



科博国际教育  
HOPE International Education  
— Since 2000 —

# HOPE Updates 2024 No.3

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Editor in chief: Daniel Zheng  
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*Calvin, a HOPE student who is going to study in a UK boarding school this autumn, participated in the charity walk and sale of autism children's painting organized by HOPE. See more of the story inside.*

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# Inside HOPE

## Challenges and opportunities in China market for overseas schools

We were in BBSW and St Alphe Secondary Focus in HK recently, and met many of schools from UK and all over the world to discuss the market trend and opportunities in China as well as how we can help you enter/re-enter the market after the pandemic. I would love to share a summary of the above as follows:



*Daniel, MD, at St Alphe HK conference*

*Mei, Director of HOPE UK office at BBSW*

1. China market for schools is becoming very competitive. Destination country is becoming more diversified, particularly competition from the international schools from nearby countries and regions such as Singapore Thailand, Hong Kong and even those in China. The possible fee increase due to VAT imposition in the UK has also been circulated among parents, although parents still think UK is a good choice due to the sophisticated boarding school system, safe environment and choices of schools available. We have seen an increase of Year 7, Year 9 entry compared with unanimously Yr11 and 12 entry in the past.

2. Schools need to plan both short and long term strategy to recruit in China. For short term, it is important to visit the market regularly (twice a year) to attend some promotion events/SMALL fairs and provide training for our counsellors; For mid and long term, it is equally important to work with a few schools in China. By establishing school link, you can promote your summer programme, term time short stay programme (1wk to 1 term) and then convert some students for your long term programme. It is important to set up these short programme if you have not one at mement.

3. HOPE is planning a series of events for our partner schools later in the autumn (Mid/late Oct) including mini school fair, school link forum. you are welcome to visit us and attend the events then. Meanwhile, we have quite a few partner Chinese schools asking us to find overseas

partner schools. If you are interested in discussing the potential partnership with them, please let me know asap, and we can arrange an online meeting first with the school.

Daniel Zheng, Director, HOPE International Education  
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## A crowd of 400 teamed up for HOPE's charity walk for autistic children

On the occasion of the 17th World Autism Awareness Day on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, HOPE International Education and Shanghai Clover Autism Children Centre, South Baby Autism Children Centre and Xing Ning Children's Rehabilitation Centre jointly held a charity walk for autistic children in Shanghai, Nanjing and Hangzhou on 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> March. The purpose of this event was to send warmth and care to children with autism and their families, while also calling on the general public to understand and support the autism community.

The event in Shanghai took place in the beautiful Shanghai Botanic Garden. Over 300 participants from Fudan University, Jiaotong University, Shanghai Ocean University, Shanghai College of Politics and Law, Shanghai Middle School International Division, Hongwen International School, Huayu Middle School, Luwan Middle School, Gaoanlu Primary School, HOPE students and their parents, HOPE staff and partner companies formed over 28 teams to join this annual event. University of Southampton, HOPE's partner UK university also sponsored the event. The number of participants was a record high this year compared with previous years.



***The number of people participating in charity walk for autistic children in Shanghai set up a record high of over 300 this year.***

Apart from charity walk, the event also integrated the charity sale of autistic children's paintings, quiz of autism knowledge and protecting biodiversity, collages of autism pictures, contest of promoting autism awareness in social media. At the main venue, the charity sale and art exhibition attracted a big crowd to donate their love to autism children. The painting by the autism teenager Xuan Xuan became the focus. Xuan Xuan's paintings were full of unique artistic style, with each stroke expressing deep emotions and perceptive imagination, allowing audiences to feel his inner world.





*Interesting autism picture collages*



*Autistic Children's paintings on exhibition and charity sale*

On this special day, representatives from participating institutions and companies shared their comments on this meaningful event. Zoe Yao, Regional Regional Head of International Recruitment and Partnerships, University of Southampton, said after being awarded “Star of Advocating” prize that the University always try to demonstrated its social responsibility through practical actions. She called on everyone on site to work together to help autism children grow and create a warm and friendly growth environment for them.





*Zoe Yao, U of Southampton call on creating a friendly environment for autistic children*

Alex Wen, General Manager of HOPE Shanghai, recalled that HOPE has been working with Shanghai Clover Autism Children Rehabilitation Centre for decade to raise the awareness of the general public on autism and supporting the autistic children and their families. A series of events have been organized by HOPE and Shanghai Clover including charity walk, charity cycling, charity photo contest, auction and charity sales of autistic children's painting. 3 years ago, HOPE and Shanghai Clover also launched a training course for volunteers that over 80 students has participated so far.



*Alex from HOPE recalled HOPE's decade-long experience in supporting autism community*



"Light up the Starry Sky hand in hand as a united band" gathered the love and strength of various sectors of society, allowing the autistic children to feel the warmth of society.

