



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

# HOPE Updates 2024 No.8

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Shanghai “on fire” with almost a month of 35°C+ in temperature

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## Inside HOPE

### Special summer camp launched to support autism children

HOPE International Education announced the launch of a volunteer training and practical summer camp activity focusing on supporting autistic children and their families early August. The 4-day camp kicked off in Shanghai on 11th August and concluded on 14<sup>th</sup>. This initiative not only reflects HOPE's innovative spirit in the field of education but also demonstrates its profound commitment to social responsibility. With a history of 12 years in helping autistic children, HOPE has continuously explored and practiced new means aiming to bring more social attention and support to this vulnerable group.



**HOPE students in STAR Cafe. This special cafe hires autism students as their employees**



**Professional lectures introducing autism**



The carefully-designed camp consisted of training lectures, interact with autistic children as a teaching assistant, visit to cafe where autistic people work, charity walk and organizing auction sale of autistic children’s painting in local community. The main objective of this year’s summer camp is to arouse the attention, care, and deep understanding of students, parents and institutions towards autistic children and their families. HOPE is well aware that autistic children and their families often face numerous challenges and difficulties in society. Therefore, through such activities, HOPE wishes to enhance the understanding and support to this group from all sectors of society. At the same time, HOPE also encourages students to actively participate in various charity activities organised by HOPE and autism rehabilitation centres that HOPE partners with.



**Camp students’ charity walk to along Huangpu River to arouse the awareness of general public towards autism**

As a professional institution in the international education industry, HOPE emphasizes more on the cultivation of their social responsibility and international perspective. By organising such charity activities, HOPE wishes that students can know more about the importance of social responsibility in practical terms, learn to care for others, and understand the challenges faced by autism children and family. Such experiences can not only enrich students' personal growth but also lay a solid foundation for their future studies abroad and entry into the international community.



**Participants in charity walk for autistic children in Shanghai on autism day, 2024 supported by University of Southampton**



**Group photo to mark the start of the charity photography contest during Xiapu Forum, 2023 attended by principals of international schools in China**



**Group photo to mark the start of the charity walk, October 2023 Attended by senior management team of Loughborough University**

Over the past 12 years, HOPE has successfully implemented influential public welfare projects, including charity walks, charity bike rides, charity sales and auctions, as well as volunteer training and practice for autism children. HOPE is also pleased to see that more and more of our partner overseas institutions are joining these meaningful events we organize as well!



## A level result day in HOPE Shanghai

15<sup>th</sup> of August is an important day with the release of A-Level result. HOPE Shanghai invited students and parents to come to office. Most of the students received their ideal offer, but some students were more prone to choosing clearing. HOPE counsellors helped students to phone admission offices in the UK on the spot. Almost all students and parents went back with satisfied offers.

HOPE knows that the choice and planning of every student is crucial; therefore, HOPE's service is not limited to an application agency alone. Instead, it starts with long-term planning and personalized growth paths for students. Starting from initial academic planning consultation, carefully planned background upgrade projects, meticulous university selection strategies and application guidance, HOPE is always there for students. During the pre-departure briefing, HOPE provides detailed overseas guides and cultural adaptation tips to ensure that students can smoothly transfer into their new learning environment. What is particularly important is that HOPE always puts the interests of students first and strives to achieve perfection in every aspect.



### **On A-Level result day, students gathered in HOPE Shanghai office, anxiously waiting for their results**

With the increasing maturity of the overseas market and intensified competition, students and parents have increasingly high requirements for service quality. HOPE actively responds to this trend and continuously invests resources in developing and updating service projects, aiming to continuously improve service quality and efficiency through technological innovation and process optimization. We know that only through continuous improvement can we meet the growing and diversified needs of students.

It is worth mentioning that with the continuous rise in the popularity of undergraduate study abroad applications, HOPE has also actively adjusted its direction and committed to helping more aspiring young people realize their dreams of studying abroad. We have established

close cooperative relationships with reputed universities around the world by not only providing students with professional application services, but also hoping to cultivate high-quality students with excellent abilities and potential for overseas institutions so as to jointly promote the prosperity and development of international education.

