

# AN INVESTIGATION OF CHINA'S CONFUCIUS INSTITUTES IN THE UK

BY SAM DUNNING and ANSON KWONG



DEMOCRACY | FREEDOM | HUMAN RIGHTS

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## Acknowledgements

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## About Us

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## 1. Introduction

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There are no offshoots of the Chinese state that are integrated more closely into British society than Confucius Institutes.

The United Kingdom is host to 30 Confucius Institutes – more than any other country. Their ostensive purpose is to teach Mandarin and promote Chinese culture. These 30 institutes have been funded to the tune of perhaps £46,000,000<sup>1</sup> by Chinese sources, mostly the Chinese Government. Their influence extends into well over 100 schools, into politics, academia and business. They exist within a set of institutions that, during the last decade, have become increasingly involved with China in one way or another: British universities.

The position of Confucius Institutes inside British universities constitutes one of several fundamental differences between them and the UK's closest equivalent, the British Council. The British Council routinely promotes individuals, institutions, events and programmes that embody free speech and produce fierce criticism of British governments past and present. Most of its turnover comes from teaching and exams, and it operates in China out of four standalone offices.

By contrast, Confucius Institutes are formally part of the propaganda system of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), are financially dependent upon funding from the Chinese Government and, in general, are subject to People's Republic of China (PRC) speech restrictions. Yet Confucius Institutes can trade on the reputation of host universities such as Edinburgh and Manchester, or the London School of Economics – institutions known as beacons of free scholarly enquiry and academic excellence.

This situation highlights the difference between the tolerant values of the Western academy and the intolerant values of the CCP, a difference which for too long has been ignored or dismissed as irrelevant. It is the position of Confucius Institutes in universities that explains one of the main findings identified by this report, and makes it all the more worrying.

That finding is as follows: the UK's Confucius Institutes engage in activities far beyond the remit of 'language and culture' that is often attributed to them. Confucius Institutes are not 'language and culture' centres and are not mere tools of 'soft power'. This is suggested by names such as 'The Confucius Institute of Science and Technology Innovation at the University of Huddersfield', 'The Confucius Institute for Scotland in the University of Edinburgh' and 'The Confucius Institute for Business London'.

Operating from under the umbrella of prestigious universities, Confucius Institutes have been informing government policy and politicians, assisting the establishment of science and technology partnerships, offering consultancy services to business, promoting trade, running academic events supposed to shine a light on Chinese policy, and cooperating with UK organisations that work with the United Front Work Department (UFWD), a CCP agency the interference activities of which were recently highlighted by MI5. One Institute even runs a commercial acupuncture clinic: it has also organised events in Parliament. Another Institute is a partnership with a company overseen directly by the CCP's Propaganda Department.

In spite of the political attention paid to Confucius Institutes in the past six months – and the press and academic attention paid during the last six years – this pattern has gone unnoticed and its ramifications have been ignored. Relatedly, it has been argued that criticism of Confucius Institutes in the UK is unfounded because the number of problematic situations or

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<sup>1</sup> This study has identified £33,426,300 of funding and estimates that a further £10-13m remains to be disclosed.

incidents identified is low. This is because no one has looked properly. This investigative report is intended to fill the gap.

The report argues that, far from being a gateway to 'mutual understanding', Confucius Institutes threaten Britain's capacity to understand China and to devise a sensible policy towards the country and its institutions. This affects host universities, business big and small, Holyrood, Stormont and the Senedd in Wales, Westminster and Whitehall, the media and the general public.

A single illustration suffices to introduce the evidence for this assertion. Those Confucius Institutes that express a desire to 'inform' the UK about China have, over the past decade, hosted many hundreds of talks and events. Only a handful relate to the 100 million plus inhabitants of China who are not a member of the Han ethnic majority – for example, Uyghurs or Tibetans – or to the half of China's national territory where such people have historically dwelt as majorities with political power.

The failure to treat these topics is positively damaging to the UK's understanding of China, given that the colonisation of these peoples and that territory over the past hundred years constitutes one of the most important aspects of recent Chinese history without the study of which no understanding of modern China is nearly complete.

The provision of information about Taiwan, a country whose situation demands very urgent thought and planning by the UK Government, academia and industry, is also essentially non-existent. Likewise, there has been no treatment of the predicament of Hong Kong, even as the CCP's crackdown in the city has caused dismay in the UK and demanded a complex governmental response.

Very few people read Chinese-language sources relating to Confucius Institutes. They make clear that Confucius Institutes are designed to aid the CCP's integration into universities, and to exploit this integration in order to shape how China is understood and what strategy is adopted – by universities and by all who depend on their intellectual output – in light of this 'understanding'.

British universities have been subject to this programme whilst undergoing structural changes, such as commercialisation and internationalisation. The Confucius Institute programme has exploited these changes and contributed to them. This report finds Confucius Institutes have been instrumental in building and supporting their host universities' broader relationships with China, including in relation to science, technology and innovation. Confucius Institutes are a central motif of the broader pattern of British universities' enlarged dependence on and collaboration with Chinese institutions. Confucius Institutes may stand out, may be an easy target, but this broader pattern poses a broader and more complex problem.

These conclusions about Confucius Institutes have an important context. A succession of British Governments have encouraged and vigorously promoted the developments related here. This largely exculpates many of the individuals mentioned in this report. It also represents a serious failure of policy. China is now routinely described as the greatest long-term threat to the UK – yet we recently spent nearly a decade increasing our dependence on and building deep partnerships with the country. Conservative politicians are especially responsible for this, and their party has not taken responsibility and has sought to shift the blame to universities. This is counterproductive.

*In administering your government, what need is there for you to kill?* Confucius would disapprove greatly of the Chinese Communist Party. The use of his name to whitewash the CCP's reputation and give it a foothold in institutions dedicated to free enquiry is subversive and intolerable. Strong action is required.



\* \* \* \* \*

Some Confucius Institutes are largely exempt from the judgment outlined here. They stick mostly to two areas: language and culture. It is not sensible to sensationalise activity in these areas. However, nor would it be sensible to allow the good work done by these institutes to distract attention from problems in other areas; nor to overlook the potential for these institutes to morph into problematic institutions; nor to ignore the fact that even these Confucius Institutes are ultimately tied to the CCP, which promotes an intolerance inimical to the Western academy.

In the first instance, certain key Confucius Institutes are integral to the teaching of Mandarin in the United Kingdom, which certainly will aid our ability to generate practical knowledge about China. Whilst the teaching done by these institutes is not without risks – the blurring of language provision to businesspeople into business networking, the use of teaching material to convey the CCP position with regard to Taiwan – these are of a wholly different character to the main issues identified here.

Cultural activities are harder to define than language teaching and, in theory, present a higher risk of conveying misleading impressions of Chinese history and society. Their practical utility may also be lower than that of Mandarin teaching. However, again, activities such as calligraphy sessions and Tai Chi classes must generally be treated as innocent.

Even Confucius Institutes that are engaging in very problematic activity are also fulfilling these functions. Language and culture have been used as a cover for forays into politics, industry, business, science and society more broadly. Indeed, senior CCP cadres responsible for Confucius Institutes have explicitly referred to language teaching as such: “Using the excuse of teaching Chinese language, everything looks reasonable and logical.”<sup>2</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

This report recommends that the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) investigates universities with Confucius Institutes and whether their recruitment practices are compliant with British equality law, and that it enforces compliance.

This report further recommends an amendment to the upcoming Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill, which would affect the UK's Confucius Institutes by demanding the agreements that govern them contain certain terms. This would likely lead to the removal of Confucius Institutes from universities.

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<sup>2</sup> Marshall Sahlins, *Confucius Institutes: academic malware* (Prickly Paradigm Press, 2015). Sahlins quoted Politburo member Li Changchun, “The ‘Confucius’ brand has a natural attractiveness. Using the excuse of teaching Chinese language, everything looks reasonable and logical.”

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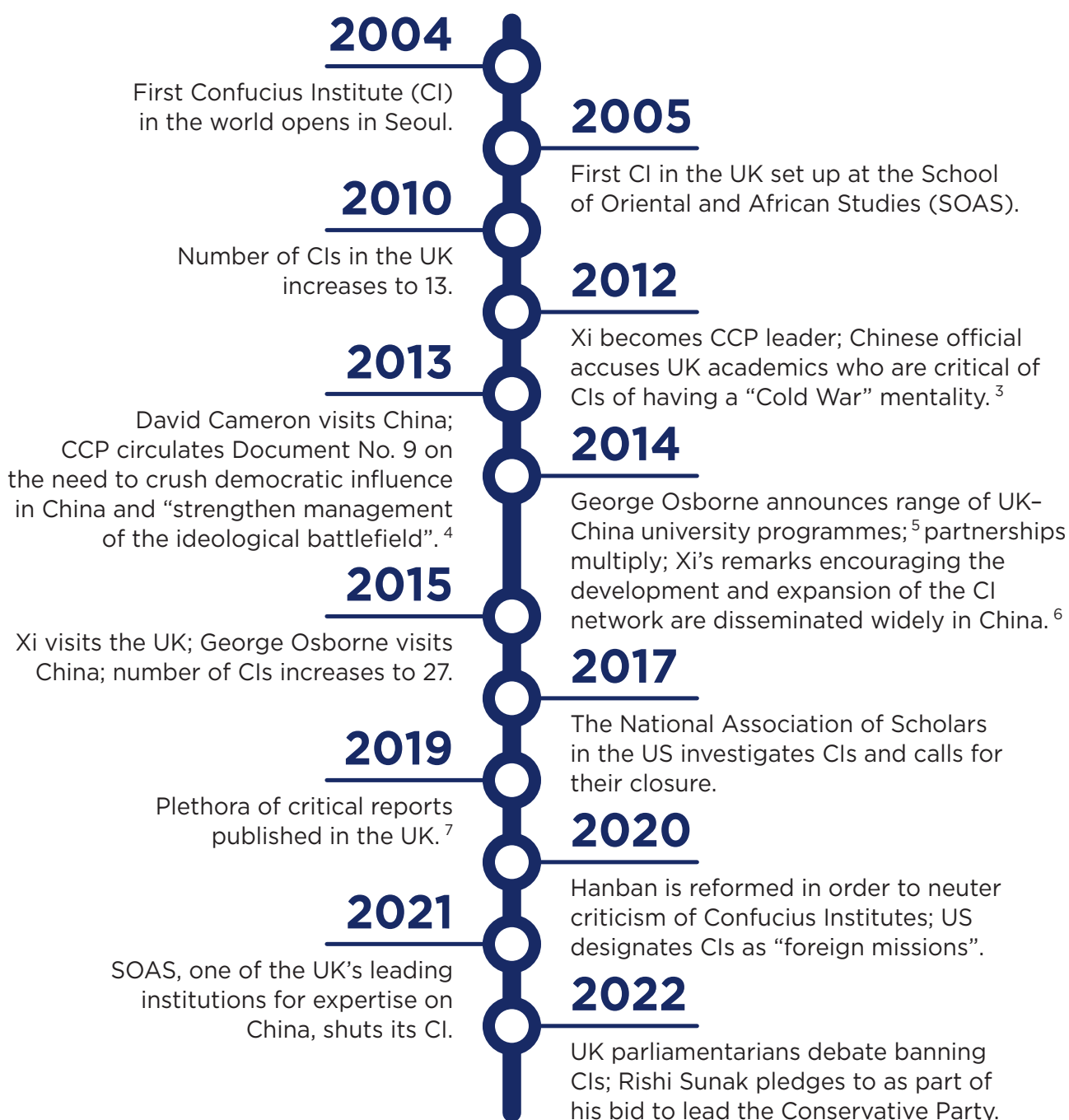
## 2. Executive summary

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- A recent reform of the management structure of Confucius Institutes (CIs) in the PRC is designed to disguise the continuity of CCP control over CIs. A number of British universities have taken this at face value and refer to the new body that oversees CIs as a 'non-governmental organisation'. The new body is supervised by the Chinese Ministry of Education, funded mostly by a state-owned propaganda company, and integrated into the CCP's propaganda system.
- The UK's CIs have received more funding from Chinese sources (mostly the Chinese Government) than previously thought. This study has identified £33,426,300 of funding despite many universities not offering full or even partial disclosure of their funding. This study provides a rough estimate of £43-46m of funding received from China. Whatever the figure paid to British universities, the actual sum spent by Chinese entities on the CIs is higher, because some costs (e.g. basic instructor salaries) have been paid directly by them and not channelled through universities.
- The CIs employ at least 200 staff. The total number of staff is likely to be more than 250, and most of these staff are citizens of China, where roughly 8% of people are members of the CCP. The percentage of CCP members amongst university-educated people is higher, however, and this is likely to be reflected amongst CI staff in the UK.
- The recruitment of staff from China is done by Chinese stakeholders in China and involves political and ethnic vetting. The authors were able to identify with certainty only two non-Han staff members in the UK: non-Han ethnic groups make up 8% of the PRC's population. There is a possibility that British universities are in breach of equality/employment law in respect of their CIs. There are other risks of a similar kind: for example, there is evidence that Chinese staff are obliged to follow Chinese law whilst in the UK.
- Most scholars and academic associations tend to agree that CIs should not be involved in the core functions of a university – knowledge production and undergraduate teaching. There is a well-developed history of criticism of CIs to date.
- The authors conducted an analysis of publicly available information about the topics covered by CIs' seminars, lectures and events, and found that scarcely any related to topics deemed in any way sensitive by the Chinese Government.
- Although described as 'language and culture' centres, the authors were only able to confirm that four of the 30 CIs were sticking entirely to language and culture. This is based on an analysis of the CIs' activity that finds that half are engaging in noteworthy activity in other areas, and six are deeply involved in other areas.
- Eight CIs were investigated in depth. This investigation uncovered connections to the United Front Work Department and the Propaganda Department of the Chinese Communist Party; payments to British politicians and political activity; involvement in the establishment of scientific partnerships between British and Chinese universities; and involvement in the production and dissemination of knowledge about China.
- A non-comprehensive survey of the activities of the other 22 CIs was conducted. This survey revealed that:
  - CIs are implementing a range of programmes aimed at businesspeople, political networks, academia and the general public;

- CIs run events intended to support business by disseminating knowledge about Chinese Government policy and providing opportunities to network;
- CIs also provide other services to business, including more general 'consulting' and not just language-related services such as interpretation;
- a number of politicians have received funding from CIs;
- a small number of CIs are involved in teaching degree courses on China;
- CIs are also involved in the development of their host universities' broader relationships with China;
- CIs have close relationships with the problematic Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA).
- The teaching of Mandarin at British schools is currently dependent on CIs. In particular, a small number of CIs are central to special Government-sponsored teaching programmes in each of the home nations. Some language teaching material contains limited propagandistic elements.
- This report recommends a variety of measures that would affect CIs.
  - First, EHRC must conduct an immediate investigation of the legality of CI recruitment practices and enforce compliance with the law. Where practices are not in line with British law, agreements must be renegotiated. Where negotiations fail to bring recruiting practices in line with the law, the CI must be closed.
  - Second, a new amendment to the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill would demand that the agreements governing partnerships with foreign powers to deliver teaching or other academic programmes must contain certain terms designed to safeguard freedom of speech and ensure compliance with equality legislation.
- This report also recommends:
  - that a special government fund of £5m is provided for critical China studies in order to bolster knowledge of China in the UK, and to provide information to support business, the media, government and the general public with regard to a country now widely considered the greatest long-term threat to the UK;
  - given that the CCP oath demands members shape their professional conduct in support of CCP policy, that universities ask all members to declare their membership privately to the university;
  - that the Government work with other countries with significant numbers of Mandarin speakers, especially Taiwan, in order to develop new language and cultural programmes.

### 3. Timeline



<sup>3</sup> Tania Branigan, “Chinese ambassador attacks ‘cold war’ fears over Confucius Institutes”, *The Guardian*, 15 June 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jun/15/confucius-institutes-universities-chinese-ambassador>.

<sup>4</sup> “Document 9: A ChinaFile Translation”, ChinaFile, 8 November 2013, <https://www.chinafile.com/document-9-chinafile-translation>.

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. Chris Parr, “Osborne unveils China-Russell Group link”, *Times Higher Education*, 20 February 2014, <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/osborne-unveils-china-russell-group-link/2011502.article>; “Partner Country Case Study: China”, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, February 2022, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/105551/newton-fund-evaluation-case-study-china.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/105551/newton-fund-evaluation-case-study-china.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> See e.g. “Xi backs Confucius Institutes’ development on anniversary”, *ChinaDaily*, 27 September 2014, [https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2014-09/27/content\\_18673336.htm](https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2014-09/27/content_18673336.htm).

<sup>7</sup> See e.g. “China’s Confucius Institutes: An Inquiry by the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission”, Conservative Party Human Rights Commission, February 2019, [https://conservativepartyhumanrightscommission.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CPHRC\\_Confucius\\_Institutes\\_report\\_FEBRUARY\\_2019-1.pdf](https://conservativepartyhumanrightscommission.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CPHRC_Confucius_Institutes_report_FEBRUARY_2019-1.pdf); “A cautious embrace: defending democracy in an age of autocracies: Autocracies’ influence in academia”, UK Parliament, 5 November 2019, [https://pubhijlications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201919/cmselect/cmfa/109/10905.htm#\\_idTextAnchor004](https://pubhijlications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201919/cmselect/cmfa/109/10905.htm#_idTextAnchor004).



## 4. Criticism to date

In the past decade, CIs have been subject to increasing levels of criticism.

In 2011, a Falun Gong practitioner called Sonia Zhao:

...alerted McMaster University [Canada] that she had felt forced to sign a contract with Hanban that banned Falun Gong practice, because she was afraid that if she acknowledged that she herself was a Falun Gong practitioner she would be punished. Her mother had been imprisoned for two years for practising Falun Gong. As a result, after she had filed a complaint with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, McMaster University terminated its relationship with the Hanban and closed its Confucius Institute... McMaster University spent a year negotiating with Hanban to remove the discriminatory clause but when Hanban refused to do so, the university decided to close its Confucius Institute.<sup>8</sup>

The incident has been widely covered in the press in Canada and worldwide.<sup>9</sup> A statement released by McMaster said that: “Concerns were raised that the hiring decisions in China did not reflect the normal hiring practices of the University. Numerous discussions were held with [the Chinese partner university] officials to consider possible solutions but a satisfactory resolution could not be found.”<sup>10</sup>



Students for a Free Tibet (Source: “Confucius Institutes”, NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, 6 June 2019, [https://stratcomcoe.org/cuploads/pfiles/confucius\\_institutes.pdf](https://stratcomcoe.org/cuploads/pfiles/confucius_institutes.pdf)).

<sup>8</sup> “China’s Confucius Institutes: An Inquiry by the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission”.

<sup>9</sup> David Leask, “VIDEO: The film that lifts the lid on China’s Confucius Institutes”, *The Herald Scotland*, 20 June 2018, <https://www.heraldsotland.com/news/16301647.video-film-lifts-lid-chinas-confucius-institutes/>.

<sup>10</sup> “McMaster University severs ties with Confucius Institute”, Canadian Association of University Teachers bulletin, 2013, <https://bulletin-archives.caut.ca/bulletin/articles/2013/03/mcmaster-university-severs-ties-with-confucius-institute>.

In 2013, both the American and Canadian associations of university teachers passed resolutions calling for Confucius Institutes to be removed from campuses or the agreements governing them to be renegotiated to bring them in line with normal standards.<sup>11</sup>

In 2014, Professor Chris Hughes of the London School of Economics (LSE) wrote an article entitled *Confucius Institutes and the university: distinguishing the political mission from the cultural*. Hughes analysed the mission and function of universities in liberal democracies, and the mission of CIs. On the latter, Hughes concluded that the notion of 'soft power' was not applicable to them, because 'soft power' ought to be defined as being an organic force independent of state power, whereas Confucius Institutes are controlled and designed by an authoritarian state and governed by CCP functionaries.<sup>12</sup>

As well as identifying risks such as the distortion of the academic agenda and the subversion of equality in recruitment, Hughes warned of "mission creep" whereby CIs "broaden out their work beyond the teaching of language and traditional culture by making greater efforts to penetrate the core activities of universities." Hughes warned that changing circumstances within China and on its borders could result in many of the risks associated with CIs being realised, with consequences for universities. In light of what has since been reported, Hughes' concerns seem prescient.<sup>13</sup>

Also in 2014, the late Professor Marshal Sahlins published a pamphlet entitled, *Confucius Institutes: Academic Malware*. Like Hughes, Sahlins argued that CIs and Western universities are incompatible, that CIs are part of an intrusive political programme, and that agreements for CIs should be terminated.<sup>14</sup>

In 2017, the National Association of Scholars (NAS), a US non-profit organisation,<sup>15</sup> published *Outsourced to China*, a seminal report of nearly 200 pages looking at general issues and containing an investigation of 12 CIs in New York and New Jersey.<sup>16</sup> The report uncovered a lack of transparency, avoidance of taboo topics and entanglement with academic provision and university development. It recommended the institutes be shut by means of the government "conditioning grants on the closure of an institution's CI".<sup>17</sup> The annual National Defense Authorization Act for FY2021 put restrictions on the receipt of federal funding by institutions hosting Confucius Institutes.<sup>18</sup> As a result of this and public pressure, many institutions began to close their CIs.

In 2019, the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission published a detailed report on CIs in the UK. The report studied official Chinese pronouncements on the purpose of CIs and included interviews with and submissions from British academics, former diplomats and others. It related instances of censorship, bullying and institutional opacity.<sup>19</sup> A film produced around the same time by one interviewee,<sup>20</sup> Doris Liu, was subject to PRC-instigated cancellations

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<sup>11</sup> Hughes, "Confucius Institutes and the university".

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Sahlins, *Confucius Institutes: Academic Malware*.

<sup>15</sup> "About Us", National Association of Scholars, <https://www.nas.org/about-us>.

<sup>16</sup> Rachelle Peterson, "Outsourced to China: Confucius Institutes and Soft Power in American Higher Education", NAS, 5 April 2017, <https://www.nas.org/reports/outsourced-to-china>.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, (from the report's accompanying "Media Packet").