Other than Shanghai, HOPE Hangzhou and Nanjing offices have also held such charity walk so as to raise the awareness of the public.



*Charity walk in Hangzhou by West Lake*



*Charity walk in Nanjing before the old city wall*



# HOPE was invited to train school counsellors at the 9<sup>th</sup> ISCS 2024 Forum

Ms. Chanel Zhang, Counselling Director of HOPE International Education and General Manager of HOPE Hangzhou Office was invited by the 9<sup>th</sup> ISCS 2024 School Counsellor's Summit on 24<sup>th</sup> March to share her insight on the entry requirements of leading UK universities in 2024.



**Chanel Zhang addressing as a keynote speaker in 9<sup>th</sup> ISCS workshop**

About 200 school counsellors from international schools across China attend this two-day event. Chanel started her training by introducing a diagram of Oxford admissions in 2022. She outlined the core of cultivating talents in elite universities. It was to cultivate talents which will not be replaced by AI. She also carefully analyzed the dimensions by which those universities evaluating students: Ability, Aptitude, Attitude, Personality as well as three thinking patterns : Analytical Thinking, Creative Thinking, and Critical Thinking. The three thinking patterns in the end were long-term goals and difficult goals.

In addition to entry requirements of best universities, she also outlined that academic records in some Chinese international schools were increasingly competitive. This has demonstrated a fact that in addition to high requirements for students, teachers would need more knowledge and skills during teaching, planning and counselling process.



**Group discussion session of ISCS workshop**

In the end, she also emphasized the fact that AI era was unstoppable. Good universities were also very keen on setting up this kind of major. In the near future, there will be only two kinds of people in the workplace: those who can use AI, and those who create AI tools. We as the most ordinary people, cannot be the latter, but we can become the former. Students also needed to become people who can use AI. Hence, teachers in international schools should emphasize this characteristic during their daily teaching, thereby successfully helping their students apply for their ideal universities overseas.



# INSIDE HOPE --- Photo news



HOPE was invited by the British Council to attend 2024 StudyUK Agent Conference. During the meeting, HOPE director Daniel Zheng shared his insights regarding the current agent industry.



HOPE received visits from universities and colleges around the world. This month, Norwich School from the UK, Karelia University of Applied Sciences from Finland and Knightsville from Singapore paid their visits to HOPE Shanghai office.



HOPE attended annual Top School exhibition on 23-24 March during which HOPE's summer schools products were welcomed by school teachers



*Daniel Zheng, MD, HOPE attended the 7<sup>th</sup> annual congress of Shanghai International Education Association on 12<sup>th</sup> March.*



## [News from local media](#)

### Career options broaden for school graduates

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202403/30/WS66076b98a31082fco43bf8b9.html>



Vocational schools offer international programs, like this one at a traditional medicine college in Huzhou, Zhejiang province. TAN YUNFENG/FOR CHINA DAILY

Chen Meina, a 29-year-old care worker, stayed in Germany and continued with her work during Spring Festival, rather than returning to her hometown in Northeast China's Liaoning province.

"I've been studying and working in Germany for more than five years. I incorporate traditional Chinese medicine nursing skills into my daily work, and many elderly individuals here appreciate it," Chen says.

Chen graduated from the Liaoning Vocational College of Medicine in 2018. The institution is run by the provincial government to cultivate highly skilled professionals in nursing, pharmacy and medicine.

In the same year, an educational cooperation agreement was signed between the vocational college and Germany's Oscar Kemmel Vocational College for a nursing talent training program.

Subsequently, the first batch of 17 Chinese students pursued studies in Germany, with six including Chen opting to serve as elderly care workers in German nursing homes.

In recent years, China has actively expanded its vocational education to align with the demands of enterprises. According to this year's government work report, the country will redouble its efforts to improve vocational education. Thanks to diverse programs, the country's vocational education has embraced international cooperation.

Statistics show that, in the past decade, since the inception of the Belt and Road Initiative, more than 400 higher vocational colleges in China and foreign educational institutions have forged cooperation in running schools.

Many vocational education programs from China have also been introduced in the countries involved with the Belt and Road Initiative. In 2017, the Mombasa-Nairobi Railway, a Belt and Road flagship project jointly built by China Road and Bridge Corp and the Kenya government, officially opened to traffic. Two vocational colleges from Liaoning sent their staff to Kenya and helped train over 300 railway workers.

"Recently, we've signed two new international joint education programs, mainly serving the construction of the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway and the China-Mongolia railway. Compared with previous programs, we are paying more attention to the employment and technical needs of the enterprises this time," says Dong Yanan, vice-president of the Liaoning Railway Vocational and Technical College.

According to data released by the Ministry of Education in 2023, there were 9,752 secondary vocational schools in the country, with over 17.8 million students.

