institute staff from China are "employed at" a UK location.

<sup>1</sup> <https://archive.is/qSf5w#selection-2223.0-2495.1>

<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/I5FsF>

<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, the University stated that “the University and Confucius Institute do not stipulate” that “the staff from the PRC at the University's Confucius Institute have to abide by Chinese law on campus”.