<sup>18</sup> David Acevedo, "NDAA 2021 Plays Softball with Confucius Institutes", NAS, 22 December 2020, <https://www.nas.org/blogs/article/ndaa-2021-plays-softball-with-confucius-institutes>; "National Defense Authorization Act For Fiscal Year 2021", U.S. Government Publishing Office, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-116publ283/html/PLAW-116publ283.htm>.

<sup>19</sup> China's Confucius Institutes: An Inquiry by the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission".

<sup>20</sup> "In the Name of Confucius Official Trailer", *YouTube* video, posted by In the Name of Confucius, 1 February 2017, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=71&v=KYa55jk2uVI&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=71&v=KYa55jk2uVI&feature=emb_logo).



and boycotts worldwide.<sup>21</sup> In 2022, a follow-up report from NAS found that closed CIs in the US were effectively re-opening under new names:

Of 118 CIs in the United States, 104 have closed or are in the process of closing. But at least 64 colleges and universities have reopened a Confucius Institute-like program under a different name or maintained close relationships with the Chinese entities that cosponsored Confucius Institutes.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> China's Confucius Institutes: An Inquiry by the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission".

<sup>22</sup> "Press Release: Confucius Institutes Rebrand to Circumvent U.S. Policy, Report Finds", 21 June 2022, NAS, [https://www.nas.org/blogs/press\\_release/press-release-confucius-institutes-rebrand-to-circumvent-us-policy-report-finds](https://www.nas.org/blogs/press_release/press-release-confucius-institutes-rebrand-to-circumvent-us-policy-report-finds).

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## 5. Organisational structure

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### *Hanban, CLEC and CIEF*

In September 2022, Sinopsis, a Czech think-tank associated with the Sinology Department at the Charles University in Prague and a non-profit, AcaMedia, published a primer on the organizational structure of Confucius Institutes' supervisory body. The key points were:

- Until 2020, Confucius Institutes were administered by a body called Hanban. This was an abbreviation of the Office of the Leading Small Group (LSG) for the International Promotion of the Chinese Language, 国家汉语国际推广领导小组办公室.<sup>23</sup>
- The Office was a unit of the Ministry of Education that was overseen by the LSG, a less formal body that had by 2009 evolved into the Confucius Institute Headquarters Council (CIHQ Council), just as Hanban began to be referred to as the Confucius Institute Headquarters (CIHQ). The profile of the core leadership of the upper body, the LSG/CIHQ Council, was relatively constant through this first restructuring: the CIHQ Council was chaired by two successive former United Front Work Department (UFWD) heads turned vice premiers, Liu Yandong 刘延东 then Sun Chunlan 孙春兰.<sup>24</sup>
- The office, Hanban/CIHQ, whilst part of the Ministry of Education, was “organically integrated into the CCP propaganda system, with propaganda organs represented at the CIHQ Council, career propaganda cadres on the Hanban/CIHQ party committee, propaganda leaders, including CPD heads, personally visiting CIs and local propaganda departments involved in the organisation of CI events. Senior propaganda and education officials [...] explicitly referred to CIs as an “important component” of external propaganda.”<sup>25</sup>
- In 2020, this bureaucracy was reformed. The reform involved a new body, the Centre for Language Education and Cooperation (CLEC), replacing Hanban. Hanban's Party secretary, Ma Jianfei was made the head of CLEC, which retains the same social credit number as Hanban, and remains part the Ministry of Education. CIHQ Council, meanwhile, was replaced by the China International Education Foundation (CIEF), which describes itself as a non-governmental organisation. However, CIEF too is overseen by the Ministry of Education, and based at an address that previously housed another section of the Ministry. CIEF's semi-reconstituted leadership reflects the continued integration of CIs into the CCP's propaganda system.<sup>26</sup>

English-language PRC-controlled state media described this as a means to “disperse misinterpretation” amongst Western critics.<sup>27</sup>

For CIs in the UK, the main consequence of the changes outlined seems to be that funding now ostensibly derives chiefly from Chinese partner universities, not from Hanban, and Ministry of Education officials are less visible. However, some funding still comes from CIEF, of which the biggest funder is a state-owned company, China Education Publishing & Media Group.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Jichang Lulu, “Propaganda and beyond: A note on the 2020 Confucius Institute reform”, *Sinopsis*, 2022, <https://sinopsis.cz/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/ci0.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, and “第483号：基金会设立登记公告”, China Social Organisation Government Services, 13 July 2020, <https://archive.ph/hd2Y9#selection-109.0-1179.30>.

<sup>27</sup> Chen Xi, “New NGO to operate China's Confucius Institutes, ‘disperse misinterpretation’”, *Global Times*, 5 July 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220830095609/https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1193584.shtml>.

<sup>28</sup> “中国国际中文教育基金会 2020年度工作报告”, China International Education Foundation, [https://www.cief.org.cn/xxgk\\_ndbg](https://www.cief.org.cn/xxgk_ndbg).

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Anglophone scholars have not yet fully analysed CIEF's role in controlling the funding ostensibly from Chinese partner universities. It is likely that the funding is determined and approved by CIEF (which involves some universities in its governance structure and is itself funded partly by universities). For example, one university states that its Chinese partner "liaises with CIEF on the grant allocation".<sup>29</sup> CIEF retains its role in UK and Chinese law in the governing of Confucius Institutes, having 'inherited' contracts signed with Hanban.

These facts suggest that the 'reform' integrates the CPP's apparatus of control over CIs into Chinese universities. There is other evidence of this, as in a number of references to CLEC offices within Chinese partner universities.<sup>30</sup> This may be intended to make counteracting the Confucius Institutes programme more difficult. This issue is discussed further in the policy recommendations section.

British universities have reproduced claims about CIEF's independence. A number state that CIEF is a "non-governmental charitable organisation", "non profit charitable organisation", or "non-governmental organisation".<sup>31</sup> Several scholars at British universities have also reproduced these claims.<sup>32</sup> But CIEF is in no sense 'non-governmental'.

CLEC's UK arm is a private limited company, The Centre for Language Education and Cooperation, UK (formerly Hanban UK Ltd),<sup>33</sup> directed by Chen Tongdu 陈同度 (aka Chen Tong Du / Chan Tung Tao). Chen was formerly described by a Chinese Government source as Hanban's UK director and has been involved in "matchmaking" CI students with Chinese businesses in the UK.<sup>34</sup> Chen directs a dozen companies spanning real estate, advertising and freight air transport. Some are associated with the PRC state apparatus in the UK (such as CLEC and visa services). Two are membership organisations.<sup>35</sup>

Mr Chen was contacted for comment on this report prior to publication. At the time of writing, no response had been received. No wrongdoing on his behalf is suggested.

Finally, there is some evidence that the rise of Xi and the circulation of Document No. 9 (see above) corresponded with an intensification of the CCP's desire to use CIs to infiltrate the study of China. At a Hanban central conference in 2012:

A number of strategies were thus recommended to break down the barriers preventing the "integration" (rongru 融入) of the CIs into the mainstream activities of universities,

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<sup>29</sup> "Confucius Institute Governance", Scottish Confucius Institute for Business & Communication, Heriot-Watt University, <https://confuciusinstitute.site.hw.ac.uk/confucius-institute-governance/>.

<sup>30</sup> e.g., "A FOI Request Has Been Submitted To The University", Newcastle University Students' Union, 28 June 2022, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220709091759/https://www.nusu.co.uk/news/article/7710/An-update-on-FOI-request-to-the-University/>.

<sup>31</sup> See, e.g., Ibid.; "Confucius Institute", Bangor University, <https://www.bangor.ac.uk/confucius-institute/>; "Confucius Institutes embark on a new phase of partnership, support and governance", Lancaster University Confucius Institute, 20 November 2022, <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/confucius-institute/news/confucius-institutes-embark-on-a-new-phase-of-partnership-support-and-governance>.

<sup>32</sup> See, e.g., Kenneth King and Siyuan Li, "Ask the Experts: Are Confucius Institutes a threat to the UK's national security?", LSE, 15 June 2022, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/cff/2022/06/15/ask-the-experts-are-confucius-institutes-a-threat-to-the-uks-national-security/>; Xiuchuan Lu ORCID and Zhu Hua, "Teacher resilience and triple crises: Confucius Institute teachers' lived experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic", *Applied Linguistics Review*, 26 May 2022, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/applirev-2021-0193/html>.

<sup>33</sup> "The Centre for Language Education and Cooperation, UK", Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/07893658>.

<sup>34</sup> "孔子学院：中国文化“走出去”的桥梁国务院新闻办公室网站", The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, 12 May 2016, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220711121147/http://www.scio.gov.cn/zhzc/35353/35354/Document/1513792/1513792.htm>.

<sup>35</sup> "Tung Tao Chan", Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/officers/DynUOPMrIN2YfJDPvPOW8Qcn-0/appointments>; "Tongdu Chen", Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/officers/e0736o40pIbMjEeSx69UM3XBmro/appointments>; "Tong Du Chen", Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/officers/FaaOVdbbSenfSa4vCFKoCPdCdlg/appointments>.

schools and communities. Central to these strategies is the launching of the research-focused “Confucius China Studies Program” (孔子新漢學計畫), which is more accurately rendered into English as the “New Confucius Sinology Plan.” This involves cooperation between CIs and host institutions on the projects of doctoral students, youth leadership, study trips for scholars to “understand China,” international conferences and assistance for publishing research.<sup>36</sup>

Whether this new institutional goal was realised is a key topic for the present investigation.

### *The Chinese Communist Party and its oath*

The CCP is the paramount authority within the PRC and all institutions within that country; it operates cells within all major institutions and political and governmental bodies. The CCP secretaries who lead these cells are usually *de facto* the main decision makers of their institution or body. CCP committees even have special power within ‘private companies’, which are obliged by law to accommodate them.

CCP members take an oath. This is an oath of loyalty to the CCP, and includes the promise to “uphold the Party’s program, observe the provisions of the Party constitution, fulfil a Party member’s duties, carry out the Party’s decisions, strictly observe Party discipline, guard Party secrets, be loyal to the Party, work hard, fight for communism throughout my life, be ready at all times to sacrifice my all for the Party and the people, and never betray the Party.”<sup>37</sup>

This oath of loyalty and service means that being a CCP member is very unlike being a member of the Labour or Conservative party. The oath ought not to be considered a private matter because it obliges the swearer to apply the programme of an authoritarian political regime in all areas of their lives, including, as in some cases identified in this report, in their professional conduct as a member of staff on a British campus, or as part of the governing body of an institution based in a British university.

CCP members pose a threat to British universities. This report does not investigate this matter *per se*, although it is of great significance. However, with regard to CIs, it must be noted that the CCP indeed has a “program”, has made “decisions”, and has “secrets”. Given that CCP members are demonstrably involved in the running of CIs in the UK, the fact that such people have taken the oath has ramifications, including potential legal ramifications, for their professional conduct and therefore for host universities.

### *Basic structure of partnerships and legal agreements*

There is considerable variation in the structure of Confucius Institutes. However, a typical CI does have a basic framework.

Ordinarily, CIs are underpinned by two agreements. The first is a main agreement with Hanban. The second is a supplementary agreement with a Chinese partner university. Since Hanban was superseded by CIEF/CLEC, various parts of these agreements appear to be being renegotiated across universities in a haphazard way.

The original Hanban agreements are mostly similar, consisting of 14 articles:

1. The agreement is to set up a CI.

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<sup>36</sup> Christopher R. Hughes, “Confucius Institutes and the university: distinguishing the political mission from the cultural”, *Issues and Studies* 50 (4), 2014, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/35434291.pdf>.

<sup>37</sup> “Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party (Chinese and English Text)”, Congressional-Executive Commission on China, 14 November 2002, <https://www.cecc.gov/resources/legal-provisions/constitution-of-the-chinese-communist-party>.

2. The CI shall be a non-profit. There is some variation: the University of Wales Trinity St David's original agreement stipulated that the new CI "abides by the 'One China' principle, respects and maintains the independence and unification of the People's Republic of China".<sup>38</sup> The agreement has since been superseded by a new one without this note.
3. The British and Chinese partner universities will sign a supplementary agreement.
4. Scope of activities: there is some variety here, including stipulation of activities besides 'language and culture', such as the sponsorship of academic events and travel/exchange consulting. "Other activities with authorization and by appointment of [Hanban]" are almost always stipulated. However, there is far greater variety in the actual activity of the institutes.
5. Organisation/management: this clause stipulates the operation of a board to oversee the Institute. It often also stipulates the responsibilities of this board, and the appointment of two co-directors, one nominated by each university.

There is also often a reference to the Institute having to obey Chinese laws. This matter has attracted some attention. Usually this is in a format like the following: 'the Institute's activities... shall not contravene relevant laws... both in China and in the UK.' This language can be ambiguous and its specific legal ramifications, if real, are not treated here. Any implication that Chinese law should apply outside of the PRC would represent a fundamental threat to universities. The ambiguity of the language must not distract from the basic reality these clauses reflect: staff of British CIs who are Chinese citizens and plan to return to China know that they may face consequences if they support, organise or otherwise engage in anti-CCP speech. (They or their relatives may face consequences even if they do not plan to return.) British staff know that they risk putting Chinese partners and the agreement itself in jeopardy if they engage in the same.

Important too is reference to Hanban's Constitution and By-Laws: the CI's activities must not contravene these. The problem is that, although agreements with Hanban have been taken over by CIEF, as of August 2020, CIEF does not publish a constitution or any by-laws online.

6. Obligations: this article almost always sets out that Hanban should provide a) branding rights; b) "3000 volumes" of books; c) a 'start-up fund' of \$150,000; d) Chinese language instructors paid by Hanban. The British university should provide a) office space and facilities; b) administrative personnel; c) a special bank account with Bank of China in the CI's name; d) a set annual fund that at least equals that provided by Hanban.

The authors received a partial inventory of the 3000 volumes from one university. Along with many language textbooks, it includes titles such as *The Economy of Tibet*; *Invest in China*; *The Road to China's Prosperity*; *The Communist Party of China & Contemporary China*; three volumes of *The Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*; and books on China's history, philosophy and so on.<sup>39</sup>

7. The Confucius Institute's brand belongs to Hanban.
8. Provision for revision of the agreement.

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<sup>38</sup> "Agreements on the Confucius Institute", What Do They Know, [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/agreements\\_on\\_the\\_confucius\\_inst\\_18#incoming-1947247](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/agreements_on_the_confucius_inst_18#incoming-1947247).

<sup>39</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

9. The agreement is to last five years and can be renewed.
10. Force majeure.
11. Termination of the agreement must be notified six months in advance.
12. This is usually an ambiguous clause relating to the procedure for a dispute.
13. The agreement shall be in English and Chinese and both parties shall have a copy of both versions.
14. This is often a non-disclosure clause – but not all agreements contain this.

In terms of staffing, each institute generally has a British director (nominated by the UK university) and a Chinese director (nominated by the Chinese university), alongside a number of teaching staff provided by the Chinese side and administrative staff by the British side. It appears that the roles of the respective directors vary considerably: this is especially true of the British directors.

In some cases, British directors seem to be key staff, initiating programmes, making decisions and managing the day-to-day running. In others, the role appears to be largely nominal.

In one recent case, the British director of one institute sent an email containing the following message to an academic colleague: “As you know we have a Confucius Institute at [the university] The governance arrangements are that each party has a Chair ... a Director ... and two other members. I will need to fulfil the Chair role and I wondered whether you would be able to take over as Director? Happy to discuss.” He went on to describe the role: “When I undertook this role, I held monthly meetings to keep up-to-speed with activities but it’s up to you how you want to do this.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.



## 6. Data

**Figure 1:** Activities

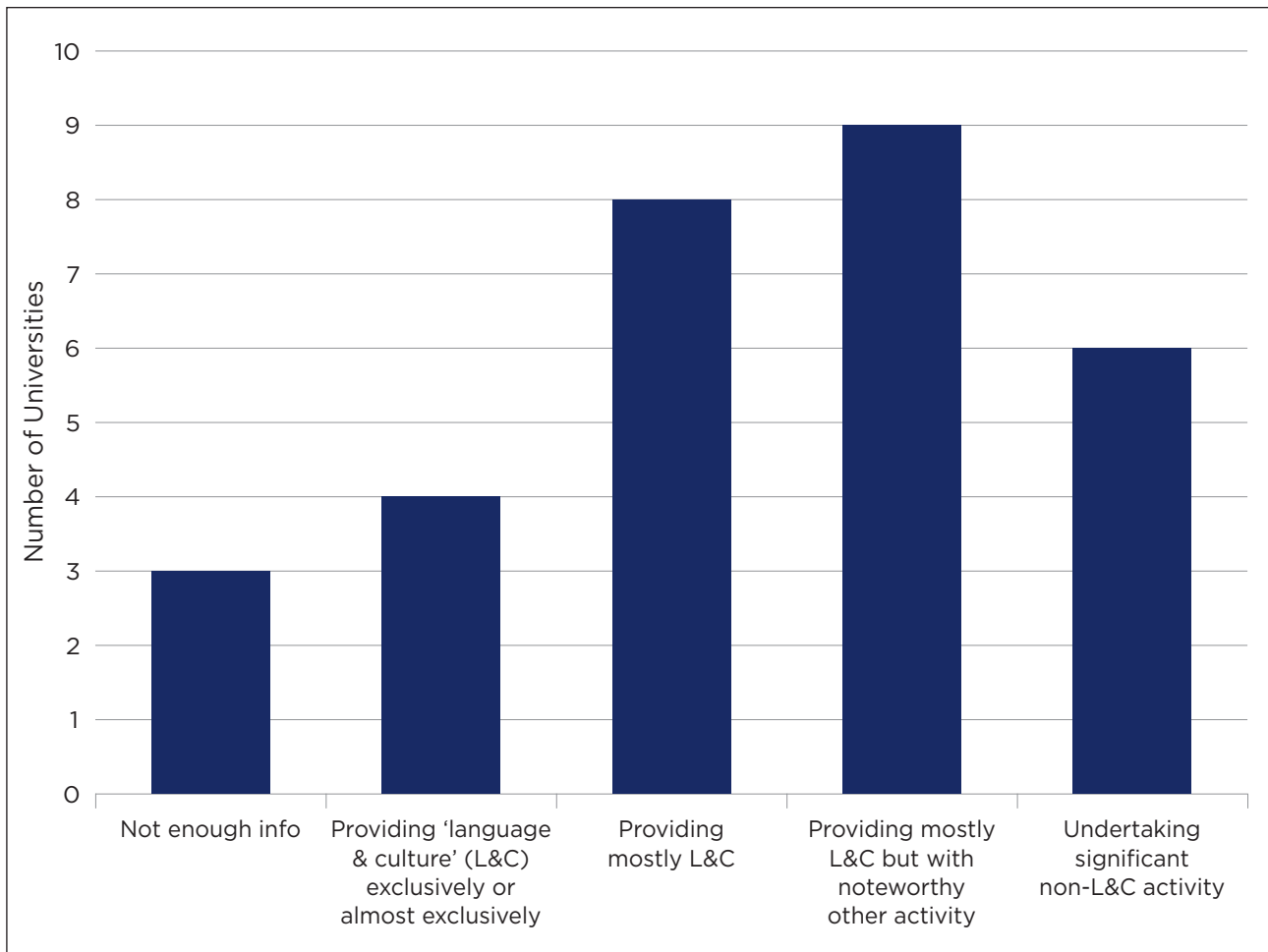


Figure 1: This data is based on an open-source analysis of the activity of the institutes. This was supplemented by use of data released by some universities. *For more information on this tally, consult the methodology.*

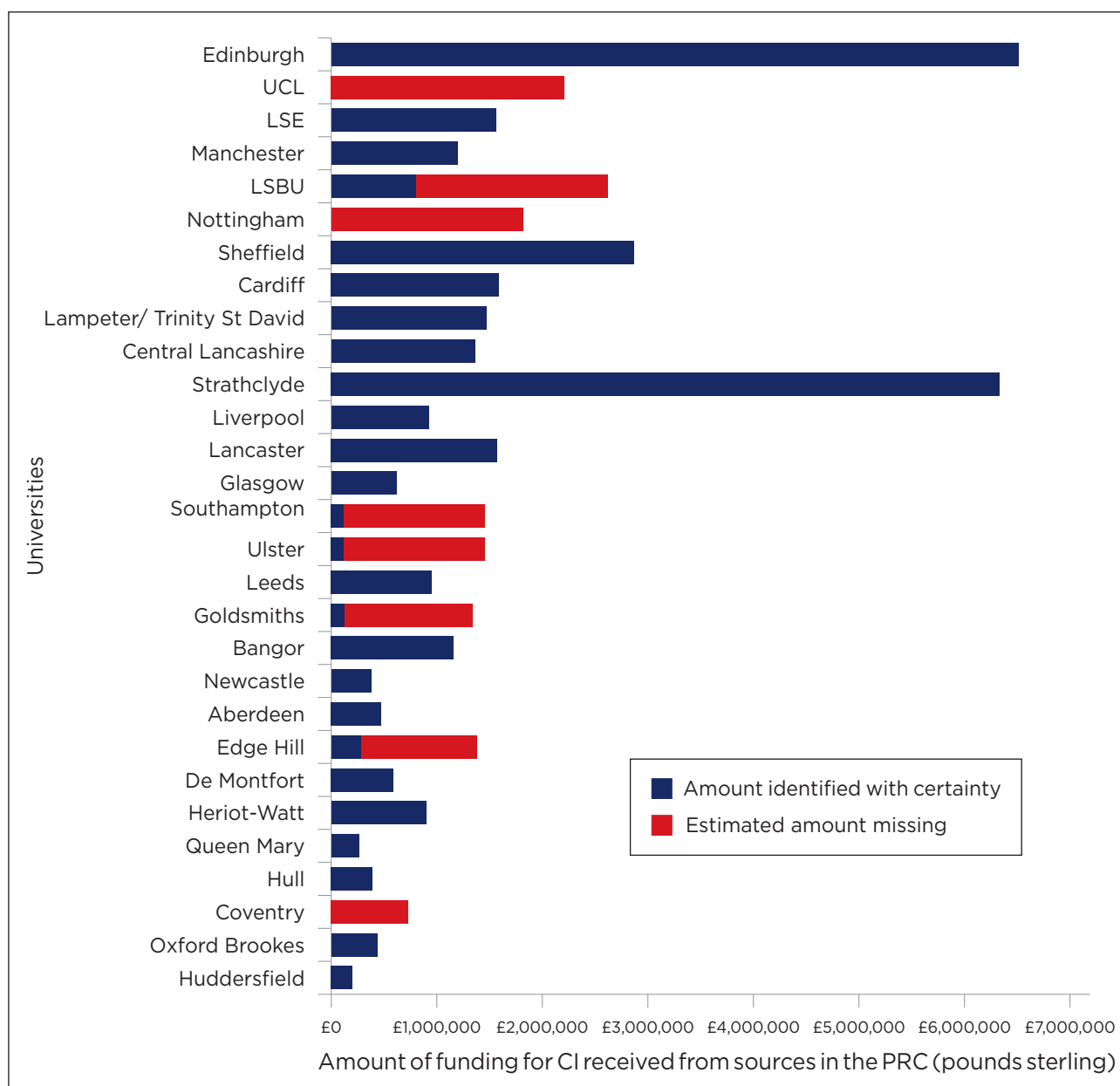
**Figure 2: Funding**

Figure 2. This chart shows in blue the amount of funding identified with certainty by the authors through the collation of FOIs (their own, those published online and some obtained by others); and estimates in red of the amount of ‘missing’ funding. (The Open University’s CI opened very recently and is not included.) The total sum shown in blue is £33,426,300. Confucius Institutes are shown in order of their date of foundation.