## Annual HOPE Counsellors' Training to equip a professional team

As a company specializing in study abroad service and international education exchange and collaboration for 24 years, HOPE International Education pays great attention to building a professional team. On 21-23 August, Hope organized our annual counsellor's training in Xitang, a small ancient town near Shanghai.



**HOPE team group photo in Xitang**



**HOPE consultant heated discussion of cases**

Most Chinese students and parents only focus on the rankings when choosing a university. However, the rankings do not represent everything. Instead, choosing the right institution is the best for them. This not only requires each counselor's institution knowledge and familiarity, but also relevant consulting skills. In the training, senior counselor shared with other staff how to effectively manage students' expectations. All the participating staff were encouraged to bring up difficult cases they encounter, and then they were discussed and solved as a group. In addition, with the increasing trend of younger international students and the rise in demand for multi-country applications, various relevant successful and unsuccessful cases were introduced and analyzed.

The professional development of the staff has always been an important part of Hope's commitment. Regular company training is not only to improve the staff's own ability, but also to provide more professional guidance to parents and students. HOPE already has 7 counsellors who have obtained the British Council professional counsellor's certificate qualification.



# INSIDE HOPE --- Photo news of

## August

On 3<sup>rd</sup> August, HOPE were invited to Industrial Bank (Zibo Branch, Shandong Province) to share the theme of “how to plan to apply top universities overseas” with 25 parents and students from private banking clients. Daniel Zheng and Sherry Zhang from HOPE also interacted specifically on how to choose the path after the high school entrance examination and Gao Kao, which received unanimous praise from parents and students.



70 students and 10 teachers, led by HOPE staff, the students from a school in Yiwu embarked on a study tour to its UK sister school at the beginning of August. The 15-day study tour was a rich experience about culture exchange and English language. They have also learned how to embrace the world with an open mind, understand different cultures and respect every voice.



As HOPE’s monthly publication to our parents aiming at building a bridge between HOPE and its clients families, Parents Panorama Journal has its unique charm in its deep analysis of educational topics and sharing of cutting-edge education concepts. This month, HOPE interviewed some families and students who are going to study abroad in UK, Canada and US. The interview is included in this months publication for all reader’s reference to share these students successful stories!



At the end of August, James, HOPE IClass partner came to HOPE Shanghai and Hangzhou office to address to students on how to improve their IELTS speaking scores, how to write personal statements that are attractive to G5 admission officers and how to prepare for interviews for G5 universities. Regarding culture shock, he encouraged students to engage actively in communication with lecturers and teachers to adapt. This is a good tip for students who have not been to the UK or other countries to adapt more smoothly.



# News from local media

## EU and UK universities perform well in ARWU ranking

By EARLE GALE in London | chinadaily.com.cn | Updated: 2024-08-19 19:14

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202408/19/WS66c32916a31060630b923d67.html>

Paris-Saclay University has been named the European Union's top-ranked higher education institution in the Shanghai 2024 Academic Ranking of World Universities, or ARWU.

Paris-Saclay, which was listed in 12th place in the annual ranking that was first produced in 2003 and that grades universities based on academic and research performance, was joined in the top 50 by seven other EU universities.

The Paris-based institution's achievement was hailed by President Emmanuel Macron, who wrote on the X social media platform: "Paris-Saclay is magical! Never before has a French university been ranked so highly in the prestigious Shanghai Ranking: 12th in the world."

The university had been 15th in last year's ARWU listing.

While Paris-Saclay was the top-ranked university from an EU member nation, it was not the highest-ranked institution in Europe because non-EU member the United Kingdom had two institutions in the top 10 – Cambridge and Oxford, which were fourth and sixth, respectively.

The other eight universities in the top 10 were all from the United States.

The UK had 63 universities in the top 1,000, with the University of Manchester, at 52nd, hailing the achievement and also drawing attention to the fact that all listings have a degree of subjectivity.