"Many believe that only students with good academic performances from famous universities have the opportunity to study abroad. Now, we can also study abroad through our own efforts and excellent vocational skills, which is a great encouragement to me," says Chen Xingwang, a student from the School of Economics and Management at Guangzhou Nanyang Polytechnic College who studied in South Korea last year.

To better serve the development of Chinese enterprises overseas, 18 vocational colleges in South China's Guangdong province have launched 39 overseas education programs.

Shenzhen Polytechnic University has collaborated with enterprises, such as China's tech giant Huawei, to establish seven overseas vocational education and training centers in five countries, including Bulgaria and Germany.

China has also invited its global partners to empower the development of its vocational education.

Since 2013, BMW Brilliance Automotive, located in Shenyang in Liaoning, has run a vocational program. Collaborating with vocational schools, the company develops courses that align with the needs of both the schools and the enterprise, aiming to offer students more comprehensive practical training and on-the-job internship opportunities.



# China files over 1,000 new undergraduate education programs in 2023

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202403/19/WS65f94aoca31082fco43bd87b.html>

Xinhua | Updated: 2024-03-19 16:17



BEIJING -- Regular higher education institutions in China filed for a record of 1,456 new undergraduate education programs that focus on fields such as culture, health, science and technology in 2023, according to the Ministry of Education.

A total of 217 new undergraduate education programs have been approved over the past year, the ministry said on Tuesday.

This move is part of China's efforts to support higher education institutions in establishing programs that meet the country's strategic needs and serve regional development, the ministry said.

This batch of filed, approved and amended programs will be open for undergraduate admission this year.

# Cutoff scores surge in postgraduate exams: Candidates in some disciplines face fierce rivalry despite applicants decline

By ZHAO YIMENG | CHINA DAILY | Updated: 2024-03-30 07:25

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202403/30/WS66074dd9a31082fc043bf850.html>



Students prepare for the postgraduate entrance exam in the library of the University of South China in Hunan province on Nov 23. CAO ZHENGPING/XINHUA

The cutoff scores for several disciplines in the 2024 postgraduate entrance exams have risen despite the number of applicants for the exam declining for the first time in nine years, according to the latest report of education consultancy MyCOS.

The number of applicants for the postgraduate entrance exam this year fell by 7.6 percent year-on-year to 4.38 million, the Ministry of Education said last year.

However, data released earlier this month show that cutoff scores for disciplines such as philosophy, history, sciences, medicine and physical education have increased, reflecting a continued intense competition in the exam.

About one out of every four candidates who take the exam will be admitted, according to the annual report on the exam released last week by New Oriental's College Student Learning and Development Center.

Chen Xi, a senior student at Beijing Union University, said the cutoff for the postgraduate computer science major he applied for increased by 60 points compared with last year.

Although the number of applicants dropped this year, students who took part in the exam are still competitive because many of them were taking the exam for the second or third time, Chen said.

Graduates who failed to take the exam during the COVID-19 pandemic also joined the competition in 2024. "They are more experienced and well-prepared than me," Chen said.

The highest proportion of undergraduates who chose to retake the postgraduate entrance examination in 2022 were medical students, reaching 9.6 percent. Next were law students at 8.8 percent, followed by students in economics and literature.

About one-third of the 30 computer science majors in Chen's class participated in the postgraduate entrance examinations, while the rest intended to immediately find a job as their major focused more on practical application.

Only three of the 10 candidates in his class made the second round of the exam, and Chen is the only one who will be interviewed by his top preference — Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou, Guangdong province.

Chen said although seven of the 10 candidates for the interview will be finally enrolled, he still felt a lot of pressure because he heard that the quota for the academic master's degree had been squeezed amid the country's changing emphasis on a professional master's degree.

In addition, some of his competitors have been studying in Sun Yatsen University for a bachelor's degree. "They are exposed to more information and have more advantages in the interview section."

Chen did not give up other options in case he failed the exam. Last week, he took part in a job fair at Beijing Normal University and submitted his resumes to about 10 companies, including technology giant Huawei.

"I found that a master's degree is needed for most of the enterprises on site," Chen said.

"I hope to accumulate more knowledge and grasp more skills during another three years at the university," Chen said.

Given the fierce competition of the current job market, Chen said he would apply for the examination for civil service after achieving a master's degree.



Shi Weixin, a senior student majoring in big data at Beijing Union University, didn't reach the cutoff score of the university where she applied for postgraduate studies.

"I will not prepare for the exam for another year but I'm determined to find a job or seek an internship," she said, adding that State-owned enterprises and internet companies are her top preferences.

Several universities have issued letters in the new semester urging graduates in 2024 not to solely focus on pursuing further education or taking exams for government-related positions.