Amongst the immediately apparent observations are that:

- There are two outliers in the institutes at Edinburgh and Strathclyde Universities. Both universities have been very transparent and are outliers in this sense too, but this does not account for the extent to which they are outliers.
- The sums provided by Strathclyde are inconsistent: one FOI response gives one sum for a certain year; another response gives a different sum.
- The estimates for missing funds range from £9,859,381 to £12,966,014. This forms the overall estimate offered by this report of a total of £43m to £46m from sources in China.

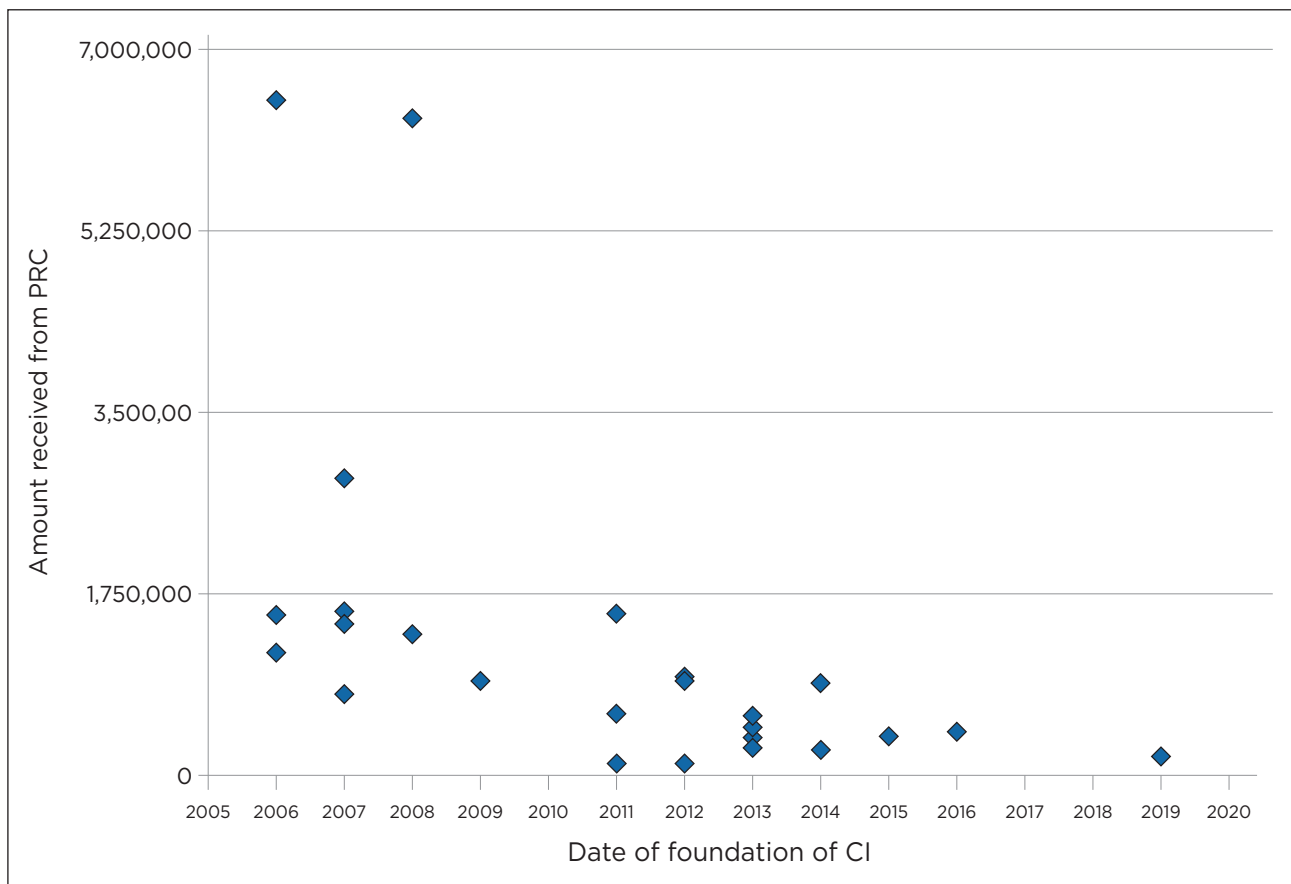
**Figure 3:** Funding / Date of Foundation of Confucius Institute

Figure 3. This graph shows the confirmed amounts received by each institute relative to the date of establishment of that institute.

#### Box 1: University Responses to FoI Requests

**6** universities have released no or very little data on how their CIs have been funded (not all this data is public, but it has been received by the authors).

**6** universities have failed or refused to release their original agreements with Hanban. This may be to avoid scrutiny of controversial clauses that were removed in later revisions.

**1** university refused to release its current agreement with Hanban: this is Oxford Brookes.

**Half** of universities failed or refused to release their CIs' recent budgets and work reports.

**2** CI staff or former staff agreed to speak off-the-record to the authors about their institute. All CIs were contacted requesting an off-the-record interview with a staff member. Most did not respond to the request.

**0** universities were able to share a specific risk assessment conducted with regard to the impact of Confucius Institutes on students from Taiwan or Hong Kong, pro-democracy Chinese students, Uyghur students, Tibetan students and others at particular risk of being targeted by pro-CCP actors on campus.

## 7. Case Studies – *institutes*

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### *The London School of Economics*

The Confucius Institute for Business London (CIBL) at the London School of Economics (LSE) was established in 2006 as a partnership with Tsinghua University. It was founded with £25k of support from each of five “founding corporate members” – HSBC, Swire, BP, Deloitte and Standard Chartered – which, along with the China–Britain Business Council (CBBC), now have a seat on the Institute’s advisory board, alongside Chinese embassy staff.<sup>41</sup>

CIBL has since received over £1.5m in funding from the Chinese Government. The Institute describes itself thus: “CIBL helps London business communities to learn Mandarin and to develop their understanding of business cultures in China. Alongside delivering business Chinese classes, CIBL also hosts a number of events offering insights into UK – China commercial relations.” As well as language training, “CIBL provides intercultural communication training to both UK and Chinese companies and facilitates effective business communications in both directions.”<sup>42</sup> CIBL charges for this training. It advertises its events as an opportunity to “Expand your global network with like-minded people” and also offers “bespoke courses” to businesses on a commercial basis, for example, two-week programmes in Shanghai and Tsinghua involving courses on trade, finance and entrepreneurship and “networking events”.<sup>43</sup>

The deputy director of CIBL is Dr Lu Hong OBE 卢红. In one interview given in 2008, Lu said that her “bigger goal” was to introduce businesspeople and businesses to one another.<sup>44</sup>

In 2012, when concerns were raised about CIs in the UK, Dr Lu gave an interview to BBC Chinese. In it, she argued “that it was unfair to accuse Confucius Institutes, as the British Council, the Alliance Française and the Goethe-Institut are all doing the same thing as Confucius Institutes, and are the same kind of platform for spreading language and culture.” Lu also accused Professor Chris Hughes (see above), who had criticised CIs, of hypocrisy, asking “If the institute should be questioned for receiving funding from mainland China, what about the fact that [Hughes] has received research funding from Taiwan, for example from the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation?”<sup>45</sup>

In 2014, following a report criticising CIs by the American Association of University Professors, Lu again gave an interview to BBC Chinese. Responding to the fact that the then Chairman of Hanban’s board was a member of the CCP’s Politburo, Lu stated, “Western critics of Confucius Institutes should not jump to conclusions based on its organisational structure alone, and that just because Confucius Institutes are overseen by a central leader does not mean it must be carrying out official wishes.” Lu repeated the argument that CIs were just like the British Council.<sup>46</sup>

In addition to her work at the Institute, Dr Lu is chair of the advisory board of the Confederation of Guangxi Chinese Association UK 英国广西华人华侨社团联合总会 (CGAUK). CGAUK has

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<sup>41</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>42</sup> “About us: Confucius Institute for Business London”, CIBL, <https://www.lse.ac.uk/cibl/about-us>.

<sup>43</sup> “Partnership programmes”, CIBL, <https://www.lse.ac.uk/cibl/partnership-programmes>.

<sup>44</sup> Tian Shu, “访谈：儒家思想进汇丰”, *BBC Chinese*, 24 January 2008, [https://www.bbc.co.uk/china/studyintheuk/story/2008/01/080124\\_iv\\_luhong.shtml](https://www.bbc.co.uk/china/studyintheuk/story/2008/01/080124_iv_luhong.shtml).

<sup>45</sup> “中西学者谈孔子学院和中国软实力”, *BBC News Chinese*, 25 May 2012, [https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/chinese\\_news/2012/05/120525\\_confucius\\_nottingham\\_lse\\_interviews](https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/chinese_news/2012/05/120525_confucius_nottingham_lse_interviews).

<sup>46</sup> “美教授炮轰孔子学院 中国软实力再受考验”, *BBC News Chinese*, 18 June 2014, [https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/world/2014/06/140618\\_confucius\\_institutes](https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/world/2014/06/140618_confucius_institutes)

expressed support and affinity for branches of the Chinese Communist Party.<sup>47</sup> It works with subsidiaries of the CCP's United Front Work Department (UFW) and has ties to the Chinese Embassy. Guangxi is a province of China. The group's website reveals that it has, amongst other things, engaged in these recent activities:

- Published on its website a set of poetic patriotic statements such as the following: "With one heart and wish: the wish to work together for the development of the homeland, Guangxi." It states that the group's aims include bringing together talented people, uniting Guangxi people in the UK, gathering capital and sharing resources.<sup>48</sup>
- In 2019, upon the invitation of the Guangxi UFW, CGAUK led a delegation to China to participate in a series of events on the Belt and Road Initiative, at which UFW officials underlined how "networking among leaders and representatives of the Guangxi overseas communities is a crucial tactic for United Front building."<sup>49</sup>
- In January 2020, CGAUK held a Spring Festival poetry event in Telford "with the approval of the CCP Propaganda Department". The then Mayor of Telford took part.<sup>50</sup>
- In early 2020, "in response to the call of the Central Committee of the Communist Party", CGAUK bought up personal protective equipment (PPE) from more than ten suppliers in the UK and, working with the Overseas Chinese Affairs counsellor in the Chinese Embassy, sent this PPE to China; Lu was involved in this. In June, the Confederation transferred PPE from a subsidiary of Guangxi's UFW to the UK,<sup>51</sup> and distributed it amongst people of Guangxi origin. Around the world, many United Front groups undertook similar activities.

In July 2020, when China introduced the National Security Law (NSL) in Hong Kong, effectively making protest illegal, CGAUK was one of a number of British organisations, some charities, which signed a statement in support of the law, which was published in a Hong Kong newspaper.<sup>52</sup> The statement invoked "warm celebration" of the 23rd anniversary of Hong Kong's "return to the motherland" and supported the NSL's "passage and implementation". Dr Lu was awarded an OBE in 2015 "For services to the Chinese community in the UK and Community Relations between the UK and China".<sup>53</sup> She has also been photographed meeting with HM The Queen.<sup>54</sup>

Lu also runs an educational initiative in Brighton that has received Government funding.<sup>55</sup> It is promoted on the Guangxi Confederation's website, according to which it is supported by the Chinese Embassy.<sup>56</sup>

Dr Lu was contacted by the Henry Jackson Society with the full details of this reporting prior to publication. At the time of writing, no response had been received.

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<sup>47</sup> "首页", The Confederation of Guangxi Association UK, <http://web.archive.org/web/20201124201807/http://www.guangxiuk.org/首页>.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.; on the subsidiary, see e.g. "南宁市归国华侨联合会2022年部门预算及"三公"经费预算", Nanning Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese, <https://www.nanning.gov.cn/zwgk/fdzdgknr/czxx/sbjyjs/sbjbmys/2022bmys/P020220713634412114461.pdf>.

<sup>52</sup> "热烈庆祝香港回归祖国 23 周年 衷心支持港區國安法通過實施 全面保「一國兩制」行穩致遠 香港繁榮長治久安", *Wen Wei Po*, 1 July 2020, <http://pdf.wenweipo.com/2020/07/01/aa28-29-0701.pdf>.

<sup>53</sup> "Queen's birthday honours list 2015: OBE", *The Guardian*, 12 June 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/jun/12/queens-birthday-honours-list-2015-ob>.

<sup>54</sup> "The Queen with Dr. Hong Lu, OBE", CEDP Chinese Centre, <https://www.cedp.org.uk>.

<sup>55</sup> Zeng Bao, "卢红博士：孔子未到，子贡先行", 5 January 2008, *Yinglun Zaixian*, [https://web.archive.org/web/20080316062832/http://www.ylzx.co.uk/news/News\\_View.asp?NewsID=873](https://web.archive.org/web/20080316062832/http://www.ylzx.co.uk/news/News_View.asp?NewsID=873); and "Business Services", Chinese Educational Development Project, <https://www.cedp.org.uk/services-business/>.

<sup>56</sup> "CEDP 中国文化发展中心", The Confederation of Guangxi Association UK, <http://www.guangxiuk.org/cedp中国文化发展中心>.

In January 2022, according to LSE:

Peking University HSBC Business School (PHBS) and Confucius Institute for Business London (CIBL) at London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on January 19 to promote cooperation and advancement of international understanding in academic and executive education, marking the launch of a cooperative program “PHBS-CIBL International MBA.”<sup>57</sup>

LSE has refused to release the memorandum under Freedom of Information laws, on the basis that it “has commercial value”.<sup>58</sup>

The LSE Institute has run a series of events at the House of Lords. No exhaustive search of such events has been conducted, however, they took place in at least 2012, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.<sup>59</sup> The Institute has also run events including “China’s energy transition – the road to net zero”, “AI in China”, “Fintech Investment Opportunities” (in China), “The impact of Brexit” and “The evolution of business and government in China”.

The UK Chair of the Institute’s advisory council is Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, HSBC’s group head of government affairs and chair of the CBBC. The China chair is Professor Peng Gang, Vice-President of Tsinghua University, who has underlined the importance of Xi Jinping’s guidance for Chinese universities, urging his students and staff to remember and follow Xi’s guidance: “cultivate patriotic sentiments, cultivate noble educational ethics, and take real action to practice the principle of ‘educating people for the Party.’”<sup>60</sup> LSE told the Henry Jackson Society that the “Advisory Board is not involved with the governance of the Institute.”

The arguments of Professor Chris Hughes in his 2014 article *Confucius Institutes and the university: distinguishing the political mission from the cultural*<sup>61</sup> are discussed in chapter 4. An FOI release available online details how Hughes and his colleagues warned LSE in 2019 about its work with China and called for a rigorous review of CIBL. The release details how the university sought to adapt its stance in light of this pressure.

In November 2019, a new agreement governing CIBL was signed with Hanban: the FOI release in question revealed how academics’ concerns fed into changes to the agreement’s terms. The improvements that were made shine a light on how weak Confucius Institute governance can be, the CIBL having been run for 13 years without these amendments. Essentially, CIBL was belatedly brought into the “core School framework”, including its ethics code – in other words, it was finally treated like most other parts of the university and its operations were placed “in the context of English law”.<sup>62</sup>

LSE told the Henry Jackson Society that it “[did] not accept [the Henry Jackson Society’s] portrayal of the Confucius Institute for Business London”. It added that “CIBL’s agreement is renewed every five years and the 2019 renewal provided an opportunity to explicitly mention the LSE Ethics Code.”

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<sup>57</sup> “PHBS and CIBL Sign Memorandum of Understanding for a Cooperative Program”, LSE, January 2022, <https://www.lse.ac.uk/cibl/news-and-events/news>.

<sup>58</sup> FOI response seen by the authors.

<sup>59</sup> e.g., “Chinese New Year Reception at the House of Lords 2017”, LSE, <https://www.lse.ac.uk/cibl/news-and-events/past-events/2017/chinese-new-year-house-of-lords>.

<sup>60</sup> Qin Xia, “清华大学召开第38次教书育人研讨会座谈会”, *Tsinghua University News*, 22 April 2021, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220803163748/https://www.tsinghua.edu.cn/info/1176/93523.htm>.

<sup>61</sup> Hughes, “Confucius Institutes and the university”.

<sup>62</sup> “China discussion follow up”, What Do They Know, [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/619109/response/1482695/attach/2/FOI%2010Nov%20Release%20Redacted.pdf?cookie\\_passthrough=1](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/619109/response/1482695/attach/2/FOI%2010Nov%20Release%20Redacted.pdf?cookie_passthrough=1).



Critically, the FOI release reveals how concerns about the Institute were connected to LSE's broader relationship with China; for example, it was noted that roughly 1 in 8 LSE students are from China – a financial pillar for the university. No mention is made of a private company, Confucius Institute for Business, London, that existed from 2006 to 2010, the accounts of which suggest it made investments;<sup>63</sup> nor of a registered charity of the same name that existed from 2007 to 2009.<sup>64</sup>

As early as 2012, Hughes told *The Guardian* that the Institute “just appeared on campus, with no consultation or transparency”.<sup>65</sup>

### *The University of Sheffield*

The Model Confucius Institute at the University of Sheffield (MCIUS) was officially opened by then Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott in January 2007. MCIUS's partners are Nanjing University and Beijing Language and Culture University. The Institute has received over £2.8m in funding from bodies in China.

From its inception, MCIUS committed itself not just to ‘language and culture’, but also to “forging strategic alliances with key stake-holders in business, industry, government and other institutions”. Its first newsletter boasted of holding a lecture for businesspeople, in partnership with the CBBC, which featured a discussion of “intellectual property rights” in China, and advertised that MCIUS offered professional interpretation and translation services.<sup>66</sup>

Later, MCIUS stated clearly that: “The Sheffield Confucius Institute has very deliberately targeted the crucial area of industry and trade, supporting advanced manufacturing collaboration between the Sheffield region” and China.<sup>67</sup> On a webpage since edited by the university, MCIUS advertised an “affiliated” body, the China-UK Business Research Association. The webpage states that this body offers “intellectual supports, typically including consultancy, legal advice and research reports, to business communication and investment collaboration between Chinese and British firms.” The webpage's previous version advertised membership at £300 including VAT.<sup>68</sup>

According to the university, MCIUS “played a pivotal role in facilitating inward investment and the New Era Square development”, a £70m development in the heart of Sheffield.<sup>69</sup>

Although important and related to the rest of this section, MCIUS's role in promoting business and trade with China is not the matter highlighted here. Instead, it is MCIUS's role in science and technology partnerships that is highlighted.

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<sup>63</sup> “Confucius Institute For Business, London”, Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/05882465>.

<sup>64</sup> “Confucius Institute for Business, London”, Charity Commission for England and Wales, <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/4025693/what-who-how-where>.

<sup>65</sup> Tania Branigan, “Chinese ambassador attacks ‘cold war’ fears over Confucius Institutes”, *The Guardian*, 15 June 2012, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jun/15/confucius-institutes-universities-chinese-ambassador>.

<sup>66</sup> FOI release seen by authors.

<sup>67</sup> “University of Sheffield's Confucius Institute honoured for China collaboration at Horasis awards”, The University of Sheffield, 8 November 2017, <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/confucius/news/university-sheffields-confucius-institute-honoured-china-collaboration-horasis-awards>.

<sup>68</sup> Compare the original “China-UK Business Research Association”, Confucius Institute at the University of Sheffield, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200810105243/https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/confucius/association> to its replacement version: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/confucius/research/china-uk-business>.

<sup>69</sup> “University of Sheffield and University of Sheffield Students' Union submission to Migration Advisory Committee call for evidence – impact of international students in the UK”, University of Sheffield Students' Union, <http://www.exeduk.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/TUoS-and-SU-submission-to-MAC-call-for-evidence-international-students-Final-090218.pdf>.

By 2018, Sheffield had established the following partnerships in/with China/Chinese organisations:<sup>70</sup>

- a memorandum of understanding with Xiamen University “for global health”;
- a “President-to-President agreement with Jilin University for science and innovation”;
- a memorandum of understanding with Tsinghua University “to work with its Future Lab – human and societal impacts of Artificial Intelligence and digital technologies”;
- a “Joint Institute for Science in Nanjing”.

In response to enquiries, the university told HJS that all these agreements, except the final one, have expired.

In addition, a recent study, conducted by the Rand Institute with UK Government sponsorship, of partnerships for joint research centres between UK and Chinese universities stated that Sheffield has relationships with the following other institutions in China:<sup>71</sup>

- The Institute of Chemistry, Beijing;
- The Changchun Institute of Applied Chemistry;
- The Shanghai Institute of Materia Medica;
- The Beijing University of Chemical Technology;
- Sichuan University;
- Nanjing Tech University;
- The University of Shanghai for Science and Technology.