Professor Duncan Ivison, the University of Manchester's president and vice-chancellor, said on the university's website: "While they don't measure everything we value, what these rankings demonstrate is our consistent position as one of Europe's leading universities. But, for a university of our scale and ambition, they also serve as a reminder that we need pay attention to our global performance and work collectively to improve across everything we do to retain our position as a world-leading institution."

Among EU universities in the top 50, the University of Copenhagen placed 32nd, the Paris Sciences et Lettres University was 33rd, Sorbonne University was 41st, and Sweden's Karolinska Institute landed in 43rd place.



The EU had 135 universities in the top 500, which was more than the US and more than China, which had 114 and 91, respectively.

The ARWU listing is one of several rankings published each year, including the Times Higher Education listing and the CWTS Leiden ranking.

France's Le Monde newspaper noted that the ARWU listing, which is compiled by Shanghai Jiao Tong University, is dominated by English-speaking universities, and favors institutions with a focus on research in the hard sciences, with US giants Harvard, Stanford, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology consistently finishing in the first three places.

The rankings also take into account whether alumni and faculty members have won prestigious awards, such as Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals, and whether they have produced cited research, or had papers published in leading magazines, including Nature and Science.

## Summer education costs should cool down

By CHU ZHAOHUI | China Daily | Updated: 2024-08-24 09:04



[Photo/IC]

The end of summer vacation may come as a relief to many parents because they had been struggling to pay for their children's vacation activities as the rising trend of students engaging in more diverse and specialized activities has driven up costs.

The root of the problem lies in the tendency of students (with parents' encouragement in many cases) to blindly pursue activities that their peers engage in. This is because many parents mistakenly believe that higher costs equate better opportunities for their children. Many parents even believe the newest or most "innovative" programs, often branded "smart" or "intelligent", are inherently better.

More importantly, some parents overlook the fact that every child is unique, and has different interests and needs. They wrongly believe in a one-size-fits-all approach, and assume that what applies to school also applies to summer activities. Then there is peer pressure. The fear of their children falling behind if they don't participate in certain activities prompts parents to push their children to take part in every possible activity, which increases their financial burden.

The situation is exacerbated by the shift of many travel and educational program organizers from nonprofit to commercial models, where the focus is on making more profits than on imparting education. Although the demand for such programs has surged, the benefits don't necessarily match the costs.

In reality, extracurricular activities, including travel and training, are not necessities. So families should evaluate their own resources before making their children participate in every activity. Often, spending less on activities and understanding the personal needs of children by talking to them about their interests will be more beneficial to the children's growth.

Additionally, making their children take part in activities that would enhance their knowledge, make them more worldly wise and teach them life skills might even help them earn some money, which could cover the cost of their summer activities and ease the burden of the parents.

Families should choose summer activities for their children according to their financial condition. Parents should identify the genuine needs of their children, and understand which activities they are truly interested in, and what will boost their individual strength and help them achieve their long-term goals. For instance, if gaining social experience is a priority, part-time work or volunteering could be as, if not more, valuable to children as expensive programs.

Establishing clear goals can assist children in navigating their educational and personal development in collaboration with them. For students with limited social experience, summer job-training programs can provide them with valuable learning experience and even make them financially independent.

The sense of financial responsibility is equally important. Students need to understand their family's financial condition. Learning to manage expenses is essential to achieve success in life.

Parents should choose activities for their children which offer genuine benefits rather than those that are costly. Well-planned, meaningful activities often provide more value than high-cost, superficial programs.

Teenage is a time when children tend to spend more without thinking about how difficult it is to earn money. But it is also a time when many children realize how important it is to lessen their reliance on their parents for money and become more self-sufficient.

So parents should teach their children how to manage money and explore different sources of income, which would help the children in the long run. They could start by setting a budget for discretionary spending, allowing their children to make their own choices but within the budget, and teaching them how to decide which expenses are necessary, which can be postponed, and which are unnecessary. Such

an approach will help children develop a healthy attitude toward money, and better understand their responsibilities toward the family. This may encourage some to even learn to save and generate additional income.