In February, the employment and entrepreneurship guidance center of Zhejiang Sci-Tech University stated in an open letter that students should voluntarily take the first step in job hunting.

Students are encouraged to actively respond to the national call of engaging in employment opportunities in small and medium-sized enterprises or grassroots positions such as rural teachers or those in western areas, the letter said.

# Nation's growth target seen as achievable, appropriate

By LIU ZHIHUA | CHINA DAILY | Updated: 2024-03-30 07:35

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202403/30/WS6607502aa31082fc043bf857.html>



This aerial photo taken on June 10, 2023 shows the night view of the urban areas in Guangzhou, South China's Guangdong province. [Photo/Xinhua]

A moderately rapid growth of around 5 percent annually is both achievable and appropriate for a country at China's stage of development, a senior economist said.

Jeffrey Sachs, a world-renowned professor of economics and director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University, said in an exclusive interview with China Daily that China's superhigh growth phase made sense when it had a huge surplus of rural labor and was still far behind the United States in terms of technology.

"Now there is no surplus of labor and China is at or near the technology frontier in all sectors. Growth has therefore slowed from around 10 percent per year to around 5 percent per year, still far higher than in the US and Europe," he said.

Sachs said that new quality productive forces mean cutting-edge technologies that promote sustainable investment.

They include 5.5G, soon to be 6G, digital platforms for health, education, payments, industry and land management, electricity-based means of transportation, hydrogen economy and advanced robotics among others, he said, adding that China is at the forefront of technological advancement, but can and should coordinate with other BRICS members as well as other nations to further advance its technologies.

China has registered better-than-expected economic data so far this year, with the industrial output growing 7 percent year-on-year in the first two months compared with a 6.8 percent rise in December.

Fixed-asset investment increased 4.2 percent year-on-year during the same period compared with a 3 percent annual growth in 2023.

Retail sales growth slowed to 5.5 percent year-on-year during the two months compared with 7.4 percent in December, but it is in line with market expectations.

According to Sachs, there are two positive and fundamental drivers of the Chinese economic growth — technological advancement and the high savings rate, which underpins continued high rates of investment and growth.

He said the US' attempts to hinder China's growth, which is "a disreputable policy in violation of international law", is having a negative impact by slowing China's exports to the US and stagnating US investment in China.

"Because of the slowdown in China's exports to the US and Europe, China faces a shortfall in aggregate demand. China has the productive supply-side capacity for rapid growth, but the markets for China's ... output are now hindered by US and EU protectionism," he said.

In addition, China has certain structural and cyclical challenges such as a high level of real estate debt. These structural factors are "normal" and solvable, but they present practical challenges, he said.

Sachs suggested boosting China's internal investments via measures such as speeding up the deep transformation of the economy to green and digital technologies, while expanding exports to other developing countries.

"This can be done, for example, by expanding the Belt and Road Initiative and financing strategies, including an expansion of the AIIB (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank) and the New Development Bank, and expanded renminbi-based financing through Hong Kong and Shanghai financial centers."

He also suggested that China appeal to the World Trade Organization and other international bodies to stop the US' illegal attacks on the Chinese economy.



Despite the challenges facing the Chinese economy, the economist said he is confident that "China will chart a course of continued rapid economic growth and technological advancement".

Sachs said he believes that the US is trying to drive foreign investors out of China as part of its decoupling or "de-risking" strategy, and China will overcome the anti-China policies by keeping an open door, continuing to internationalize the renminbi, expanding cooperation among BRICS nations, and enhancing the BRI and other global initiatives including the Global Development Initiative.

"With all of that global cooperation, China will continue to attract high-quality inbound investments," he said.

The economist also pointed out that governments at all levels in China need to prepare medium-term and long-term fiscal frameworks to clarify their debt-management strategies and capacities.

"Debt can be a driver of long-term development, but needs to be managed systematically and prudentially. This, of course, requires systematic planning and prudential regulation of debts," he added.

# Chinese and British primary students jointly perform in special concert

By Zheng Jinran | chinadaily.com.cn | Updated: 2024-03-29 19:10

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202403/29/WS6606a18fa31082fc043bf7c8.html>



Photo shows primary students performing for the concert in the music hall of China National Traditional Orchestra on Thursday. [Photo by Zou Hong/chinadaily.com.cn]

A special concert with performances from primary students from China and Britain was staged in the music hall of China National Traditional Orchestra on Thursday, showcasing the blend of Chinese and Western musical traditions.

Over 200 students from Fangcaodi International School's Century Primary School and students and faculty from its sister school, Richard Alibon Primary School in the UK, have participated in the concert to exchange their stories and understandings of their cultures.

Music has no boundaries and it's the diversity of cultures that enriches the world, said Wu Jianguo, principal of the primary school in Beijing, adding that these young artists have integrated folk music with choir and blended Chinese and Western cultures via their performances.