In response to enquiries, the university told HJS that it “does not have ‘joint research centres’ with any” of these institutions.

In addition, the authors have identified reference to the following agreements:

- With Beijing Aerospace & Aeronautical University (aka Beihang) “to work together on artificial intelligence and manufacturing”.<sup>72</sup>
- With “the Chinese Nuclear Power Company at our Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Centre” [*sic*].<sup>73</sup>
- Sheffield’s Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) has been described by the university as “a formal partner of the Chinese space programme, working on high-performance materials for the Chinese space station”; a web page boasting of this mentions discussion of “cooperation in exciting areas such as quantum computing and communications”.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> “UK China Regional Leaders Summit: Briefing Pack”, Sheffield City Region, 11 October 2018, [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/685158/response/1671246/attach/3/Annex%20A%20SCR%20Delegation%20to%20China%20Briefing%2011.10.18.pdf?cookie\\_passthrough=1](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/685158/response/1671246/attach/3/Annex%20A%20SCR%20Delegation%20to%20China%20Briefing%2011.10.18.pdf?cookie_passthrough=1), p.32.

<sup>71</sup> Fiona Quimbre, Peter Carlyon, Livia Dewaele and Alexi Drew, “Exploring Research Engagement with China”, RAND Corporation, 2022, [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RRA1839-1.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA1839-1.html).

<sup>72</sup> “Professor Sir Keith Burnett visits the Tsinghua Future Lab”, Confucius Institute, University of Sheffield, 15 December 2017, <http://web.archive.org/web/20220613142457/https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/confucius/news/professor-sir-keith-burnett-visits-tsinghua-future-lab>.

<sup>73</sup> Sir Keith Burnett, “Should the UK’s partnership with China be welcomed or feared?”, *The Telegraph*, 24 September 2015, <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/news/nr/should-uks-partnership-with-china-be-welcomed-or-feared-keith-burnett-telegraph-1.511082>.

<sup>74</sup> “New partnerships in science and innovation between Sheffield and China”, University of Sheffield News Archive, 9 April 2018, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220802102443/https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/news/nr/science-innovation-sheffield-china-1.773879>.

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The vehicle for this final partnership seems to be an agreement to launch a joint research institute with the Shanghai Academy of Spaceflight Technology (SAST), in relation to which the university stated that “AMRC will work with SAST to develop thin-walled structures for commercial rockets”.<sup>75</sup> However, despite Sheffield’s intentions, there are few scientific areas that have more obvious military applications.

In response to enquiries, Sheffield University told HJS, “The University of Sheffield AMRC worked with SAST on a desk-based short project in 2017... The project was in line with Innovate UK’s research priorities at that time, and an MOU between the AMRC and SAST expired in June 2020.”

MCIUS had a role in establishing many of these partnerships through its then Chair and its main staff. For example, MCIUS’s former director was involved in developing the space agreement.<sup>76</sup> Referencing plans for the agreement in 2017, MCIUS’s chair mentioned that “our Confucius Institute Director who has taken on a broader role of supporting partnerships in China. Now in Shanghai, we are talking to the Faculty of Engineering and Nuclear AMRC [Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre] to see how these collaborations will fly.”<sup>77</sup>

In 2018, MCIUS hosted a “Sino-British Principals’ Dialogue”, Nanjing University’s CCP Committee Secretary Zhang Yibin, a diplomat from the Chinese Consulate in Manchester, a senior executive from the London branch of Chinese state media outlet Xinhua and others. This involved a visit to the AMRC, a dialogue on “What makes a good university”, and the renewal of an existing agreement between Nanjing and Sheffield Universities on a “Training Programme for Outstanding Young Management Cadres”, whereby Sheffield would apparently provide three years’ training in leadership and international management to Nanjing staff. The language used (particularly the use of ‘ganbu’, cadre) and the involvement of Zhang, who was the university’s CCP Secretary, suggest the Chinese side may have seen this as a programme for CCP members to gain experience at Sheffield.<sup>78</sup>

In 2014, MCIUS was renamed as the “*Model Confucius Institute*”, focusing on business and healthcare”. It received ‘Confucius Institute of the Year’ awards in 2010, 2015 and 2018.<sup>79</sup>

## *Oxford Brookes University*

The CI at Oxford Brookes University (CIOBU) was established in 2016. It is unusual because it is a partnership not with a Chinese university, but with “a publishing company in China”, Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press (FLTRP).<sup>80</sup>

FLTRP considers the establishment of CIOBU one of 15 key events since its own founding in 1979.<sup>81</sup> With nearly 2000 employees, FLTRP is run and was founded by Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU).<sup>82</sup> BFSU was previously formally associated with China’s Ministry of Foreign

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<sup>75</sup> “University of Sheffield makes advanced manufacturing links to China’s space programme”, University of Sheffield, <https://web.archive.org/web/20170323050331/https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/confucius/chair>.

<sup>76</sup> “谢菲尔德大学与上海航天技术研究院签署航空航天新合作”, *Guangming Study Abroad*, 27 September 2016, [https://web.archive.org/web/20210727225109/https://liuxue.gmw.cn/2016-09/27/content\\_22188575.htm](https://web.archive.org/web/20210727225109/https://liuxue.gmw.cn/2016-09/27/content_22188575.htm).

<sup>77</sup> “Copies of periodic communications between the Vice-Chancellor and staff”, What Do They Know, [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/copies\\_of\\_periodic\\_communication\\_38#incoming-1446210](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/copies_of_periodic_communication_38#incoming-1446210).

<sup>78</sup> “谢菲尔德大学孔院召开第十一届理事会暨“中英校长对话”活动”, Office of Confucius Institutes, Nanjing University, 10 July 2018, <http://web.archive.org/web/20220802105246/https://confucius.nju.edu.cn/3e/96/c7626a278166/page.htm>.

<sup>79</sup> “Mission”, Confucius Institute, University of Sheffield, <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/confucius/about-us/mission>.

<sup>80</sup> “About”, Oxford Brookes University, <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/confucius-institute/about/>.

<sup>81</sup> “Milestones”, FLTRP, <https://www.fltrp.com/en/aboutus/milestones/>.

<sup>82</sup> “About Us”, FLTRP, <http://web.archive.org/web/20220803195246/https://www.fltrp.com/en/aboutus/>; “About BFSU”, Study China, 12 November 2021, <https://studychina.chinadaily.com.cn/universities/bfsuaboutus>.

Affairs – it claims to be known as “a cradle for diplomats” – but is now directly managed by the Ministry of Education.<sup>83</sup>

The Chinese-language version of FLTRP’s website states that the company is overseen by the CCP’s Propaganda Department.<sup>84</sup> One of FLTRP’s avowed aims is to “serve the Belt and Road Initiative and tell a good story of China in the New Era.”<sup>85</sup>

The chairman and secretary of the CCP committee of FLTRP is Wang Fang 王芳.<sup>86</sup> Wang is an active CCP member and has recently given speeches on the importance of Xi Jinping’s emphasis on “learning history and increasing faith” – the history of the CCP and faith in the CCP. These speeches also delve into the “miraculous historical achievements” of the CCP, etc. *ad nauseam*.<sup>87</sup>

The university has refused to release contracts relating to the agreement with FLTRP,<sup>88</sup> but disclosed that FLTRP has given it £422,465 in the past five years, along with roughly £11,214 from Hanban.<sup>89</sup> CIOBU’s co-director was FLTRP’s International Director for seven years before taking up her current role.<sup>90</sup>

In April 2022, FLTRP published a report of a meeting of CIOBU’s board.<sup>91</sup> Wang Fang is a board member. In the meeting, CIOBU’s director “reported to the board on the 2021 activities of CIOBU, as well as the 2022-2024 strategic plan”, which the university has not released.

All CIs are formally part of the CCP’s propaganda system. However, in this case, CIOBU is effectively co-managed by a subsidiary of the CCP’s Propaganda Department.

The Institute’s British director is Angus Phillips who, according to the Institute’s website, is also director of the Oxford International Centre for Publishing (OICP).<sup>92</sup> The OICP is part of the university and describes itself as “one of the leading institutes for media education in the world”.<sup>93</sup>

According to CIOBU’s website, “Publishing is the specialist focus of CIOBU, making CIOBU a unique presence among all the Confucius Institutes around the globe. In April 2016, CIOBU officially opened its doors and began working toward promoting Chinese language and culture, as well as offering publishing-related activities. CIOBU commits to aiding co-operation between Chinese and UK publishing whilst encouraging Chinese Language Teaching (CLT) or China-related publications.”<sup>94</sup>

The authors were unable to conduct a comprehensive survey of CIOBU’s work in the area of Sino-British publishing cooperation. A note at the bottom of one webpage advises, “Do get in

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<sup>83</sup> “About BFSU”, BFSU, <http://en.bfsu.edu.cn/overview.html>.

<sup>84</sup> “本社简介”, FLTRP, 12 April 2022, <https://www.fltrp.com/gwym/>.

<sup>85</sup> “外研社国际业务中心简介”, FLTRP, <https://ip.fltrp.com/>.

<sup>86</sup> See e.g., “外研集团（外研社）党委书记、董事长，外研社社长王芳讲授党史学习教育专题党课”, FLTRP, 16 June 2021, <https://www.fltrp.com/c/2021-06-16/503712.shtml>.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> “Agreements on the Confucius Institute”, What Do They Know, [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/agreements\\_on\\_the\\_confucius\\_inst\\_10#incoming-1561476](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/agreements_on_the_confucius_inst_10#incoming-1561476).

<sup>89</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>90</sup> “Staff: Hui Hou, Co-Director”, Oxford Brookes University, <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/confucius-institute/about/staff>.

<sup>91</sup> “2022 Board Meeting of the Confucius Institute at Oxford Brookes University Held Online”, FLTRP, <https://archive.ph/wdKUi#selection-341.0-341.129>.

<sup>92</sup> “Staff: Angus Phillips, Director”, Oxford Brookes University, <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/confucius-institute/about/staff/>.

<sup>93</sup> “Oxford International Centre for Publishing: About us”, Oxford Brookes University, <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/research/units/tde/centres/oicp/>.

<sup>94</sup> “About”, Oxford Brookes University.





The 2022 board meeting of CIOBU: its director is in the middle on the top row; Wang Fang is in the middle in the middle row. Some names have been obscured by the authors (Source: “2022 Board Meeting of the Confucius Institute at Oxford Brookes University Held Online”, FLTRP, <https://archive.ph/wdKUi#selection-341.0-341.129>).

touch if you want to make connections with publishing in China”. The same page advertises the following event: “Taking place again in 2022 is the Symposium on Publishing in Europe and China” which, according to Phillips, will explain “how further links can be established between publishing in Europe and China”. CIOBU also offers “customized training” to Chinese publishers, including “lectures from industry experts and industry visits”.<sup>95</sup> There is no suggestion of any wrongdoing or affinity with the CCP’s Propaganda Department on the part of Phillips.

CIOBU runs annual trips to China for publishing students and young publishing professionals. In response to an email from the Henry Jackson Society, the university stated that its “Young Publishing Professionals’ Trip to China” is funded by the employers of the professionals. But a note on CIOBU’s website states that “the terms of the funding” dictate that participants must be under 40, have at least two years’ experience in the industry, and have a “Willingness to attend the scheduled activities.” CIOBU’s website states that “the trip has an emphasis on networking and the rights trade”.<sup>96</sup>

The first such trip was in 2019, “with 12 attendees from 10 publishing companies and institutions in the UK joining the trip to Shanghai and Beijing, meeting over 100 Chinese publishers and editors from over 30 publishing houses in China.”<sup>97</sup> Staff from Cambridge University Press (with its own China-related controversies), Macmillan, Hachette and Penguin Random House took part.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>95</sup> “Publishing Highlights”, Oxford Brookes University, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220804132250/https://www.brookes.ac.uk/confucius-institute/publishing-highlights>.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> “News and events”, Oxford Brookes University, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220804153841/https://www.brookes.ac.uk/confucius-institute/news-and-events>.

<sup>98</sup> ““孔子新汉学计划·青年领袖——2019欧洲青年出版人來華研修班圓滿落幕”, FLTRP, 5 September 2019, <https://www.fltrp.com/c/2019-09-05/494065.shtml>.

CIOBU publishes a list of news and events online.<sup>99</sup> The following events are included on this list.

In 2021, CIOBU began to be involved in teaching credit courses at the wider university and also “Collaborated with FLTRP, Macmillan Education and the International Chinese Language Education journal to host the online ‘Symposium on International Chinese Teaching in a New Era: Innovation and Quality’.” ‘New Era’ is a Xi-ism.

CIOBU has set up Confucius Classrooms in 14 nearby schools.<sup>100</sup> In July 2021, CIOBU “recommended” four students from a local girls’ school to join in “the singing of “*We are the World*” in the 200-day countdown event to the XXIV Winter Olympic Games” in Beijing. The event involved a live gala in China, combined with “live video linking small ambassadors from dozens of countries”.<sup>101</sup> India, the United States, the UK and a handful of other countries staged a diplomatic boycott of the games.

Other events in recent years include the following. In August 2019, CIOBU “Co-organised the ‘Belt and Road’ 2019 Academic Publishing Symposium with Beijing Normal University, held at Beijing Normal University, China.” The same year, it hosted “its very first academic lecture event by inviting Professor Weiwei Zhang, Director of the China Institute at Fudan University, to give a talk on The Chinese Way and the Belt and Road Initiative: a Civilizational State Perspective and have a dialogue with Professor Rana Mitter from the University of Oxford and Martin Jacques, author and senior fellow at the University of Cambridge.” The event received positive coverage from the Xinhua news agency and the *People’s Daily*.<sup>102</sup>

The university told the Henry Jackson Society:

FLTRP is the largest English language teaching publisher and university press in China. It publishes in 80 languages and has worked with a variety of UK publishers including Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, and Macmillan Education. The CI is funded by both partners; and the strategy and operational plan of the CI are overseen by the Board, which has equal representation from both partners. The Vice Chancellor of Oxford Brookes University chairs the Board. ... Since its launch in 2016 the CIOBU has worked with 1,500 learners and put on events and activities for over 11,000 attendees. Over 500 students have taken examinations through the CIOBU test centre.

### *London South Bank University*

London South Bank University (LSBU) is host to the world’s first Confucius Institute for Traditional Chinese Medicine (CITCM). This Institute was opened in 2007. It has two partner universities: Heilongjiang University of Chinese Medicine and Harbin Normal University (HNU).

The university has released no data on the amount of funding it has received from the Chinese Government, except that subsequent agreements with Hanban in 2007 and 2014 detail the provision of \$100,000 and £800,000 respectively. These agreements were initially withheld or released in redacted form by the university before a correspondence between it and the Information Commissioner’s Office led to their full release.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> “News and events”, Oxford Brookes University.

<sup>100</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>101</sup> See “Cuba attends event towards Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics”, *Prensa Latina*, 19 July 2021, <https://www.plenglish.com/news/2021/07/19/cuba-attends-event-towards-beijing-2022-winter-olympics/> and “Envoys of humanities exchanges between China and foreign countries gather in Zhangjiakou to welcome the 200-day countdown to the Winter Olympics”, *China News Service* via *yyqlm.com*, 19 July 2021, <https://www.yyqlm.com/2021/07/envoys-of-humanities-exchanges-between-china-and-foreign-countries-gather-in-zhangjiakou-to-welcome-the-200-day-countdown-to-the-winter-olympics/>.

<sup>102</sup> “Experts discuss China’s development, BRI in Oxford”, *Xinhua*, 15 October 2019, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-10/15/c\\_138474176.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-10/15/c_138474176.htm).

<sup>103</sup> “Agreements on the Confucius Institute”, What Do They Know, [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/agreements\\_on\\_the\\_confucius\\_inst\\_26#incoming-1707977](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/agreements_on_the_confucius_inst_26#incoming-1707977).

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The Institute is based in a large building called Caxton House. Photograph taken by author.

According to CITCM's website, its aim is "to enhance cross-cultural understanding and engagement in education, research, industry and business".<sup>104</sup> CITCM says that it offers a slate of services to "a wide range of businesses and organisations". It adds that "the majority of our partnership work has a focus on Chinese wellbeing, language learning and the arts."<sup>105</sup> It also runs a commercial clinic, offering massage, cupping, hot stone treatment, scratching therapy, moxibustion and acupuncture for between £13 and £60.<sup>106</sup> CITCM offers training in these methods,<sup>107</sup> and a full Bachelor of Science (Honours) course in acupuncture.<sup>108</sup>

CITCM currently has a visiting scholar, Dr Ouyang Bo 欧阳波, who is seemingly an official, having been described as recently as August 2021 as "Deputy Director of Administration at the office of The Chinese National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine".<sup>109</sup> This organisation is part of China's National Health Commission and is responsible for regulating the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) industry.

CITCM's base, Caxton House, pictured above, is described in a job offer posted in July 2022 by the Institute as home also to the "Sino-British Health Promotion Research Centre that

<sup>104</sup> "Welcome to the London Confucius Institute for Traditional Chinese Medicine", LSBU, <https://lsbu-confucius.london>.

<sup>105</sup> "Business and Services", LSBU, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/business-and-services/>.

<sup>106</sup> "Clinic", LSBU, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/clinic/>.

<sup>107</sup> "Acupuncture Training", LSBU, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/clinic/acupuncturetraining/>.

<sup>108</sup> "BSc (Hons) Chinese Medicine: Acupuncture", LSBU, <https://lsbu.rl.talis.com/courses/4171.html>.

<sup>109</sup> "CITCM Staff", LSBU, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/about/citcm-staff/>. The convention in this paper is to put Chinese names in the format: (English name), surname, then given name. Given names are usually two syllables, surnames one. However, this rule of thumb is reversed in Ouyang's case – Ouyang is her surname and Bo her first name.

advances inter-institutional education and research in health and social care, and to the London Association of China Enterprises as a platform for promoting intercontinental communications in energy, environment and big data.”<sup>110</sup> There is no information online whatsoever about either of these, nor were the authors able to identify a Chinese name for either.

According to CITCM:<sup>111</sup>

On 24th March 2017, to mark the first anniversary of the establishment of the Heilongjiang Fellowship Association of the United Kingdom (HFAUK), [CITCM] and HFAUK held a symposium at Caxton House. The symposium was titled “The Fellowship and Development of Heilongjiang Province” and explored cooperation and development opportunities in fields such as Sino-British talent, science and technology, economic and trade and culture. Lu Haitian (Counselor of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the British Embassy) and Professor Xu Yinong (Executive Director of CITCM) both attended the symposium and delivered insightful speeches.

As counsellor for overseas Chinese affairs, Lu works closely with the UFWD. HFAUK has Dr ‘Herman’ Wang Haimao 王海矛 as its president and is more commonly known as the UK Heilongjiang Association. (Heilongjiang is a province of China.)

According to CITCM, on 22 May 2017, it “hosted a signing ceremony to mark the establishment of the London International Qigong Centre. The centre was cofounded with the Health and Qigong Federation UK (HQFUK) and is located at London South Bank University.”<sup>112</sup> There is no other reference online to the “London International Qigong Centre”. Pictured signing the agreement for the Centre were CITCM’s director, Xu Yinong (who “recalled the video recorded by Prince Charles for CITCM’s previous Health and Wellbeing Conference”),<sup>113</sup> and Wang Haimao, Chairman of the HQFUK, which claims to be a member organisation of the Health Qigong Federation International (HQFI).<sup>114</sup> HQFI’s chairman, Mr Yang Chunbo 杨春波,<sup>115</sup> who is a wealthy entrepreneur and political figure in Heilongjiang (see below),<sup>116</sup> was present at the signing ceremony. So was “Mr. Lei Fengyun, Chief Representative UK-China association for exchange of international personnel [sic].”<sup>117</sup>

HQFUK has signed at least two public statements (e.g. in a Chinese-language newspaper read in the UK) in support of measures taken to curtail democracy in Hong Kong, one in support of the National Security Law<sup>118</sup> and one in favour of ‘patriots rule Hong Kong’,<sup>119</sup> an initiative to exclude pro-democracy/anti-CCP politicians from office.<sup>120</sup> The UK Heilongjiang Association/HFAUK (HFAUK henceforth) also signed the former public statement.

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<sup>110</sup> “Project Manager”, jobs.lsbu.ac.uk, 28 July 2022, [https://web.archive.org/web/20220902110259/https://jobs.lsbu.ac.uk/tlive\\_webrecruitment/wrd/run/ETREC107GF.open?VACANCY\\_ID=8567916VUa&WVID=46197623lw&LANG=USA](https://web.archive.org/web/20220902110259/https://jobs.lsbu.ac.uk/tlive_webrecruitment/wrd/run/ETREC107GF.open?VACANCY_ID=8567916VUa&WVID=46197623lw&LANG=USA).

<sup>111</sup> “CITCM Co-hosts Symposium on The Fellowship and Development of Heilongjiang Province”, LSBU, 25 March 2017, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/news/citcm-co-hosts-symposium-on-the-fellowship-and-development-of-heilongjiang-province/>.

<sup>112</sup> “CITCM hosts Signing Ceremony for London International Qigong Centre”, LSBU, 23 May 2017, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/news/citcm-hosts-signing-ceremony-for-london-international-qigong-centre/>.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> “Home”, Health Qigong Federation UK, <https://archive.ph/2e9dM>.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Yang has served as a deputy in Heilongjiang’s People’s Congress. See, for example, “重磅喜讯：龙采董事长杨春波当选黑龙江省人大代表！”, Heilongjiang Longcai Technology Group, Sohu, 4 January 2018, <https://archive.ph/ZmCVq#selection-359.0-364.0>.

<sup>117</sup> “CITCM hosts Signing Ceremony for London International Qigong Centre”, LSBU.

<sup>118</sup> “熱烈慶祝香港回歸祖國 23 周年 衷心支持港區國安法通過實施 全面保「一國兩制」行穩致遠 香港繁榮長治久安”, *Wen Wei Po*.