It is incumbent upon parents to find a balance between meeting their children's needs during the summer vacation and setting reasonable limits. This balance will not only help lighten their financial burden, but also boost their children's personal growth and help them develop responsible financial habits.

The author is a senior researcher at the National Institute of Education Sciences. The views don't necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

## China vows to cultivate high-quality teachers to strengthen education sector

Xinhua | Updated: 2024-08-27 13:32



Students pose for a group photo with their teacher after the exam at a national college entrance examination site in Yinchuan, Northwest China's Ningxia Hui autonomous region, June 8, 2024.

[Photo/Xinhua]

BEIJING -- China has vowed to strengthen its teaching workforce by cultivating more competent and high-quality professionals, a crucial task in its pursuit of becoming an educational powerhouse.

To that end, a set of guidelines published on Monday outline specific measures, including strengthening professional integrity, conduct and skills of teachers, optimizing education resource allocation, and protecting teachers' rights and interests.



By 2035, teaching will become one of the most respectable and admirable occupations in China, according to the guidelines that have been issued by the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the State Council.

The guidelines advocate zero tolerance for malpractice and violations of regulations concerning teachers, calling for strict enforcement of discipline and legal consequences for offenders.

The building of normal schools will be further supported, and training for rural teachers will be strengthened, according to the guidelines.

Stronger efforts are called for to ensure timely salary payments for teachers, alleviate unnecessary workloads, and protect them from misconduct such as humiliation, defamation and rumors.

The guidelines also call for lifting teachers' social status, fostering public respect for educators, and encouraging public support for education.

## Summer blockbuster *Successor* raises crucial questions

By Zhao Ziyi | chinadaily.com.cn | Updated: 2024-08-20 13:49

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202408/20/WS66c42e80a31060630b923fc5.html>

If there is one movie that dominates this summer's box office, it has to be *Successor*. By August 19, this comedy had grossed over 3 billion yuan, securing its status as the undisputed blockbuster of the 2024 summer season. Beyond its impressive numbers, *Successor*, produced by Mahua FunAge—a company known for its blend of humor and social critique—offers more than laughs. Beneath its comedic surface lies a biting satire that resonates with audiences across the country.

*Successor* tells the story of Ma Chenggang, a wealthy man played by the popular comedian Shen Teng. Disappointed with his "deadwood" elder son, Ma Chenggang decides to take a different educational approach with his younger son Ma Jiye. Determined to toughen him up, Ma Chenggang moves his family from a luxurious villa to a rundown 1980s courtyard, where he enlists a team of educational experts to act as NPCs, monitoring his son's every move. In this carefully constructed world of adversity, Ma Jiye endures 18 years of hardship: living in a shabby house, caring for a paralyzed grandmother, chopping wood, brewing medicine, running five kilometers to school every day, and collecting bottles to sell for extra money. In the film's climax, Ma Jiye uncovers the truth behind his father's scheme and chooses to chart his own course in life.

More than just a source of entertainment, *Successor* has sparked a nationwide conversation on the relevance of "hardship education" in today's world. Many argue that such an approach should be phased out. The film serves as a mirror, reflecting the dilemmas within our real-world educational practices.

In China's educational traditions, hardship has long been celebrated as a virtue. Over two thousand years ago, Mencius taught that "When Heaven is about to confer a great responsibility on any man, it will first fill his heart with suffering, toil his sinews and bones, expose his body to hunger, and subject him to extreme poverty." Similarly, the Song Dynasty philosopher Zhang Zai stated, "Difficulty is the nurse of greatness," which is further echoed in the Chinese proverb, "Honing gives a sharp edge to a sword, and bitter cold adds keen fragrance to plum blossom." These teachings all underscore a deep-rooted belief that suffering is essential for achievement. However, in today's world, is it still necessary to glorify hardship education?

### **The benefits of hardship education are open to question**

A survey conducted by China Youth Daily found that 81.8 percent of 2,017 respondents support hardship education, with 65.7 percent believing it would benefit children's future development.

