

University of Wales Trinity St David (UWTSD)

The Confucius Institute at this university was founded in 2007 as a partnership with Beijing Union University (BUU).

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

- Provide details of their “political characteristics” and “ethnicity”
- Provide details of their “main social connections” and each of these individuals’ contact details and “political characteristics”
- Give reasons for their application, including relating to their “political attitude”
- Promise that they are not a “member of any illegal organisations and do not participate in any activities that are detrimental to the national interests of China”*
- Be evaluated by their managers on their “political performance”

*“Illegal organisations” refers to social, religious and cultural groups banned by the CCP but whose beliefs and rights are protected under UK law, including but not limited to cultural and civil society groups representing the Tibetan, Uyghur, and Hong Kong communities, the Falun Gong, and religious groups associated with Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam.

Although this is not stated explicitly by BUU, 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

¹ <https://archive.vn/vugs6>

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/I5FsF>

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”.

In response to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request, UWTSD answered "No" to the question, "Do the staff from the PRC at the University's Confucius Institute have to abide by Chinese law on campus?"

In response to a separate FOI request, UWTSD stated of its Confucius Institute staff from China:

“These are not formal university roles. Staff are assigned to the Confucius Institute who initiate the recruitment process and line manage the staff once they arrive in the UK.”

UWTSD stated that it had not received legal advice about the legal status of these roles and those who occupy them.