<sup>119</sup> “支持「愛國者治港」聯合聲明”, Heung Yee Kuk Europe, <https://web.archive.org/web/20210714101326/http://www.hykeurope.org/public/支持「愛國者治港」.pdf>: this is a reproduction of the front page of *Sing Tao Daily Europe*, issue number 14139, published on the 6/7 March 2021.

<sup>120</sup> “Puppet showmen’: Hong Kong elite vote in ‘patriots only’ election process”, *The Guardian*, 19 September 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/sep/19/hong-kong-elite-vote-patriots-only-election-process>.

The Henry Jackson Society contacted Wang Haimao, HFAUK and HQFUK for comment, but received no response.

Wang Haimao, in charge of both HFAUK and HQFUK, is a director of several consultancies and business clubs,<sup>121</sup> and was formerly “liaison officer of the Chinese Olympic Committee” in the UK.<sup>122</sup> HFAUK appears to have cooperated with the UFWD of Heilongjiang province. Some evidence in support of this claim comes from the group’s website, which has not made any online posts since 2020:

- In 2019, Wang and HFAUK hosted a delegation from the Harbin Overseas Friendship Association (HOFA), a branch of the China Overseas Friendship Association, with which Christine Lee was associated, and which is controlled by the UFWD.<sup>123</sup> Harbin is the capital of Heilongjiang province. According to HFAUK’s website, the delegation’s leader, the vice-president of HOFA, encouraged Wang and his fellows to support the development of Heilongjiang, especially its “industrial transformation, the introduction of high-tech, biomedical engineering, ice and snow sports industry”, and so on. Wang was given a certificate and appointed an “overseas advisor” of HOFA, and the two sides agreed to meet in Harbin the next year.<sup>124</sup> During HOFA’s visit to the UK, it also met HFAUK on another occasion, upon which HFAUK stipulated its desire to “unite” people from Heilongjiang in the UK.<sup>125</sup>
- In 2018, HFAUK posted a letter from Heilongjiang’s Overseas Chinese Affairs Office, which is part of the UFWD, offering congratulations for the establishment of a separate business club set up by Wang.<sup>126</sup>
- The same year, HFAUK held a dinner to welcome a visit by its honorary president, the aforementioned Yang Chunbo.<sup>127</sup> Yang is a CCP member and secretary of his company’s CCP committee; in 2020, he took part in a special training session co-organised by the central UFWD.<sup>128</sup> The session involved in-depth study of “Xi Jinping thought” and affirmations that the development of the private sector cannot be separate from that of the CCP leadership. Yang received a certificate for completing this UFWD session (see overleaf).<sup>129</sup> Yang is also a politician, having served as a deputy at Heilongjiang’s People’s Congress.<sup>130</sup> His company, Longcai, was in 2018 described as one of the “top 100” Chinese internet companies.<sup>131</sup> The company claims to have 73 subsidiaries, a presence in 46 Chinese cities, more than 1000

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<sup>121</sup> “Herman Wang”, Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/search/officers?q=Herman+Wang>.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., and “理事会”, UK Heilongjiang Association, <http://web.archive.org/web/20220219082748/http://ukheilongjiangassociation.org.uk/staffs/>.

<sup>123</sup> Alex Joske, “The party speaks for you”, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 9 June 2020, <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/party-speaks-you>.

<sup>124</sup> “凝聚乡谊力量, 深化交流合作”, UK Heilongjiang Association, 24 November 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220322230233/http://ukheilongjiangassociation.org.uk/凝聚乡谊力量, 深化交流合作/>.

<sup>125</sup> “祖国70年华诞, ‘我和我的家乡’座谈会”. UK Heilongjiang Association, 24 November 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220409135126/http://ukheilongjiangassociation.org.uk/祖国70年华诞, 我和我的家乡座谈会/>.

<sup>126</sup> “黑龙江省人民政府侨务办公室为“英国龙商会”发来贺信”, UK Heilongjiang Association, 4 September 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20210307121602/http://ukheilongjiangassociation.org.uk/黑龙江省人民政府侨务办公室为英国龙商会发/>.

<sup>127</sup> “英国龙商会正式成立”, UK Heilongjiang Association, 29 August 2018, <https://web.archive.org/web/20201125115828/http://ukheilongjiangassociation.org.uk/英国龙商会正式成立/>.

<sup>128</sup> “中组部举办党建培训 龙采科技集团党委书记、董事长杨春波参与学习”, Heilongjiang Longcai Technology Group, 20 November 2020, [https://web.archive.org/web/20220805111330/http://www.longcai0411.com/news\\_info/966](https://web.archive.org/web/20220805111330/http://www.longcai0411.com/news_info/966).

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> “重磅喜讯：龙采董事长杨春波当选黑龙江省人大代表！”, Heilongjiang Longcai Technology Group.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., and Kassey Lee, “Domains used by China’s Top 100 internet companies”, Domain Name Wire, 6 September 2018, <https://domainnamewire.com/2018/09/06/china-internet-domains/>.



technicians and to be one of the top three partners of Baidu, one of China's most important tech companies.<sup>132</sup>

CITCM has organised at least two events in the House of Commons. The date of one, involving Mark Hendrick, the deputy-chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on China,<sup>133</sup> could not be identified (see image overleaf). The second event in Parliament was to celebrate Chinese New Year and took place in 2016.<sup>134</sup> Hendrick visited CITCM in 2010 (when it hosted a conference of European Confucius Institutes),<sup>135</sup> 2011<sup>136</sup> and 2013.<sup>137</sup>

In 2011, LSBU gave Hendrick £2330 for a return flight to Beijing, whilst Hanban gave him £1628-worth of language training, accommodation and expenses during his stay in China;<sup>138</sup> the next year, CITCM gave Hendrick gifts worth a further £2297 in the form of language training and accommodation at China Normal University. Not including these sums, the authors have identified a further £31,904 received by Hendrick for China-related activities: this includes £14,700 from Chinese Government sources and £12,770 from Huawei.<sup>139</sup> Hendrick previously hosted a reception in Parliament "on behalf of Huawei".<sup>140</sup> Hendrick declared all of these interests in the proper manner.



Yang Chunbo's certificate. Source in text.

Mr Hendrick was contacted for comment by the Henry Jackson Society prior to publication. At the time of writing, no reply had been received.

In April 2012, the institute celebrated its fifth anniversary. It hosted a special guest to mark the occasion. Li Changchun was then a Politburo member and head of the CCP's Propaganda Department. The spectacle can be viewed on *YouTube*.<sup>141</sup> Greeted outside the institute by a crowd of Chinese students holding huge PRC flags, Li entered the building to several minutes of local children robotically chanting '欢迎 huānyíng', which means 'welcome'. The ceremony

<sup>132</sup> "龙采科技集团有限责任公司", Heilongjiang Longcai Technology Group, <https://web.archive.org/web/20211028004543/http://longcai.com/>.

<sup>133</sup> "Members: Sir Mark Hendrick MP", All-Party Parliamentary China Group, <https://appcg.org.uk/members-2/>.

<sup>134</sup> "LSBU Confucius Institute celebrates Chinese New Year at House of Commons", *China Daily*, 11 February 2016, [http://web.archive.org/web/20220706010222/http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/life/2016-02/11/content\\_23450215.htm](http://web.archive.org/web/20220706010222/http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/life/2016-02/11/content_23450215.htm).

<sup>135</sup> "Speech by H.E. Ambassador Liu Xiaoming at the Opening Ceremony of the 2010 Joint Conference of European Confucius Institutes", Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 7 September 2010, <https://archive.ph/BupM2>.

<sup>136</sup> "The Launch of China-UK Panda Pals Project", Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 15 November 2011, <https://archive.ph/MdKYk>.

<sup>137</sup> "Confucius Institute welcomes House of Commons members", LSBU, 7 November 2013, <http://web.archive.org/web/20210724193719/https://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/news/confucius-institute-welcomes-house-of-commons-members>.

<sup>138</sup> "Changes to the Register of Members' Interests: Mark Hendrick", They Work For You, 8 August 2022, <https://www.theyworkforyou.com/regmem/?p=10682>.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., and "Donations", The Electoral Commission, <https://bit.ly/3pRjIWA>.

<sup>140</sup> "Huawei Hendrick inviting MPs to pro-Huawei reception", *Guido Fawkes*, 11 March 2020, <https://order-order.com/2020/03/11/huawei-hendrick-inviting-mps-pro-huawei-reception/>.

<sup>141</sup> "Chinese propaganda chief Li Changchun in London Southbank University", *YouTube* video, posted by "Londravizyon", 27 April 2012, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2bUnlmo\\_ic](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2bUnlmo_ic).



China-Britain Cultural and Business Function at House of Commons

Undated (Source: "About CITCM", LSBU,  
<https://web.archive.org/web/2022031110312/https://lsbu-confucius.london/about/>).



The CCP's propaganda chief Li Changchun poses with three local teachers (holding plaques for their new Confucius Classrooms) and Mark Hendrick MP (Source: FOI seen by the authors).





(Source: "Red Scarf Carrying Chinese Dream", LSBU, 18 June 2014, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220804235337/https://lsbu-confucius.london/news/red-scarf-carrying-chinese-dream/>)

that followed involved Chinese dancing by the children and a rendition of the nationalist song 'Descendants of the Dragon', the lyrics of which herald Chinese unity in racial terms – "Black eyes, black hair, yellow skin, / Forever and ever a descendant of the dragon" – and reference the awakening of China in response to enemy encirclement.<sup>142</sup> A document relating to this event released by LSBU mentions a number of other MPs being present.<sup>143</sup>

At some point prior to 2013, CITCM set up a special Confucius Classroom, the 'Sunshine school', at the Chinese Embassy. In 2014, CITCM announced, in English, the "Grand Establishment of 'Young Pioneers Team' of the Sunshine School". The Young Pioneers of China is a children's organisation run by the Communist Youth League, the youth wing of the CCP. At the "Grand Establishment" ceremony, held in the Chinese Embassy, children under the age of ten were, in the true "revolutionary tradition", given the characteristic red scarves of the Young Pioneers and a certificate. They were told "to have the motherland at heart wherever they might be" and made a "solemn vow" to the Young Pioneers flag. The Institute's website implies that these were mostly the "children of diplomats". Then Ambassador Liu Xiaoming gave a speech urging the children to "bear in mind the Chinese Dream, cherish lofty ideals, cultivate remarkable talents, have a sense of mission and responsibility, and possess strong physique".<sup>144</sup> (Usually, the vow made includes the promise, "I will love the Communist Party of China".<sup>145</sup>) Other Chinese embassies and consulates around the world are reported to have Sunshine Schools

<sup>142</sup> Cheng Yinghong, *Discourses of Race and Rising China* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), chapter 2.

<sup>143</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>144</sup> "Confucius Institute welcomes Chinese Embassy", LSBU, 17 July 2013, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220804235218/https://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/news/confucius-institute-welcomes-chinese-embassy>; "Chinese Embassy Sunshine School hosted a Farewell Party for LSBU CI's Teachers", LSBU, 17 July 2014, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/news/chinese-embassy-sunshine-school-hosted-a-farewell-party-for-lsbu-ci-s-teachers/> and "Red Scarf Carrying Chinese Dream", LSBU, 18 June 2014, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220804235337/https://lsbu-confucius.london/news/red-scarf-carrying-chinese-dream/>.

<sup>145</sup> "我是中国少年先锋队队员，我在队旗下宣誓！", Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China, Sohu, 31 May 2021, [https://web.archive.org/web/20220822111749/https://www.sohu.com/a/469622873\\_120006290](https://web.archive.org/web/20220822111749/https://www.sohu.com/a/469622873_120006290).



of this kind.<sup>146</sup> The scheme was launched for diplomatic families but there were plans at one point to make it available to prestigious “overseas Chinese” families too.<sup>147</sup>

CITCM also administers Confucius Classrooms at more than 30 London schools.<sup>148</sup>

Over the years, CITCM has run a number of events relating to health, business, law and economics:

In 2015, Stephen Perry of the 48 Group Club (discussed overleaf) visited CITCM and discussed China's recent history and “peaceful rise”.<sup>149</sup> The Institute also hosted a “China Healthcare & Life Sciences Roadshow”, in collaboration with UK Trade & Investment (UKTI),<sup>150</sup> and a talk by an economist on globalisation and “the strategy the UK must adopt as the balance of power shifts to China”.<sup>151</sup>

In 2017, CITCM organised a fully funded trip to China for ten London head and deputy head teachers, paid for by Hanban and HNU.<sup>152</sup> The next year, it organised for a group of several dozen LSBU law students to visit the country and its law firms, courts and universities,<sup>153</sup> and organised an event on law in China as it impacts on business.<sup>154</sup>

In 2018, CITCM organised a visit to London by academics from Southeast University (China) and a Chinese public health official, where they met with NHS doctors, local public health officials and university leaders.<sup>155</sup>

The chief executive and vice-chancellor of LSBU has been biochemist Professor David Phoenix OBE since 2013. Phoenix was previously deputy vice-chancellor at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), taking up that role in 2008 when that university established its own CI. According to Phoenix's biography, he “has worked extensively overseas, developing and leading on an overseas campus in Cyprus and a research institute in China. He was awarded an individual Excellence award by China's Vice Premier in 2014 and in 2016 was given the national Friendship Award (China) by the Premier for his outstanding contribution to the country's economic and social development.”<sup>156</sup> The research institute is in Shenzhen and affiliated with the University of Central Lancashire. It “conducts research into emerging nanotechnologies which have applications in medicine and engineering”.<sup>157</sup> The award was a “Confucius Institute Individual Performance Excellence Award”.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Google search: “sunshine school Confucius”, <https://bit.ly/3Sw3B8n>.

<sup>147</sup> Chen Chenchen, “Influential overseas Chinese selected to give advice at CPPCC session”, *Global Times*, 16 March 2014, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/848821.shtml>.

<sup>148</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>149</sup> “Mr Stephen Perry, Chairman of the 48 Group Club Comes to the 2015 China-West Colloquiums at London South Bank University”, LSBU, 7 July 2015, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/news/mr-stephen-perry-chairman-of-the-48-group-club-comes-to-the-2015-china-west-colloquiums/>.

<sup>150</sup> “Confucius Institute for TCM Hosted London: China Healthcare & Life Sciences Roadshow”, LSBU, 7 July 2015, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/news/confucius-institute-for-tcm-hosted-london-china-healthcare-life-sciences-roadshow/>.

<sup>151</sup> Mayor of London's top economist comes to LSBU to outline future for China and the UK”, LSBU, 28 March 2015, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/news/mayor-of-london-s-top-economist-comes-to-lsbu-to-outline-future-for-china-and-the-uk/>.

<sup>152</sup> “London Head Teachers Explore the Chinese Education System”, LSBU, 31 March 2017, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/news/london-head-teachers-explore-the-chinese-education-system/>.

<sup>153</sup> “Law Students explore the Chinese Legal System”, LSBU, 22 May 2018, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/news/law-students-explore-the-chinese-legal-system-/>.

<sup>154</sup> “Legal Aspects of Doing Business in China”, LSBU, 16 March 2018, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/news/legal-aspects-of-doing-business-in-china/>.

<sup>155</sup> “CITCM helps to establish links between London South Bank University and The Southeast University”, LSBU, 11 May 2018, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/news/citcm-helps-to-establish-links-between-london-south-bank-university-and-the-southeast-university/>.

<sup>156</sup> “Prof. David Phoenix OBE”, LSBU, [https://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/people/governance/university-executive/prof-david-phoenix-obe#id\\_first](https://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/people/governance/university-executive/prof-david-phoenix-obe#id_first).

<sup>157</sup> “UCLan Biomedical Technology (Shenzhen) Ltd”, UCLan, <https://www.uclannanobio.com/en/>.

<sup>158</sup> “LSBU Vice-Chancellor presented with Confucius Institute award”, LSBU, 8 December 2014, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/news/lsbu-vice-chancellor-presented-with-confucius-institute-award/>.

According to one Chinese-language media outlet based in the UK,<sup>159</sup> in 2021, Phoenix was given an award and a fellowship by the 48 Group Club, which promotes trade with the PRC.<sup>160</sup> Phoenix gave an online talk for the organisation entitled “Technology and Careers – A New Approach to UK-China Education Cooperation?” The club’s president, Stephen Perry, praised Phoenix and, according to a statement sent by the 48 Group to the Henry Jackson Society, said: “In the last 50 years that I [Perry] have been working with China, in which I have organised many technical transfers, what has been evident is that the technology transfer has been from the West to the East.” A video of Phoenix’s talk is available online.<sup>161</sup> According to Phoenix, prior to the pandemic, LSBU was discussing participating in “university cities” in China.<sup>162</sup>

The Henry Jackson Society contacted the 48 Group Club suggesting that it supports the CCP.<sup>163</sup> It responded as follows: “Kindly note that we are not a ‘pro-CCP’ body. The 48 Group Club stands for engagement, positive relations and understanding in the interests of UK business.”

CITCM was awarded Confucius Institute of the Year (a misnomer, it is awarded to several dozen Institutes every year) for five years running from 2009 to 2013. In 2014, it was awarded Model Confucius Institute status.<sup>164</sup>

London South Bank University was contacted for comment prior to the publication of this report. All matters, including those concerning their Vice-Chancellor David Phoenix, were put to them. At the time of writing, no response had been provided.

### *The University of Huddersfield*

The University of Huddersfield’s Confucius Institute for Science & Technology Innovation (CISTI) was established in July 2019. The institute’s focus is semi-unique, shared only with an institute at the Belarusian National Technical University. The Huddersfield institute has received over £200,000 from Chinese sources, mostly the Government, in the past two years; 2021’s budget, which is expressed in American dollars, earmarks a further \$181,536.07, which is due to be received this year.<sup>165</sup>

CISTI is a partnership with East China University of Science and Technology (ECUST) and still lacks a website.<sup>166</sup> Its foundation ceremony was attended by the then Chinese ambassador to the UK, Liu Xiaoming, who received an honorary doctorate from the university on the same day and made the “surprise announcement” that the Chinese Government had decided to award 20 Huddersfield students a special scholarship to study in China.<sup>167</sup>

A month prior, the university had announced that its “Centre for Efficiency and Performance Engineering will be at the focal point of a network involving seven leading Chinese universities”,

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<sup>159</sup> “英国48家集团俱乐部举办线上学术讲座探讨中英教育合作新途径”, Huawen, 12 April 2021, <https://ihuawen.com/article/index/id/56403/cid/45>.

<sup>160</sup> Tim Shipman, “Club for elite lets Beijing meddle in UK”, *The Times*, 5 July 2020, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/club-for-elite-lets-beijing-meddle-in-uk-cj5r59hn7>.

<sup>161</sup> “‘Technical and Vocational – A new path for China/UK educational cooperation?’”, *YouTube* video, posted by 48GroupClub, 16 April 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aArBgD9g60w>.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 25:20.

<sup>163</sup> Bernard Lagan and Lucy Fisher, “British elite ‘being groomed by China’”, *The Times*, 30 June 2020, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/british-elite-being-groomed-by-china-q5ng2plt8>.

<sup>164</sup> “About CITCM”, LSBU, <https://lsbu-confucius.london/about/>.

<sup>165</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>166</sup> As of 8 August 2022.

<sup>167</sup> “University celebrates signing of Confucius Institute Agreement”, University of Huddersfield, July 2019, <http://web.archive.org/web/20210421064152/https://www.hud.ac.uk/news/2019/july/china-confucius-institute-huddersfield/> and “The 30th Confucius Institute will be at the University of Huddersfield”, *YouTube* video, posted by University of Huddersfield News & Research, 11 July 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8k1rqO-mIL8&t=95s>.

with the Beijing Institute of Technology in Zhuhai (BITZ) forming the “hub” for this partnership. The university’s pro vice-chancellor for research and enterprise, Professor Andrew Ball, flew out to China to mark the agreement and “was very impressed by the dedicated facilities that [BITZ] have made available”. Ball received three honorary professorships whilst in China, including one from Tsinghua.<sup>168</sup> The engineering centre in question, which Ball runs, involves “the largest independent plant maintenance and diagnostics research group in the world”.<sup>169</sup> The University has refused to release the agreement with BITZ on the basis this might endanger its “commercial interests”.<sup>170</sup>

A year prior, in May 2018, Huddersfield signed a memorandum of understanding with Shanghai Jiaotong University to start a joint metrology lab in China, which could leverage and expand on the expertise stored at Huddersfield’s existing “£40 million specialist metrology centre”.<sup>171</sup>

In October 2019, a reception was held at the Chinese Embassy in London to mark the tenth anniversary of Huddersfield University’s “China Office in Beijing”. Present were “International Partnerships Manager Tong Wong and Senior Research Fellow Dr Zhen Tong, who is also the Vice-President of the Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA-UK)”. CSSA-UK is part of the United Front and closely connected to the Chinese Embassy (see below). In its announcement of this reception, the university noted that its “Chinese student population has steadily increased to over 1,000 students”.<sup>172</sup>

The China Office is headed by Peter Jia Chen 陈甲.<sup>173</sup> On his LinkedIn, Chen describes himself as Deputy Director of “Belt and Road Initiative” International Talent Development Fund, run by a Foreign Specialized Bureau of the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology.<sup>174</sup> There are other references to this fund “一带一路”国际人才发展基金 online.<sup>175</sup> It is part of the PRC’s governmental technology and talent transfer efforts, which involve cooperation with UFDW bodies such as the Western Returned Scholars Association.

Mr Chen was contacted prior to the publication of this report. No response was received at the time of publication.

An ECUST newsletter recounted a meeting between the two universities regarding CISTI, and how ECUST’s Party Secretary, Du Huifang, in June 2021, thanked the Chinese Embassy in London and the Manchester consulate for their “constant care and support”, and underlined that ECUST “is actively implementing the spirit of President Xi Jinping’s speech on Confucius Institutes and will work hand in hand with the University of Huddersfield to promote the spirit of openness, persist in pioneering and innovation, make the University of Huddersfield Confucius Institute for Science and Technology Innovation a link for humanistic exchanges...”<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> “Diagnostic Engineering research centre expands into China”, University of Huddersfield, June 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220613174119/https://www.hud.ac.uk/news/2019/june/cepe-china-universities-huddersfield/>.