Why do so many people value hardship education? One reason is that many attribute their success to the hardships they endured growing up. Another is the belief that success, whether their own or others', can be replicated through a similar path, prompting parents to impose the same hardships on the next generation. However, what is often overlooked is the "survivor bias." While some may succeed despite adversity, countless others are crushed by it, with their untold stories fading into obscurity.

Another survey, involving 2,006 people aged 18-35, revealed the dark side of hardship education. A staggering 90.6 percent of respondents had experienced verbal lashing or discouragement from their parents, with most reporting long-term negative effects such as diminished motivation, rebellious behavior, and strained parent-child relationships. These findings challenge the assumed benefits of hardship education, highlighting its potential to cause more harm than good.

### **Hardship education vs. Frustration education**

We have all heard the saying, "Failure is the mother of success." Failures and setbacks are inevitable parts of life, and how we handle them often determines how far we will reach. Resilience in the face of adversity is not innate but must be nurtured from a young age. This has led educators to introduce the widely acclaimed concept of "frustration education."

Frustration education and hardship education share the same goals, but they differ fundamentally in their methods and outcomes. Frustration education occurs in a controlled environment with small, manageable challenges designed to help children manage frustration, regulate emotions, and develop problem-solving skills. In contrast, hardship education imposes severe, prolonged difficulties on children, often inflicting unnecessary pain. When the challenges are too harsh or unrelenting, they can result in negative outcomes such as anxiety, insecurity, depression, a sense of helplessness, or even trauma. In essence, frustration education fosters resilience in a supportive and constructive manner, whereas hardship education can lead to harmful consequences in a destructive way.

The embrace of frustration education suggests that, while we question the concept of hardship education, we do not advocate for overly shielding young people from risks by keeping them in a protective bubble. After all, to err is human. Wrapping them in cotton wool would only lead to another kind of nightmare.

Rather than imposing artificial hardships or sheltering them excessively, a more balanced approach is to guide young people through real-life challenges. This way, we can teach them to confront obstacles with a positive and resilient attitude, equipping them with the skills and mindset needed to navigate life's ups and downs effectively.

### **Each generation has its own journey**

The saying, "Only those who endure the hardest hardship will be the best of the best," has been drilled into every Chinese person since childhood. In the past, when material resources were scarce, older generations had no choice but to endure hardship, leading them to believe that their success was directly tied to their struggles. While they may credit their achievements to hardships, the truth is that hardship hinders success rather than being a prerequisite for it. It is because people cannot escape hardship that they romanticize it as a form of comfort. As author Yu Hua noted, "Hardship is not worth pursuing. Hardship is just hardship. It doesn't necessarily lead to success."

There's no denying that parents have the best intentions for their children. However, as times change, hardship education is losing its luster. With improved living standards, today's youth no longer worry about material deprivation that previous generations did, but they still grapple with their own set of challenges—academic stress, strained social relationships, and increased pressure from job hunting. These everyday challenges are more than enough to build resilience, so why add additional hardships on top of them? Each generation embarks on its own journey, and hardship education, as a relic of the past, is something now we can bid farewell to. Having weathered life's storms, perhaps it's time to offer shelter for the younger generation.

In conclusion, true education lies in helping individuals navigate the real-world challenges they encounter in daily life without the need to deliberately create hardships or exaggerate the struggles of previous generations while overlooking the challenges that young people face today. Parents should guide and influence children to become the best versions of themselves rather than molding them to fit their own ideals. By embracing this approach, we can foster a generation that is both resilient and compassionate, prepared to face the future with confidence and strength.

The author is a graduate student at Shandong University. The views don't necessarily reflect those of the IPEA or China Daily.

If you have a specific expertise, or would like to share your thought about our stories, then send us your writings at [opinion@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:opinion@chinadaily.com.cn), and [comment@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:comment@chinadaily.com.cn).



# Young graduates eye alternative internships, prioritizing growth

By Xiao YawenWan Lixin 17:06 UTC+8, 2024-08-22

<https://www.shine.cn/news/in-focus/2408227309/>

Rather than sticking to traditional professions, or waiting for arrangement by schools, in recent years, a growing number of Gen Zers are seeking alternative internships, in suburban farms, logistics warehouses, or niche cultural creative e-stores.

