

Newcastle University

The Confucius Institute at Newcastle University was founded in 2013 as a partnership with Xiamen University.

On its website, Xiamen University details the recruitment process for Chinese staff going to the Confucius Institute at Newcastle.¹ According to a recruitment form downloaded and translated by UK-China Transparency, applicants must:

- Provide details of their “political characteristics” and “ethnicity”
- Be evaluated by a Communist Party Committee

The recruitment notice on Xiamen’s website also asks applicants to fill in the ‘National Application Form for Teachers Going Abroad’, which has been translated and reproduced by UK-China Transparency. The form demands applicants must:

- Promise to abide by the laws of the PRC (while abroad)
- Promise not to have a child whilst working in the UK
- 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).² 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.³

Newcastle University’s response to a Freedom of Information request from its own student union is quoted partly below. The student union’s questions are marked with letters.⁴

“b. Does Newcastle University know whether or not if it is a contractual requirement of CI staff to obey Chinese law while in the UK?”

Yes, Chinese staff in the UK must still abide by Chinese law as well as UK law.

[...]

e. Does Newcastle University know the hiring processes and criteria used by Hanban to recruit Chinese directors and teachers into our CI in China?

Newcastle University is not involved in the appointment selection process of Chinese staff which takes place in China through Xiamen’s [CLEC, Centre for Language Education and Cooperation].

f. What safeguarding measures has the university has taken to avoid religious or other discrimination of potential staff members applying to join the CI?

Newcastle University does not tolerate discrimination of any kind in our community and we are committed to ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for all. Any complaints of discrimination of

¹ <https://archive.vn/Kuc4u>

² See Baidu Baike, <https://baike.baidu.com/item/党的外事纪律/9640843>

³ 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”.

⁴ <https://nusu.co.uk/news/article/foi-update-22>

any kind that are made by staff are investigated either under the Dignity and Respect Policy or the Disciplinary Policy.

g. Is Newcastle University privy to the contracts or agreements between Hanban and Xiamen University and their Chinese instructors and directors?

There is a bilateral contract between [Centre for Language Education and Cooperation] at Xiamen and Newcastle University therefore we are privy to all the clauses and agreements set up by the two partners regarding the Chinese Instructors and Directors. However, Newcastle University is not involved in the internal selection process that takes place within the [Centre for Language Education and Cooperation] at Xiamen. CI staff are guest members of staff at Newcastle University and their employment contract is with Xiamen University."