<sup>169</sup> “Andrew Ball”, University of Huddersfield, <https://web.archive.org/web/20210731224810/https://pure.hud.ac.uk/en/persons/andrew-ball>.

<sup>170</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>171</sup> “Uni signs MoU with Shanghai Jiao Tong University”, University of Huddersfield, May 2018, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220714160148/https://www.hud.ac.uk/news/2018/may/unisignsmouwithshanghaijiaotonguniversity/>.

<sup>172</sup> “China Office celebrates its 10th anniversary”, University of Huddersfield, October 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220714160137/https://www.hud.ac.uk/news/2019/october/china-office-university-of-huddersfield/>.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Peter Jia Chen, *LinkedIn*, [https://www.linkedin.com/in/miapeter/?locale=de\\_DE](https://www.linkedin.com/in/miapeter/?locale=de_DE) (NB: that *LinkedIn* cannot be archived in the normal sense but that the authors have downloaded the version of this page, accessed 7 August 2022.)

<sup>175</sup> See, for example, ““一带一路”国际人才发展论坛在北京召开”, The One Belt One Road Industry Alliance, 24 June 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220807114342/https://www.ydyjsw.com/m/view.php?aid=742>.

<sup>176</sup> “学校与哈德斯菲尔德大学举行视频会”, *East China University of Science and Technology Weekly*, 11 June 2021, [https://web.archive.org/web/20220807120554/https://upfile3.cuepa.cn/data/pdf/2021/06/15/20210615100408\\_6131.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20220807120554/https://upfile3.cuepa.cn/data/pdf/2021/06/15/20210615100408_6131.pdf).

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Because it lacks a website, CISTI's activities are not fully known. According to the University, CISTI's advisory board includes several scientists from the UK and China.<sup>177</sup> The initial announcement declared that it would "concentrate on innovation in science and technology", as its name suggests.<sup>178</sup> Rather than make inferences from its 2021 budget, received in response to an FOI request, part of it is simply reproduced below.

**Table 2: Detailed List of Proposed Budgetary Items to Be Financed in 2021**

Year: _____		USD				
	Projects	Budget				
		Subtotal	Personnel	Admin.	Activity	Equipment
1.	Chinese Director's salary package	██████	██████	0	0	0
2.	Recruitment	19,412	8,000	0	6,412	5,000
3.	Teaching	25,604.07	0	0	0	25,604.07
4.	CI meetings and tours	40,866	0	40,866	0	3,294
5.	Festival celebrations	27,464	10,000	1,800	12,176	3,488
6.	Communication	3,294	0	0	0	0
7.						
Total		████████████████		42,666	18,588	37,386.07

The Chinese director mentioned is Professor Zheng Guofeng 郑国锋.<sup>179</sup> Zheng is not a scientist but an English language specialist and linguist. He is based in Huddersfield. Zheng is a CCP member and also a member of ECUST's CCP committee.<sup>180</sup>

Following CISTI's foundation in December 2019, an MoU was signed between the university and the Jiangsu Industrial Technology Research Institute (JITRI). According to the university: "This

<sup>177</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>178</sup> "University celebrates signing of Confucius Institute Agreement".

<sup>179</sup> "Inclusion Week: Chinese Name Pronunciation - Guofeng Zheng", University of Huddersfield, <http://web.archive.org/web/20220819154456/https://stayhappening.com/e/inclusion-week-chinese-name-pronunciation-E3LUU30V002H>.

<sup>180</sup> "支部建设", East China University of Science and Technology, <https://archive.ph/MBqd8>.

will allow JITRI and the University to collaborate, develop and implement applied industrial research projects to strengthen industries in Jiangsu Province [*sic*] and to exploit in other territories [*sic*]. Additionally, the partners have collaborated during the year on establishing a joint twin-centre training PhD programme. JITRI will establish a fund of £2.3m (20m RMB) to support research projects developed under this MoU.”<sup>181</sup> Huddersfield’s website does not publicise the agreement, though it is mentioned in an annual report. A recent report on joint UK-China research centres suggests the provisions of this MoU were realised.<sup>182</sup> JITRI receives Chinese Government funding.<sup>183</sup>

The University of Huddersfield was contacted prior to publication. The Henry Jackson Society, at the time of writing, has received no response.

### *Heriot-Watt University*

The University’s “Scottish Confucius Institute for Business and Communication” (SCIBC) was established in 2014 as a partnership with Tianjin University of Finance & Economics (TUFE). It espouses a number of aims, including: “– Support business engagement with China and Chinese culture – Facilitate organisations to be ‘China ready’ – Develop focused activity streams with specific business sectors – Develop global mindsets and career opportunities for students – Foster joint research and academic collaborations”. SCIBC promotes the development of economic relations with China. It also offers interpretation and consulting services.<sup>184</sup>

The Institute has received nearly £1m of funding from Chinese sources, mostly the Chinese Government.

The Institute has been dispersing funds to two other bodies also involved in knowledge production relating to China.

First, SCIBC has a relationship with the China-Britain Business Council (CBBC), of which the university is a corporate member. In the past, SCIBC has given small sponsorship sums to the Annual Scotland-China Business Awards, and the Scotland-China Burns Supper (in 2022, this was a £4000 sponsorship). It is also sponsoring to the tune of £10,000 a project “to undertake mapping of educational links between Scotland and China”. The data gathered will be published only with Scottish universities’ “consent”, meaning that universities will be able to veto the publication of some data.<sup>185</sup>

The Institute also has a strategic partnership with the Asia Scotland Institute (ASI): the agreement is in its first year, though with plans for renewal, and has seen ASI receive at least £10,000 from SCIBC. According to SCIBC, it also “has a long-term strategic partnership with [ASI], to collaboratively deliver it’s [*sic*] business insights programme.”<sup>186</sup>

With the slogan “Your gateway to expert knowledge & insight on Asia”, ASI describes itself as “a non-profit organisation which exists to promote a greater understanding of Asia through the sharing of knowledge... Our ultimate objective is for every person in Scotland to have direct access to the highest calibre of knowledge and insight on Asia.”<sup>187</sup> It was founded in

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<sup>181</sup> “Financial Statements 2020”, University of Huddersfield, [https://issuu.com/universityofhuddersfield/docs/uoh294\\_a4\\_4pp\\_financial\\_statement\\_aw\\_v10\\_with\\_inne](https://issuu.com/universityofhuddersfield/docs/uoh294_a4_4pp_financial_statement_aw_v10_with_inne).

<sup>182</sup> Quimbre et al., “Exploring Research Engagement with China”.

<sup>183</sup> “About Jiangsu Industry Technology Research Institute”, CB Insights, <https://www.cbinsights.com/company/jiangsu-industry-technology-research-institute>.

<sup>184</sup> “Aims”, Heriot-Watt University, <https://confuciusinstitute.site.hw.ac.uk/vision/>.

<sup>185</sup> FOI response seen by the authors.

<sup>186</sup> “Business Support”, Heriot-Watt University, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220802225819/https://confuciusinstitute.site.hw.ac.uk/businesses/>.

<sup>187</sup> “About Us”, ASI, <https://web.archive.org/web/20210917102753/https://www.asiascot.com/about-us/>.



2012 by Roddy Gow, who describes himself as an “Experienced Founder with a demonstrated history of working in the human resources industry”.<sup>188</sup>

In 2016, Gow attracted attention<sup>189</sup> after it emerged that he had (in late 2015) introduced Peter Zhang, a Chinese businessman and managing director of SinoFortone Group, a since-dissolved company,<sup>190</sup> to First Minister Nicola Sturgeon. In spite of SinoFortone having been incorporated months earlier and lacking a track record of management of major projects, the introduction led to the drafting of proposals by the Scottish Government (which later released over 100 pages of emails relating to the episode)<sup>191</sup> and, in time, the signing of a memorandum of understanding with SinoFortone for a supposed £10 billion of investment into Scotland.<sup>192</sup> In August 2016, after details of the ‘secret’ memorandum had been revealed and attracted critical comment in the Scottish parliament,<sup>193</sup> Gow insisted that the deal could still be a good one.<sup>194</sup> “...I am quite sure that the government of Scotland would not do business with any company about which there were serious doubts,” said Gow. “... This sort of approach is how major Scottish infrastructure projects can be funded.” In the end, SinoFortone Group dissolved without ever having submitted full accounts.

In response to contact from the Henry Jackson Society, Gow said that the Zhang affair “had no connection whatsoever to the engagement between the Asia Scotland Institute and the Scottish Confucius Institute for Business and Communication at Heriot-Watt University.” He pointed out that the funding ASI receives from SCIBC “involves the Asia Scotland Institute organising events relating to issues that involve China”, but involves no obligation to run or cancel certain events: “we would highlight the event in June 2020 regarding the situation in Hong Kong, in conversation with Sir Malcolm Rifkind, Alvin Yeung (a former legislator facing charges of subversion in Hong Kong) and Dennis Kwok (a former legislator who has fled to Canada), which highlighted the suppression of the pro-democracy movement in the city and the plight of civil society.”

Gow later clarified in his correspondence with HJS that the event on Hong Kong was not in fact funded exclusively by SCIBC: “The support from the Confucius Institute is a part of our general funding from several partners... The ASI has not organised any event specifically for the Confucius Institute, and only commits to stage events relating to China.”

Notes for a draft partnership agreement received from the university do contain a list of specific events. According to the university, this agreement “was in the process of being implemented prior to the pandemic and has now been introduced post Covid... Please note however that the planned physical events therefore changed over the past two years to general corporate support.” The planned events “to be developed” were as follows: an event with Huawei, an

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<sup>188</sup> “Roddy Gow”, *LinkedIn*, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/roddy-gow-81334222/?originalSubdomain=uk>.

<sup>189</sup> Lindsay McIntosh, “SNP denies secret deal with China involving party donor”, *The Times*, 1 June 2016, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/snp-denies-secret-deal-with-china-involving-party-donor-tds37kcrv>.

<sup>190</sup> “SinoFortone Group Ltd”, Companies House, <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/09708566/filing-history>.

<sup>191</sup> “Infrastructure Funding Opportunity from China”, gov.scot, <https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/3000/https://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00500943.pdf> and “Weekend Roundup – MoU – Summary of Media Reports”, gov.scot, <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/foi-eir-release/2017/08/foi-16-01736/documents/foi-16-01736-email-correspondence-pdf/foi-16-01736-email-correspondence-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/FoI%2B-%2B16-01736%2B-%2BEmail%2BCorrespondence.pdf>.

<sup>192</sup> “Nicola Sturgeon refuses to answer on China bribes allegations”, *The Scotsman*, 6 April 2016, <https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/nicola-sturgeon-refuses-answer-china-bribes-allegations-1479281>.

<sup>193</sup> “Labour vows not to uphold Scottish Government’s Chinese deals”, *The Scotsman*, 10 April 2016, <https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/labour-vows-not-uphold-scottish-governments-chinese-deals-1479003>.

<sup>194</sup> “Scottish Government’s controversial China deal with ‘‘ could still be on track’”, *The Scotsman*, 13 August 2016, <https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/scottish-governments-controversial-china-deal-could-still-be-track-1469857>.



event on fintech collaboration between Scotland and China, an event with a Chinese tourism company, an event with the Chinese consul in Edinburgh on a “core topic that supports CI aims”, an interview with a senior leader of HSBC, a Chinese New Year event, and a careers event. According to the notes released by the university, SCIBC’s “key priorities” for the agreement were: co-hosting events and getting staff to attend, “Promoting positive awareness of China”, supporting the university’s careers services, “private dinners”, and “sharing of news articles”.<sup>195</sup>

SCIBC’s “Chinese co-director”, based in the UK, is Professor Zhang Ping. According to her biography on SCIBC’s own website, Zhang is “elected as High-level Innovative Talents by Tianjin Government”.<sup>196</sup> According to her Chinese-language biography on TUF’s website, Zhang is a CCP member, and a member of the Tianjin United Front Work System Expert Pool – this means a connection to the city’s United Front Work Department branch.<sup>197</sup>

Professor Zhang was contacted prior to the publication of this report. At the time of writing, no response has been received by the Henry Jackson Society.

According to the Institute’s website, SCIBC’s deputy director, Dr Isabel Hui Liu, “was appointed as the First Minister’s [Alex Salmond] official interpreter and his Chinese advisor in 2007. She has accompanied the First Minister for his four official visits to China. As the Scottish Government interpreter, she has covered a wide range of ministerial level dialogues between China and Scotland including Chinese Prime Minister and vice Prime Minister’s official visits. She widely involved [*sic*] in work that promotes the relationship between China and Scotland and the Scotland’s China strategy for China [*sic*].” She previously served as “International Policy officer at Universities Scotland”.<sup>198</sup> In a quote on a webpage hosted by SCIBC that outlines her work interpreting for COP26, she noted that “Without the support from the soft power, hard power can’t really achieve its purpose.”<sup>199</sup>

In 2021, SCIBC took part in an event run by the UK Association for the Promotion of Chinese Education 英国中文教育促进会. This Association does more than it says on the tin. In 2019, it organised a march in the UK in support of the “rule of law” in Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Police Force and against the “disruptive acts” of pro-democracy protestors in the city at which PRC flags were waved and the country’s national anthem sung.<sup>200</sup> In 2021, the group held an online celebration for the 100th anniversary of the founding of the CCP.<sup>201</sup> Its founder, Ng Sin Hung MBE 伍善雄, is one of six honorary presidents of the “Promotion of China Re-Unification Society in U.K.”,<sup>202</sup> which is considered to be the UK branch of a central umbrella organisation, the China Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification, which is a key organ of the United Front Work Department committed to promoting the absorption of Taiwan.

The association was contacted for comment prior to the publication of this report. No response was received by the Henry Jackson Society at the time of writing.

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<sup>195</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>196</sup> “Confucius Institute Team: Professor Ping Zhang”, Heriot-Watt University, <https://confuciusinstitute.site.hw.ac.uk/team/>.

<sup>197</sup> “张平”, Tianjin University of Finance and Economics School of Public Finance and Administration, 17 February 2019, <https://archive.ph/ZaNHk#selection-377.0-667.1> and “张平”, Tianjin University of Finance and Economics MPA Centre, 18 April 2021, <https://archive.ph/zxthY#selection-359.1-607.86>.

<sup>198</sup> “Confucius Institute Team: Dr Isabel Hui Liu”, Heriot-Watt University, <https://confuciusinstitute.site.hw.ac.uk/team/>.

<sup>199</sup> “Confucius Institute Deputy Director Interpreting at the Heart of COP”, Heriot-Watt University, 2 November 2021, <http://web.archive.org/web/20220802225806/https://confuciusinstitute.site.hw.ac.uk/2021/11/02/confucius-institute-deputy-director-interpreting-at-the-heart-of-cop/>.

<sup>200</sup> “英国纽卡斯尔华界举行护港集会游行”, UK Association for the Promotion of Chinese Education, 26 August 2019, <https://archive.ph/cD6q3>.

<sup>201</sup> “主页”, UK Association for the Promotion of Chinese Education, <https://archive.ph/mtgph>.

<sup>202</sup> “执行委员”, The Promotion of China Re-Unification Society in U.K., <https://web.archive.org/web/20220728104737/https://www.ukpcrs.com/members>.



Performers from the Confucius Institute for Dance and Performance at Goldsmiths, University of London, entertain guests including politicians and businesspeople at the fifth Anniversary of Heriot-Watt's Confucius Institute held at Edinburgh Castle (Source: <http://tufe.hikedu.com/News/Detail/3540>).

According to an FOI release obtained by the authors, SCIBC's administrator's role "has been expanded from January 2022 to a full-time position to work jointly with the [University's School of Social Sciences'] International Partnerships and Student Experience function". Relatedly, SCIBC's director Ian Baxter took part in a trip to China in 2019 during which he helped to market Heriot-Watt to Chinese students, for example, at the Central University of Finance and Economics.<sup>203</sup> In addition, according to documents released in response to an FOI request, SCIBC "is promoting some initial contacts in the MBA programme cooperation between" Heriot-Watt and its Chinese partner university.

In addition, SCIBC has established "a significant partnership with the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh", which undertakes biological research; and "co-organised the Online Reception and Celebration of 2021 Chinese New Year with the Chinese Consulate General in Edinburgh".

Heriot-Watt University declined to comment on this report.

### *The University of Edinburgh*

The University's "Confucius Institute for Scotland" (CIS) was established in 2006 as a partnership with Fudan University, and describes itself as "a national centre to promote educational, economic, and cultural ties between Scotland and China", aiming "– to act as a bridge between Scotland and China, aiding understanding and facilitating engagement – to be a major point of reference for Sino-Scottish relations in the areas of education, business and culture – to work with other stakeholders to develop greater awareness of China in Scotland..."<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> "英国赫瑞-瓦特大学 (Heriot-Watt University) 来访国际教育中心", Central University of Finance and Economics, Zhihu, 26 December 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220803103143/https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/99478003>.

<sup>204</sup> About the Institute", CIS, <https://www.confuciusinstitute.ac.uk/about-us/about-the-institute/>.

CIS has received over £6.5m from Chinese sources, mostly the Chinese Government (over £6m). China's General Consul in Edinburgh, Ma Qiang, and Minister Counsellor Wang Yongli of the Chinese Embassy in London have both previously been members of CIS's advisory board. The University of Edinburgh told the Henry Jackson Society that neither remained in post. CIS's part focus on knowledge exchange for business is emphasised repeatedly on its main website, which states that "Activities will include: – promoting scholarship relating to China – developing senior visiting fellow programmes – supporting specific programmes of research". Two of CIS's key programmes are mostly to be targeted at the business community.

First, a 'Business Lecture Series'. CIS's director for many years, who has now stepped down, has said in relation to this series that "We need to understand China's social fabric, its networks and hierarchies, and where decision-making lies, so we can play an active role in shaping the way business is conducted in China today." Guest speakers have included business figures who promote links with China such as former HSBC chair Lord Stephen Green, Huawei executive Victor Zhang, Stephen Perry of the 48 Group Club,<sup>205</sup> and at least one senior United Front figure, an individual described as Vice President of the pro-CCP All China Federation of Taiwan Compatriots, which promotes the "peaceful reunification" of China and is run directly by the UFWD with the express intention of influencing Taiwanese politics.<sup>206</sup>

Second, in 2017, 2018 and 2019, CIS hosted large-scale fora on China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), one of China's key foreign policy initiatives.

Gordon Brown was the keynote speaker at the 2017 event, which counter-intuitively also served as the 13th biannual forum of the World Alliance for Low Carbon Cities. The event described itself as "the best opportunity you will have to hear from the experts from China, the UK and Europe on the trade and policy environment of BRE and how to engage",<sup>207</sup> implying that analyses warning against engagement would not be central to the event.

The then Director of CIS said of the 2017 event that "as a Confucius Institute we have developed a five-year plan of future engagement approaches and one of them is the BRI... we have different colleagues across the university in science and engineering and medicine who are also interested in thinking about how they can engage in the programme. So we're building a little group within the university to take this further, because it doesn't stop with this conference."<sup>208</sup> Speakers included Chinese Embassy staff, businesspeople, Stephen Perry of the 48 Group Club and a few academics.<sup>209</sup>

By the account of the director at the time, 2017's conference indeed featured mostly "businesses and companies, talking about business opportunities. This year [2018] we have a more academic conference..." The 2018 conference's keynote lectures were delivered by Wang Wen, described as "Consultant Fellow at the Counselors' Office of the State Council of China and Standing Director of World Socialism Research at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences" and "Chen Liming, Honorary Professor of the University of Edinburgh and Chairman of IBM Greater China Group".<sup>210</sup>

Edinburgh University's principal and vice-chancellor is Peter Mathieson. Mathieson is a high-profile supporter of Confucius Institutes and has supported and engaged with the one at Edinburgh, the advisory board of which he chairs.

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<sup>205</sup> "Business Lecture Series", CIS, <https://www.confuciusinstitute.ac.uk/business/business-lecture-series/>.

<sup>206</sup> Joske, "The party speaks for you".

<sup>207</sup> "China's Belt and Road Initiative", CIS, <http://web.archive.org/web/20180719213946/http://www.confuciusinstitute.ac.uk/ssr>.

<sup>208</sup> "New Perspectives on the Belt and Road Initiative", CIS, <https://www.confuciusinstitute.ac.uk/bri/>.

<sup>209</sup> "Programme", CIS, <http://web.archive.org/web/20171006152401/http://www.confuciusinstitute.ac.uk/ssr/programme/>.

<sup>210</sup> "Belt & Road Initiative Keynote Lectures and Conference, October 4th and 5th, 2018", CIS, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200922164514/http://www.confuciusinstitute.ac.uk/bri/2018-conference/>.





The 2017 BRI forum hosted by the Confucius Institute for Scotland at the University of Edinburgh (Source: “New Perspectives on the Belt and Road Initiative”, CIS, <http://www.confuciusinstitute.ac.uk/bri/gallery/>).

Mathieson was strongly criticised by pro-democracy Hongkongers during his time at the University of Hong Kong according to reports in the Hong Kong press. Although Confucius Institutes are subject to the authority of the CCP, *The Times* reported in 2021 that Mathieson had stated that Confucius Institutes were no different to the British Council.<sup>211</sup>

Mathieson’s biography states that he is “lead member for security issues in higher education” for both the Russell Group Board and Universities UK.<sup>212</sup>

This Confucius Institute also offers commercial translation and interpretation services.<sup>213</sup>

The CI is also a ‘group member’ of a cross-party group on China amongst Members of the Scottish Parliament. Chinese diplomats are part of the group and most recent meetings begin with a factual ‘update’ on Chinese affairs from the Chinese Consulate in Edinburgh.<sup>214</sup>

In a response to the Henry Jackson Society, the University of Edinburgh said: “rather than being termed an ‘organisational member’ of the cross-party group on China, anyone can join as a stakeholder engaging with China”, adding “the Consul General attended these meetings only rarely on special occasions.” According to the cross-party group’s webpage, Ma Qiang attended four of the last five meetings, including all meetings held between November 2019 and March 2021, and gave a lengthy summary of events in China on each occasion.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Mark McLaughlin, “Edinburgh University’s China links ‘not a propaganda tool’”, *The Times*, 17 June 2021, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/edinburgh-universitys-china-links-not-a-propaganda-tool-wfmmw9zjp>.