Take, for example, Liu Yuyang, a junior college student, who learned by chance about internship vacancies at nine rural resorts. The internships were designed for college students, would-be writers, and freelancers, as part of a "New Farmer" program arranged by Trip.com.

It somehow tugged at Liu's heartstrings.

"Compared to the hustle and bustle in a big city, I am always trying to seek a different pace for life," she said, adding that the internship was a perfect way of gaining professional experience, having a novel village experience, and de-stressing.

Liu majors in Tourism Management and set to work immediately upon arriving at the resort in Foping County, northwest China's Shaanxi Province. However, she soon realized the discrepancies between the concepts elaborated in textbooks and the realities of the job.

She discovered her weaknesses, but also her strengths, as when her foreign language proficiency was put to the test with three foreign tourists on July 27.

Liu began to see her major in a new light. She is studying for a newly conceived major: Tourism Management Plus Russian and English Languages, as part of a specialty readjustment since 2019 to develop "comprehensive talent."

With Liu's expertise put to good use, she has also gained a heightened sense of the meaning of college education reform.

In a similar development, some suburban farms in Shanghai are also becoming a good starting place for young men aspiring to discover alternative professions and lifestyles.

In the beginning, these farming internships were often the choice of students uncertain about their future professions, or those a bit wary of the beaten track, like Qiu Tian, who chose to intern on a coastal farm in Fengxian District.

Qiu is studying Chinese Language and Literature, but was curious about farming.

Most of Qiu's colleagues were septuagenarians who did not think much of a farming job, but Qiu learned new things, such as how to plough the soil with a small rotary tiller.

In his daily contacts with the elderly farmers, Qiu also learned something new about life. In spite of the saying often heard among these farmers that work on a farm is endless, the veteran farmhands had an uncanny talent for always getting the pace just right so that they would call it a day in good time.

Qiu also found that these elderly farmers continued to work because it provided them with company and an opportunity to chat on the farm. This led Qiu to think that this might be work that could sustain him well into old age.

Those applying for internships on a farm need to fill out forms in great detail and go through several rounds of screenings and interviews to secure internships that last from three to 12 months, under the guidance of a tutor.

According to Gao Meiyong, a project manager for such a program, since November 2021, they have recruited interns for three programs. Only 64 of the 170 applying for the third session were selected, suggesting a growing number of young people keen on eco-agriculture.

With some students, it was also a journey of self-discovery, like Tingzai (a moniker).

Being a self-media music aficionado who had garnered tens of thousands of fans in three years, after submitting a carefully polished resume and surviving rounds of interviews, Tingzai landed an internship at a big tech company.

She did not last long there, being frustrated by the sense of impotence of being a dispensable cog in a machine that is precisely programmed.

"This job of mine is actually good for anyone, even though during the interviews they pretended to place a higher premium on creativity and individuality. As a matter of fact, such qualities are irrelevant here," she said.

For Tingzai , a steady job was not the goal of her journey, and documenting her internship on social media became a major occupation that brought her more followers.

After bidding farewell to the big tech company, she started working in the operation of a small culturally creative product company.

Her entrepreneurship seemed to be more elicited in this small entity, where her strengths, as well as her failings, become equally sharply defined.

A number of students have observed, after their internships, that it is important to gain experience in a wholly new terrain, free from traditional constraints, and disenchanted from the halo invested in a big name entity.

As one school career advisor suggested, Gen Zers are increasingly diverse in their choice of internships. This new generation has demonstrated an open and proactive mindset in exploring careers, highlighting the need for colleges to support them better in their journey of self-discovery by providing a range of internship resources.

There is also the need to stress interdisciplinary education, so that the students could explore the knowledge outside the range of their specialty.

(Based on sources provided by East China Normal University, Shanghai International Studies University, and Donghua University.)

Source: Jiefang Daily Editor: Li Qian