<sup>212</sup> “The Principal”, University of Edinburgh, <https://www.ed.ac.uk/about/people/officials/principal>.

<sup>213</sup> “Translation and Interpretation”, CIS, <https://www.confuciusinstitute.ac.uk/business/translation-and-interpretation-services/>.

<sup>214</sup> “Purpose of the group”, The Scottish Parliament, <https://archive2021.parliament.scot/msps/china.aspx> and “China”, The Scottish Parliament, <https://www.parliament.scot/get-involved/cross-party-groups/current-and-previous-cross-party-groups/2021/china>.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

In its response, the University of Edinburgh said:

The Confucius Institute for Scotland and the University of Edinburgh continue to conduct open and critical debate about China alongside efforts to promote cultural outreach, knowledge exchange and dialogue.

There has been no loss of academic freedom nor inhibition of academic debate at the University of Edinburgh as a consequence of its relationship with the Confucius Institute. The director of the Confucius Institute at Edinburgh is appointed by the University of Edinburgh. The Institute has contributed to significant discussion of matters relating to contemporary China.

For information, [the] proportion of overall University of Edinburgh income deriving from the Confucius Institute is in the region of 0.04%.

## 8. Case Studies – *themes*

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This section adopts a briefer, thematic approach to surveying the activities of the 22 CIs in the UK not investigated in detail above. The first four themes revolve around the academy / universities. Thereafter, the following themes are examined in turn: business and industry; policy, politics and government; science and technology; the United Front; and language and culture.

### *The Academy – Employment and recruitment*

Chinese partner institutions have control over the recruitment of most CI staff. Teaching recruits from China are considered staff of one kind or another ('seconded', 'guest') of the British partner university. This can be problematic because Chinese institutions do not hold themselves to the same ethical standards of recruitment as British ones, and because ethnic and political discrimination in China is normal. This report has collected new evidence relating to this:

- Only two non-Han members of staff at Confucius Institutes could be identified with certainty, out of an estimated 250+ staff. Ethnic groups other than the Han make up 8% of China's population and many have been subject to ethnic cleansing and other racist policies.
- An application form for the role of a CI teacher at the University of Huddersfield, posted online in May 2022 by East China University of Science and Technology (ECUST), contains signs that political and even ethnic screening may be at play in the recruitment process. The form asks for candidates' "political features" "政治面貌" and "ethnicity" "民族".<sup>216</sup>
- In October 2021, the student union at Newcastle University voted to send an FOI request to the university regarding the hiring practices for its CI. The union posted the university's response onto its website – the post has since been deleted.<sup>217</sup> Newcastle's response clarified the following:
  - "Chinese staff in the UK must still abide by Chinese law as well as UK law."
  - "Newcastle University is not involved in the appointment selection process of Chinese staff which takes place in China through Xiamen's [the Chinese partner university's] CLEC."
  - "However, Newcastle University is not involved in the internal selection process that takes place within the CLEC at Xiamen. CI staff are guest members of staff at Newcastle University and their employment contract is with Xiamen University."

More information about the ramifications of these findings is included in chapter 9.

### *The Academy – Degree courses*

A recent British policy paper by Andrew Chubb, an expert on China's foreign relations, argues that "in some cases CIs have been involved in the teaching of courses on contemporary China. This presents major risks to academic freedom as well as educational standards, as PRC laws and norms may preclude CIs from presenting a comprehensive picture of the PRC that includes

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<sup>216</sup> "关于遴选哈德斯菲尔德大学科技创新孔子学院国际中文教师候选人的通知", East China University of Science and Technology, 27 May 2022, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220727110707/https://ice.ecust.edu.cn/news-2110.aspx>.

<sup>217</sup> "An update on FOI request to the University".

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important aspects such as elite politics, human rights, social problems, ethnic relations and territorial claims including Taiwan.”<sup>218</sup> This also represents the consensus view amongst the majority of academics interviewed.

Involvement in teaching of this kind is taking place in the UK. A non-exhaustive search has identified the following instances of CIs involving or planning to involve themselves in the provision of courses on contemporary China:

- Southampton's Confucius Institute states that, “Our long-term aim is to establish and support the provision of opportunities to study of all aspects of modern China, including language and culture, from primary school through to University level. To this end we intend to develop a portfolio of MSc and BSc courses combining the study of language with aspects of Chinese economy and society.”<sup>219</sup>
- The Confucius Institute for Dance and Performance at Goldsmiths University of London is involved in two joint honours programmes at the university, one in International Relations and Chinese, the other in Sociology and Chinese, and offers credit courses in Chinese philosophy, literature and history.<sup>220</sup>
- Ulster University's Confucius Institute formerly provided a Mandarin Chinese degree-level course from which 20 or so students have graduated in the last decade, though this no longer seems to be offered by the university.<sup>221</sup>

A number of other CIs offer modules on Chinese language and culture as ‘credit courses’ for students at the university. Many universities, however, have carefully circumscribed the involvement of their CI in university teaching due to the concerns of academics.

### *The Academy – Knowledge production and exchange*

The provision of degree courses is obviously one form of knowledge production or exchange, but the CIs are also involved in others. The majority of CIs offer or have offered talks, seminars and workshops on topics such as China's history, economy, politics and philosophy. Some data related to this is presented in a previous section. As detailed above, these intellectual offerings disproportionately ignore topics of great importance to understanding modern China and this is part of the strategic design of the Chinese Government's CI programme. Some other examples of the involvement of the CIs in knowledge production and exchange are as follows:

- Nottingham University's Confucius Institute has run a range of events on China, for example, a conference which was reported under the headline “China not aiming to challenge USA as a superpower, scholars tell a CPI-CH conference sponsored by [the Institute]”<sup>222</sup> and a seminar on the Belt and Road Initiative.<sup>223</sup>
- Lancaster University's CI hosts an annual conference on the Belt and Road Initiative with the Lancaster University Belt and Road Initiative Consortium, which is led by

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<sup>218</sup> Andrew Chubb, “Rights protection: How the UK should respond to the PRC's overseas influence”, *Policy Series 2022, China in the World*, 02, Lau China Institute/King's College London/Lancaster University China Centre, <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/lci/assets/ksspplicipolicyno.2-2022-forweb.pdf>.

<sup>219</sup> “The Confucius Institute”, University of Southampton, <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/ci/whowere/index.page>.

<sup>220</sup> “Study with us”, Goldsmiths University of London, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220806123602/https://www.gold.ac.uk/confucius-institute/study-with-us/>.

<sup>221</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>222</sup> “China not aiming to challenge USA as a superpower, scholars tell a CPI-CH conference sponsored by NCI”, University of Nottingham, 10 January 2011, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220806131938/https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/confucius/news/news-before-2018/cpi-ch-conference-london-14-12-2010.aspx>.

<sup>223</sup> “Nottingham-Fudan Seminar: The Belt and Road Initiative”, University of Nottingham, 8 October 2018, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220806131940/https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/confucius/events/uonfudan-bri-seminar.aspx>.

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the CI's director, who is also a Professor of China and International Studies at the university. Local politicians and a range of Chinese officials, including one responsible for UFDW subsidiaries in the UK, have attended these conferences.<sup>224</sup> According to the CI, its staff were "the first... to meet the senior Chinese International Education Foundation" (the new Hanban) in China.<sup>225</sup>

- The CI at Hull University's budget contains a £6000 allocation for projects on history, the sciences and psychology; however, this was not spent in 2021.<sup>226</sup>
- A number of institutes have run events on climate change and cooperation. For example, in 2021, the University of Glasgow's CI organised an event on "Climate change & the challenge of a green economy: Scotland/UK and China".<sup>227</sup> Bangor's CI organised an event called "Environmental Challenges in China and beyond. Can the world survive?"<sup>228</sup>
- Coventry University's CI claims to run a Belt and Road Observatory in partnership with the China-Britain Business Council.<sup>229</sup>
- The institute at the University of Manchester has long run a range of events on China, including a very rare event on Tibet, albeit one that expressly focused not on "the 'Tibet question'", but on "aspects that remain hidden when 'Tibet' is viewed through a political... perspective."<sup>230</sup> The authors cannot comment further on this event because they were not present. Other events run by the Manchester institute include a talk on Deng Xiaoping<sup>231</sup> and a conference on "China-UK-Europe Economic Interconnection".<sup>232</sup>
- Cambridge University does not have a CI, however, in 2019, its Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies accepted a donation of £69,790 from Hanban for what is described as "Conference / Seminar / Lecture / Training / other (various programmes)".<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> See "What is LUBRIC?", Lancaster University, <http://web.archive.org/web/20220617142124/https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/arts-and-social-sciences/research/lubric/>; "Belt and Road Initiative Conference and Launch of the Belt and Road Initiative Research Consortium", 10 June 2019, Lancaster University Confucius Institute, <http://web.archive.org/web/20220617142135/https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/confucius-institute/news/belt-and-road-initiative-conference-and-launch-of-the-belt-and-road-initiative-research-consortium> and "Second Interdisciplinary Conference on Belt and Road Initiative at Lancaster University", 16 June 2022, Lancaster University Confucius Institute, <https://bit.ly/3zBQLgh>; on the Chinese official, see "Ying De Group and CIDAUK announce 11th China UK Entrepreneurship Competition for UK SMEs", Ying De Group, <https://bit.ly/3zF97wS> and "Innovation and Entrepreneurship: A Journey from China to London", The China-Britain Doctoral Association, <https://bit.ly/3Q6fwZ6>.

<sup>225</sup> "Confucius Institutes embark on a new phase of partnership, support and governance", 20 November 2020, Lancaster University Confucius Institute, <http://web.archive.org/web/20220617134347/https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/confucius-institute/news/confucius-institutes-embark-on-a-new-phase-of-partnership-support-and-governance>.

<sup>226</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>227</sup> "Climate change & the challenge of a green economy: Scotland/UK and China", University of Glasgow, <https://www.gla.ac.uk/explore/confucius/whatson/climateforum/>.

<sup>228</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>229</sup> "Belt and Road Observatory", Coventry University, <https://www.coventry.ac.uk/international-students-hub/partnerships-and-places-to-study/confucius-institute/supporting-business-and-research/>.

<sup>230</sup> "Tibetan Buddhism in contemporary China", Jane Caple (University of Leeds), The Confucius Institute at The University of Manchester, *Facebook*, 25 October 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=287641220028352&set=pb.100063474281928.-2207520000>.

<sup>231</sup> "Meet the Authors: Deng Xiaoping", Michael Dillon (University of Durham), The Confucius Institute at The University of Manchester, *Facebook*, 25 October 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=287641073361700&set=pb.100063474281928.-2207520000>.

<sup>232</sup> "China-UK-Europe Economic Interconnection", University of Manchester, 29 June 2017, <https://www.confuciusinstitute.manchester.ac.uk/about/news/archive/2017/headline-557671-en.htm>.

<sup>233</sup> "FOI-2020-542 (Corderoy)" What Do They Know, [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/681744/response/1631521/attach/3/FOI%202020%20542%20Corderoy%20data.pdf?cookie\\_passthrough=1](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/681744/response/1631521/attach/3/FOI%202020%20542%20Corderoy%20data.pdf?cookie_passthrough=1).

### *The Academy – Development and internationalisation*

Most universities see establishing a CI as a means to expand their general activity in China. This must be viewed in the context of the internationalisation and commercialisation of British universities in the past two decades. Specifically, it must be viewed in the context of the rising level of dependence by British universities on fees from students from China.

The vast majority of universities have explicitly stated at some point that their institute is intended to provide a 'bridge' to further institutional collaboration with China.

- Nottingham University's institute employs Jason Feehily as its British director. According to the university, Jason is also "Director of Knowledge Exchange Asia which seeks to enhance research, policy and commercial collaborations in Asia for the University. Jason spends part of his role at the award winning University of Nottingham Ningbo China Campus..."<sup>234</sup> Note that Nottingham is unusual compared to other universities in that it had an intensive interest in China (said campus was founded in 2004) several years before it had a Confucius Institute.
- Coventry University's Confucius Institute director Xu Jingjing is also its "Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for China Partnerships... strategic lead at the [University] for China partnerships and operations... She is also Academic Dean for a Sino-UK joint Design, Technology and Management College... Professor Xu is also the Managing Director of the 'China Hub' which is to be launched in Beijing and will be the largest overseas hub of the CUG [Coventry University Group]... the Hub is the platform for CUG's overall operations in China on academic partnership development, student recruitment, development of research, innovation and enterprise collaboration."<sup>235</sup>

Coventry University told HJS that "Professor Jingjing Xu joined the university late [in 2021] as Academic Dean and Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (China Partnerships). As such, she is the most appropriate person to be the university's representative in the Confucius Institute and so has also been given the role of Director of the CI, with a co-director also appointed by the partner university in China, as is normal practice... discussions about our strategic collaborations either in China or elsewhere are limited to university group colleagues and would not involve the Confucius Institute."

- The director of the Lancaster University Confucius Institute is also the university's "Academic Director of China Engagement", with partial responsibility for the university's broader relationship with China.<sup>236</sup> This relationship is extensive and includes a Lancaster-branded college in Beijing.<sup>237</sup>

### *Business and industry*

A majority of the UK's CIs offer services or information in one form or another, gratis or otherwise, to businesses. Three CIs – at Leeds University, Heriot-Watt University and LSE – are 'business CIs' by name. Two of these institutes have been discussed in detail in previous sections.

There is also certainly a 'business focus' to some of the more academic events detailed above. One study finds 18 of the UK's CIs to be "business-focused", compared to six each in Germany

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<sup>234</sup> "Jason Feehily", University of Nottingham, <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/confucius/people/jason.feehily>.

<sup>235</sup> "Professor Xu Jingjing", Coventry University, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220309031907/https://www.coventry.ac.uk/the-university/about-coventry-university/governance/vice-chancellors-office/professor-jingjing-xu/>.

<sup>236</sup> "Professor Jinghan Zeng", Lancaster University, [http://www.research.lancs.ac.uk/portal/en/people/jinghan-zeng\(1d8bbbdd-e41f-49e6-b087-0874bf912161\).html](http://www.research.lancs.ac.uk/portal/en/people/jinghan-zeng(1d8bbbdd-e41f-49e6-b087-0874bf912161).html).

<sup>237</sup> "Partners", Lancaster University, <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/2022ugconference/partners/>.

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and France, and two each in the Netherlands and Belgium – of course, these countries also have fewer CIs.<sup>238</sup>

This section provides some more examples of the kinds of business-related activities engaged in by British CIs:

- The UK branch of CLEC (Hanban's part-successor) runs a "Chinese Competition of Charitable Projects & Business Innovations for UK University Students" that has been promoted by a number of the institutes, for example, by Heriot-Watt University's institute.<sup>239</sup> Examples of projects put forward include a project to connect CSSAs with university employability centres<sup>240</sup> and an eco-tourism app that attracted investor interest.<sup>241</sup>
- Nottingham's CI supports events at the University of Nottingham Business School.<sup>242</sup> The Institute's British director is also director of the university's Asia Business Centre,<sup>243</sup> which supports the Institute.<sup>244</sup>
- Cardiff University's CI partner is Xiamen University. The two universities signed an agreement for their CI in 2007. According to the university's annual report that year,<sup>245</sup> the CI derived "from a visit to China led by the Vice-Chancellor in the spring of 2007, when agreements were signed with Xiamen and the Chinese Language Council Institution [*sic*] for the creation of the Institute. A further agreement was made with Xiamen University and Cardiff Council for two postgraduate bursaries for Chinese students wishing to study in Cardiff." The university stated that the CI would constitute "a major advantage in the development of business between Wales and China". 2008's annual report stated that the university's "strong and long-standing relationship with Xiamen" had "flowered with the creation of the Cardiff Confucius Institute".<sup>246</sup>

Recently, a new agreement between Xiamen and Cardiff specifies "a joint fund to provide £1.2m of seed corn funding for collaborative research projects to attract external funding and create new trade links for Wales... Additionally, Cardiff Business School and Xiamen University School of Management and Economics have an existing formal agreement on joint PhD student supervision and have co-organised two joint symposia held in Xiamen in 2015 and Cardiff in 2016."<sup>247</sup> The institute was involved in "supporting collaborative trade links", partially via "good links with CBBC" as early as 2010.<sup>248</sup> There are other initiatives linking Cardiff and Xiamen.

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<sup>238</sup> Ronald van Velzen, "Confucius Institutes Under Scrutiny: The Functioning of Confucius Institutes in China's Public Diplomacy in Northwest-Europe, 2013-2019", <https://studenttheses.universiteitleiden.nl/access/item%3A2701332/view>.

<sup>239</sup> "2nd Chinese Competition of Charitable Projects & Business Innovations for UK University Students (2021)", Heriot-Watt University, 28 January 2021, <https://confuciusinstitute.site.hw.ac.uk/2021/01/28/2nd-chinese-competition-of-charitable-projects-business-innovations-for-uk-university-students-2021/>.

<sup>240</sup> "Louis Tyler (李易琛), CI student participated in 2nd Chinese Competition of Charitable Projects & Business Innovations for UK University Students (2021)", University of Southampton, 16 April 2021, <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/ci/news/2021/04/louis-tyler-competition.page>.

<sup>241</sup> "第三届英国大学生社会公益与商务创新中文大赛成功举办", *People's Daily*, 11 March 2022, <http://uk.people.com.cn/n1/2022/0411/c352308-32396431.html>.

<sup>242</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>243</sup> "Working with business", University of Nottingham, <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/workingwithbusiness/services/asia-business-centre.aspx>.

<sup>244</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>245</sup> "125 years of making a difference: Annual Review 2007", Cardiff University, [https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/19902/CardiffReview07.pdf](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/19902/CardiffReview07.pdf).

<sup>246</sup> "the people make the place: annual review 2008", Cardiff University, [https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/19901/CU-AR08-ENGLISH.pdf](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/19901/CU-AR08-ENGLISH.pdf).

<sup>247</sup> "Our partnership with Xiamen University", Cardiff University, <http://web.archive.org/web/20220618222732/https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/international/international-partnerships/xiamen-university>.

<sup>248</sup> "Innovation Opportunities & Challenges in China: Richard Evans, Cardiff Confucius Institute", *YouTube* video, posted by Innovation Network, 14 December 2010, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jp\\_GCPn0tdw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jp_GCPn0tdw).

Cardiff told the Henry Jackson Society, “Cardiff University has records of partnerships with Xiamen dating from 2006. Our work with Xiamen began in the 1980s when the city of Cardiff was the first in the UK to twin with Xiamen... Our relationship with Xiamen University extends far beyond the Confucius Institute. The team that oversees the Xiamen partnership is entirely separate to that managing the Confucius Institute. There is no interdependence between the Confucius Institute and our relationship with Xiamen University.”

- According to its 2021 accounts,<sup>249</sup> De Montfort University’s CI delivered a programme called “Doing & Winning Business in China”, which included “regular business networking events”. This kind of programme appears to be common.
- The CBBC has been mentioned a number of times in this report. In addition to those mentions already made, the authors found that Glasgow University’s CI sponsors CBBC’s “China-Scotland Business Awards and the Chinese Burns Night”.

### *Policy, politics and government*

‘Promoting ties’ – be they cultural, economic, scientific, etc. – is itself a political activity, especially in the current context in which the PRC’s geopolitical ambitions demand consideration of the merit of limiting, fine-tuning or otherwise exerting further control over engagement with the UK.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and the West’s response to this highlight the importance of serious policymaking and planning regarding any future response to actions by the PRC with regard to the multiple unresolved territorial disputes it is involved in with India, Japan, Bhutan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei and Vietnam. No country is involved in more bilateral disputes over its maritime exclusive economic zones (EEZs) than the PRC. This is not even to mention the unstable situations on the Korean peninsula, and regarding Taiwan. ‘Promoting economic ties’ in this context can be a political act. However, that is not treated directly in this section.

Below are some further instances of the institutes’ direct involvement in politics, policy and government:

- From 2019 to 2021, Welsh Government officials met five times with staff at the Welsh CIs (Bangor, University of Wales Trinity St David and Cardiff). The purpose of two of these meetings was to discuss the Welsh Government’s “draft International Strategy”. In addition, in 2019, an unnamed Welsh Government minister met with Bangor University’s CI staff to discuss the draft strategy. A further ministerial meeting to discuss the work of CIs took place in 2020.<sup>250</sup> The Welsh Government has also co-organised eight events with Welsh CIs since 2016.
- In the period 2014-17, Liverpool’s then Deputy Mayor visited China. One ten-day trip in 2017 was organised by the University of Liverpool’s CI, which also took part in the trip. The amount of funding received for this from the university, its Chinese partner university and the Hanban has not been specified. The intention was to seal agreements between five Liverpool schools and counterparts in Xi’an, and to help the University “attract more students” and take part in other activities relating to it and other institutions from Liverpool.<sup>251</sup> In November 2021, the now former deputy

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<sup>249</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>250</sup> “ATISN 15827 – Wales China Education Links”, What Do They Know, [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/817849/response/1957188/attach/3/ATISN%2015827%20China%20and%20Confucious%20Institutes%2021.02.22.pdf?cookie\\_passthrough=1](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/817849/response/1957188/attach/3/ATISN%2015827%20China%20and%20Confucious%20Institutes%2021.02.22.pdf?cookie_passthrough=1).

<sup>251</sup> “Freedom of Information Request 7357510”, What Do They Know, [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/748014/response/1771283/attach/4/7357510%20Ms%20Williams%20Response.pdf?cookie\\_passthrough=1](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/748014/response/1771283/attach/4/7357510%20Ms%20Williams%20Response.pdf?cookie_passthrough=1).



mayor was announced as “president” of the Liverpool China Partnership (LCP), “a pioneering membership organisation that facilitates purpose-driven relationships between China and the UK for civic and business people and partnerships”.<sup>252</sup> The university’s CI is a member organisation, as is the university’s CSSA.<sup>253</sup> The former deputy mayor is also on the board of the CI.<sup>254</sup> Contacted by the Henry Jackson Society, he provided a full itinerary of the trip to China and clarified that the roles at the LCP and CI are both unpaid. There is no suggestion of impropriety on his part.

- A number of local authorities promote their nearest CI.<sup>255</sup> This is usually, but not always, in respect of Confucius Classrooms at schools overseen by the Council (see below).
- Southampton University’s CI gave £13,000 to Southampton City Council. The FOI release disclosing this does not detail the purpose of the funding.<sup>256</sup>

## *Science and technology*

Science constitutes one of the most important and sensitive areas of the UK-China bilateral relationship, and universities’ cooperation with Chinese entities on matters scientific has attracted a good deal of public attention in the past two years. CIs play a role in initiating and supporting scientific collaboration between UK universities and China.

There are other instances of this that can be traced using open sources and FOI requests. The authors have collected several of these below, but this list is non-exhaustive and there may be other instances that cannot be identified using these methods.

- Cardiff University’s Confucius Institute was established in 2008 (following an agreement signed in 2007) as a partnership with Xiamen University. It exists to “strengthen links between Cardiff University and Xiamen University.”<sup>257</sup> More about this CI and Cardiff’s relationship with Xiamen is outlined on page 52.

The universities have since built up a record of cooperation in catalysis research.<sup>258</sup> Cardiff is home to the cutting-edge Cardiff Catalysis Institute,<sup>259</sup> whose researchers work with Xiamen University scientists.<sup>260</sup> In addition to the part of their response related on page 53, Cardiff told the Henry Jackson Society, “For the avoidance of doubt, the Confucius Institute at Cardiff does not play a role in the development of Cardiff University’s scientific partnerships – and has never done so.”

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<sup>252</sup> “Liverpool China Partnership announce new leadership team and reveal future vision”, Liverpool China Partnership, 12 November 2021, <https://archive.ph/L2DuY>.

<sup>253</sup> “Our Associates”, Liverpool China Partnership, <https://archive.ph/ybjhB>.

<sup>254</sup> “Happy Chinese New Year”, University of Liverpool, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220807232224/https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/confucius-institute/chinese-new-year-22/cny22-mr-gary-millar/>.

<sup>255</sup> e.g., “Confucius Institute for Dance and Performance”, Lewisham Council, <https://lewisham.gov.uk/organizations/confucius-institute-for-dance-and-performance>.

<sup>256</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>257</sup> “Cardiff Confucius Institute”, Cardiff University, <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/confucius-institute>.

<sup>258</sup> “Our partnership with Xiamen University”, Cardiff University, <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/international/international-partnerships/xiamen-university>.

<sup>259</sup> “Cardiff Catalysis Institute”, Cardiff University, <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/cardiff-catalysis-institute>.

<sup>260</sup> See, for example, “Stable and Antisintering Tungsten Carbides with Controllable Active Phase for Selective Cleavage of Aryl Ether C–O Bonds”, *ACS Appl. Mater. Interfaces*, 2021, 13, 7, 8274–8284 <https://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/acsami.0c19599>.



- Manchester University's many scientific partnerships with Chinese entities have been the subject of considerable attention,<sup>261</sup> leading in at least one case to a re-evaluation and the termination of a partnership with a Chinese arms manufacturer.<sup>262</sup>

Manchester's Confucius Institute was established in 2006 as a partnership with Beijing Normal University (BNU). It has received over £1m from the Chinese Government.<sup>263</sup> According to the terms of Manchester's original memorandum with BNU for the institute's establishment, both sides agreed to cooperate in "joint fundamental and applied research activities" and the "exchange of staff, graduates and students".<sup>264</sup>

According to the institute's website, "BNU works closely with the Confucius Institute at the University of Manchester by arranging secondments for Chinese teaching staff in Manchester".<sup>265</sup> The institute has claimed to have a longstanding relationship with the Zhejiang Association of Science and Technology, a branch of the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST), and has assisted with its visits to Manchester and helped it build links with the university and the city's Museum of Science and Industry.<sup>266</sup> CAST is part of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, a key part of the CCP's United Front system, and is deeply involved and officially responsible for technology and talent transfer.<sup>267</sup>

According to a post on the institute's website, the "Confucius Institute plays a key role in P2P [People to People dialogue/exchanges]" and would work to ensure "collaboration with Chinese universities will be expanded and broadened".<sup>268</sup>

Manchester University did not respond to the Henry Jackson Society's request for comment.

- Coventry University's Xu Jingjing is head of the university's China partnerships and of its Confucius Institute. In April 2022, the university announced that it was "set to establish a brand-new education institution in China, in collaboration with the Communication University of China... The [Chinese government's] approval will enable the education institution to specialise in computer science, Artificial Intelligence and design, offering five courses in a mix of undergraduate, postgraduate-taught and PhD programmes."<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> Radomir Tylecote and Robert Clark, "Inadvertently Arming China? The Chinese military complex and its potential exploitation of scientific research at UK universities", *Civitas*, February 2021, <https://www.civitas.org.uk/content/files/ChinaReport.pdf>.

<sup>262</sup> "UK: University of Manchester terminates research project with China Electronics Technology Group over alleged links to human rights abuses against Uighur Muslims", Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, 21 February 2021, <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/uk-university-of-manchester-terminates-research-project-with-china-electronics-technology-group-over-alleged-links-to-human-rights-abuses-against-uighur-muslims/>.

<sup>263</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>264</sup> "Agreements on the Confucius Institute", What Do They Know, [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/agreements\\_on\\_the\\_confucius\\_inst\\_13#incoming-1551377](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/agreements_on_the_confucius_inst_13#incoming-1551377).

<sup>265</sup> "Partners", University of Manchester, <https://web.archive.org/web/20210724100320/https://www.confuciusinstitute.manchester.ac.uk/about/partners/>.

<sup>266</sup> "Our partners: Zhejiang Association of Science and Technology (ZAST)", University of Manchester, 27 June 2016, <https://www.confuciusinstitute.manchester.ac.uk/about/news/archive/2016/headline-525667-en.htm>.

<sup>267</sup> See "The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference", Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Liberia, <https://www.mfa.gov.cn/ce/celr/eng/gyzg/jgiejgi/tfgajg/t372885.htm> and Joske, "The party speaks for you".

<sup>268</sup> "Confucius Institute plays a key role in P2P", University of Manchester, 4 December 2017, <https://web.archive.org/web/20210724111024/https://www.confuciusinstitute.manchester.ac.uk/about/news/archive/2017/headline-606468-en.htm>.

<sup>269</sup> "New education institution approved in China – a signal of Coventry University's international ambitions", Coventry University, 29 April 2022, <https://www.coventry.ac.uk/news/2022/new-education-institution-approved-in-china/>.

## *The United Front*

Some reference has already been made to the involvement of United Front organisations with CIs. Interest in the United Front has risen significantly in the UK since the UFWD was named in relation to the alert issued about the activities of Christine Lee in January 2022.<sup>270</sup>

The term 'United Front' relates variously to a CCP strategy, to a CCP organ tasked with implementing that strategy (the UFWD) and to a network of groups and individuals connected in varying degrees to both.

There is ample existing evidence in the public domain that CSSAs (sometimes described as branches of the UK CSSA) are directly overseen by diplomatic outposts and significantly controlled by them. CSSAs are instruments of the United Front policy or parts of the United Front network. Rather like CIs, CSSAs' activities are a mix of the cultural and social – which may be of great benefit to the wellbeing of Chinese students – and the overtly political. A number of connections between CSSAs and CIs have been identified:

- Confucius Institute staff members are routinely invited to events organised by the central UK CSSA but hosted by the Chinese Embassy in London.<sup>271</sup>
- Manchester University's CI has described the CSSA as a 'partner' in an interview with the Manchester CSSA's president published on the CI website: "Under the guidance of Education Section, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, CSSA organises, sponsors and supports various social activities among Chinese students and scholars in Manchester... We've been working with CI on a variety of projects, including the Language Partner Event where Chinese students are paired up with those who are studying Chinese at the University of Manchester, Mandarin Corner, Chinese Culture Festival, and 2017 Manchester Chinese New Year & UK Lantern Festival Gala. Future projects focusing on student support and culture exchange are in the pipeline, including the promotion of university regulations and support services, a series of culture exchange events."<sup>272</sup> The Manchester CSSA has been described as follows by an initiative backed by the UK Government which worked with it: "It is affiliated to CSSA UK and based in the Chinese Embassy, which also subsidises its activities. Its work includes exchange programmes, and advice on business and entrepreneurship."<sup>273</sup> Parts of these descriptions are drawn from the CSSA's *Facebook* page, which also describes the group as non-political. Like other CSSA branches, Manchester's has encouraged counter-protests in response to pro-democracy events led by Hongkongers.<sup>274</sup>

Manchester University did not respond to the Henry Jackson Society's request for comment.

- The Confucius Institute at the University of Lancaster used to give a small amount of funds annually to the CSSA at the university.<sup>275</sup> This likely relates to the holding of joint events between CSSAs and institutes, which is rather common.<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Gordon Corera, "Why did MI5 name Christine Lee as an 'agent of influence'?" *BBC News*, 19 July 2022, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-62179004>.

<sup>271</sup> FOI releases seen by the authors.

<sup>272</sup> "Our partners: The Chinese Student and Scholar Association", University of Manchester, 28 February 2017, <http://web.archive.org/web/20200927205210/https://www.confuciusinstitute.manchester.ac.uk/about/news/archive/2017/headline-534434-en.htm>.

<sup>273</sup> "Manchester Investment Portfolio", The Manchester China Forum, <https://www.investinmanchester.com/dbimsgs/China%20Forum%20IP%202019%20ENG.pdf>.

<sup>274</sup> Ben Quinn, "Hong Kong protesters in UK say they face pro-Beijing intimidation", *The Guardian*, 18 October 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/oct/18/hong-kong-protesters-uk-pro-beijing-intimidation>.

<sup>275</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>276</sup> See, for example, "英国大学系列之卡迪夫大学 | 卡迪夫大学合辑带你一次了解清楚", Liuxueseng, Zhihu, <https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/150568885>.

- At LSE, academics raised concerns about the activities of the CSSA in conjunction with concerns about the Confucius Institute. The two bodies have cooperated with one another, for example, running events together.<sup>277</sup> The university's internal briefing note in response to concerns about the CSSA is worth reading in full, and recounts a full intervention in order to effectively ban the group following the systemic breaking of university rules.<sup>278</sup>

It is also worth noting that a good number of other CIs, including those at the universities of Southampton and Lancaster, have given small but not insignificant amounts of funding to local Chinese community groups and/or run joint events or other activities with those groups. In the former case, the institute has funded a local Chinese arts group,<sup>279</sup> the chair of which led a high-profile event supported by pro-CCP groups at which counter-protestors were assaulted,<sup>280</sup> and published an article in a British paper denying that ethnic cleansing is taking place in Xinjiang.<sup>281</sup> In the same period, the CI also dispersed money to other Chinese community groups, including one that has been strongly criticised by refugees from Hong Kong.<sup>282</sup>

### *Language and culture*

Much of the activity of the CIs involves the teaching of Mandarin and holding of largely innocuous cultural events and activities. Teaching material often depicts Taiwan as an integral part of the PRC, that is, Communist China (see example overleaf).<sup>283</sup> This matter has not been investigated in depth by the authors, but is worth noting.

A brief summary of CIs' role in language provision is in order. On this front, there is cooperation with the UK Government and the devolved governments, which 'channel' most of their funding for Mandarin teaching for schools through CIs (but via special programmes).

Four institutions are particularly important:

- England's Mandarin Excellence Programme, which works closely with the Confucius Institute at University College London's Institute of Education;
- The Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools at the University of Strathclyde;
- The Wales China Schools Project, which works closely with the Confucius Institute at Cardiff University;
- The Confucius Institute at Ulster University.

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<sup>277</sup> "China Week at LSE", LSE, <https://www.lse.ac.uk/cibl/news-and-events/past-events/2014/china-week-at-lse>.

<sup>278</sup> "China discussion follow up", What Do They Know, [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/619109/response/1482695/attach/2/FOI%2010Nov%20Release%20Redacted.pdf?cookie\\_passthrough=1](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/619109/response/1482695/attach/2/FOI%2010Nov%20Release%20Redacted.pdf?cookie_passthrough=1).

<sup>279</sup> FOI release seen by the authors.

<sup>280</sup> "ICYMI: Mass BRAWL in Chinatown as Hong Kong's democracy fight spills onto streets of London", *Newsflare*, 27 November 2021, <https://www.newsflare.com/video/465985/pro-china-and-hk-demonstrators-end-up-in-fight-at-londons-chinatown?jwsourc=cl>.

<sup>281</sup> "About", Chinese Arts Southampton, [http://chinese-arts-southampton.org.uk/wordpress/?page\\_id=216](http://chinese-arts-southampton.org.uk/wordpress/?page_id=216) and "Rally with us in Chinatown this Saturday against anti-Asian racism", *Morning Star*, <https://morningstaronline.co.uk/article/rally-us-chinatown-saturday-against-anti-asian-racism> and "Dr Ping Hua speaks against UK/US the whole of Western media propaganda and new cold war rally part 1", *Newsflare*, 27 November 2021, <https://bit.ly/3QaAiXu>.

<sup>282</sup> Funding related in FOI release seen by the authors; then see Mayor of Southampton, (@TheSotonMayor), *Twitter*, 31 March 2022, 3:45pm, <https://mobile.twitter.com/TheSotonMayor/status/1509542443250864137> and Ben Ellery and Sam Dunning, "China 'infiltrates' groups welcoming Hongkongers to Britain", *The Times*, 18 April 2022, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/china-infiltrates-groups-welcoming-hongkongers-to-britain-f2w903c05>.

<sup>283</sup> "Geography ebook", Scotland's National Centre for Languages, <http://web.archive.org/web/20210514132516/https://scilt.org.uk/ChineseL3resources/Geographyebook/tabid/6151/Default.aspx>.



It is generally agreed that Mandarin teaching for schoolchildren in the UK is dependent upon these programmes.<sup>284</sup> There is also general agreement that it would be good for the UK to have more Mandarin speakers.

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<sup>284</sup> "See Julia Pamilih, "Briefing: Confucius Institutes in the UK", China Research Group, 13 June 2022, <https://chinaresearchgroup.org/research/confucius-institutes-in-the-uk> and Michael Natzler, "Understanding China: The study of China and Mandarin in UK schools and universities", Higher Education Policy Institute Report 148, March 2022, <https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Understanding-China-The-study-of-China-and-Mandarin-in-UK-schools-and-universities.pdf>.

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## 9. Policy recommendations

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This report has exposed a number of problematic activities that have taken place historically and that in some cases continue to take place at and around British Confucius Institutes.

It is worth repeating: British universities and the CCP hold opposed values.

Regardless of how effectively they uphold these principles, British universities are committed to free enquiry, freedom of speech, equality and freedom from discrimination, honest teaching, and the pursuit of knowledge.

Regardless of how often it claims to pursue the greater good, the CCP jails the enquiring, suppresses speech, destroys ethnic minorities and political dissidents, lies to its people, and spreads disinformation at home and abroad.

Viewed in this way, any partnership between British universities and the CCP was bound to produce problems: because the two sides differ fundamentally. Partnerships can, of course, overcome problems. But this was never a partnership of equals. Instead, it is the kind of combination that poses a fundamental threat to one of Britain's most important institutions.

Because no policy of risk mitigation can alter this incompatibility, the Confucius Institutes programme should have been rejected when it was launched nearly 20 years ago. No policy of risk mitigation can alter this incompatibility now. In view of this, this report offers the following recommendations:

### **1. The UK Government must set aside a £5 million fund for critical China studies (Sinology)**

There is a broad consensus that the UK needs to understand China better, both by bolstering language skills and strengthening the academic discipline of Sinology. In light of the CCP's deliberate attempts to curate Sinology using a variety of tactics including Confucius Institutes, the Government should set aside a substantial fund for scholars and research projects in critical Sinology.

This fund may include high-end language training both in Mandarin and other Chinese languages such as Cantonese. It should involve resources dedicated to the study of controversial or otherwise important areas such as PRC military and foreign policy, high technology in the PRC, ethnic minorities and autonomous regions, the CCP's 'overseas Chinese' policies, the United Front and Taiwan studies.

### **2. Further efforts should be made by universities and Government to build language-teaching capacity with other countries that are not ruled by authoritarian states but where large numbers of Mandarin speakers live**

The Taiwanese Government is interested in expanding its work in this area and already operates two centres in the UK.<sup>285</sup> Taiwan is host to over 20 million Mandarin speakers.

### **3. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) must urgently conduct a full investigation of the legality of CI hiring practices, and enforce compliance with existing equality legislation**

The Equality Act establishes the Equality Duty, by which public bodies such as universities must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination; specific duties include the need to publish relevant information showing compliance with this.<sup>286</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> "Taiwan Centers for Mandarin Learning", Overseas Community Affairs Council, Republic of China (Taiwan), 27 July 2022, <https://english.ocac.gov.tw/OCAC/Eng/Pages/Detail.aspx?nodeid=5894&pid=26496783>.

<sup>286</sup> "Equality Act 2010: guidance", Government Equalities Office and Equality and Human Rights Commission, 27 February 2013, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>.



This report has suggested that hundreds of staff at British universities have been recruited through a process that discriminates against protected characteristics such as race and religion or belief. This may well represent a breach of equality legislation.

The EHRC should urgently investigate universities with CIs and enforce compliance with the Act. It is highly probable that universities cannot run CI in full compliance with equality legislation.

#### **4. Legislation should be introduced to remove Confucius Institutes from British universities**

Bodies overseen by the CCP should have no place in higher education in the UK. The CCP and the Western academy hold opposite values. Any partnership between the two is unsustainable and degrading.

Careful thought is required as to the most appropriate mechanism for removing CIs from universities. Several case studies merit mention.

Legislation passed in Australia in December 2020 gave the Federal Government the power to intervene to cancel agreements entered into between foreign governments and Australian states, territories, councils or universities. This was expected to impact CIs. In Spring 2021, it was widely thought the new laws would lead to the closure of CIs. No university-based CIs have been closed. It is worth noting also that Australia has changed government from Liberal to Labor, and this may impact the use of the new powers. There have been warnings that the powers, because they are country-blind, create an undue burden for universities.

In the United States, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2021 imposed restrictions on the receipt of federal defense funding by institutions hosting CIs, defined as “a cultural institute directly or indirectly funded by the Government of the People’s Republic of China”.<sup>287</sup> As noted in chapter 4, this apparently led to the closure of the majority of the US’s CIs, however, the National Association of Scholars found that many were re-opening in a different guise.

Both the Australian and American examples highlight the significance of the reform of Hanban in 2020, treated in an earlier section in which is presented some evidence that the reform was intended to weaken criticism of the CI programme and neuter action taken to undermine it. From 2020 onwards, agreements governing CIs have been gradually transferred from Hanban, considered a Ministry of Education unit, to CIEF, which pretends to be a non-governmental organisation (NGO, see earlier section). This study has already shown that UK universities are echoing the claim that CIEF is a genuine NGO: this may be related to the stalling or reversal of (plans to force) the closure of CIs in the US and Australia.

Reviewing the situation in the UK and abroad, it is clear there are several problems to be solved in devising legislation to remove CIs from universities.

- I. Whether or not any new legislation would be country-blind and not name China or the CCP. Failing to do so could lead to undue workloads for universities relating to countries that present no threat to the UK. This has also been an issue in foreign registration legislation (which exists in the US and Australia; UK legislation is planned).

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<sup>287</sup> David Acevedo, “NDAA 2021 Plays Softball with Confucius Institutes”, National Association of Scholars, 22 December 2020, <https://www.nas.org/blogs/article/ndaa-2021-plays-softball-with-confucius-institutes> and “National Defense Authorization Act For Fiscal Year 2021” U.S. Government Publishing Office, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-116publ283/html/PLAW-116publ283.htm>.

- II. Whether the sham 'non-governmental' nature of the new body that oversees the Confucius Institutes programme could undermine legislation; or whether Confucius Institutes could reopen under new branding as in the US.
- III. Whether new legislation might confer undue or arbitrary new powers to government.

As it stands, a proposed amendment to the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill that is currently at the committee stage in the House of Lords would give the Government the power to cancel CI partnerships. This is the amendment put forward by Alicia Kearns MP and others. It would enable the Government to "terminate" a "partnership with an overseas organisation to deliver foreign language, culture or exchange programmes or courses" entered into by a registered higher education provider. The amendment is country-blind and would require the provider to submit details about the financial and contractual aspects of all such partnerships to the Office for Students and the Secretary of State.<sup>288</sup>

This amendment avoids the risk laid out in II, but it might create a burden on universities with regard to I. Most importantly, with regard to III, it is arbitrary, leaving it up to the Secretary of State to decide whether a partnership should be terminated.

Specifically with regard to CIs, *there is a genuine risk that future governments will choose not to use the powers*. There is no saying that the political will to terminate CIs will sustain itself, or that the current or a future government might opt not to use the powers in question, should it create an undue impact on relations with the PRC. After all, most of the UK's CIs were set up under and encouraged by Conservative governments. And successive British governments have shown a general unwillingness to specifically target China legislatively. This remains the case in spite of the fact that it is now generally agreed that China under the CCP presents a unique long-term risk to the UK, and that the Government has designated the country a "systemic competitor".

In order to mitigate the risk that the Government should not use or should abuse these powers, and in light of the fundamental threat posed to British universities by CIs, this report recommends a different amendment be introduced in the House of Lords. The amendment must reflect the values of free speech and academic freedom, and ensure that British universities uphold these values in the operation of their CIs. A proposal for the amendment follows:

*Where a British higher education institution has an agreement in place with a foreign power [this should be defined as in the current text of the National Security Bill, Part 1, 25 – Meaning of "foreign power"<sup>289</sup>] for a partnership to deliver a teaching or other academic programme of any kind in the UK, that agreement must stipulate:*

- i. That the law of [the country where the foreign power is based] must not apply in any way to the operation of the programme in the UK, including but not limited to the conduct of any staff resident in the UK in relation to the programme*
- ii. That the recruitment of staff, no matter where it takes place, must not contradict British equality legislation, and that [the British higher education institution] will produce evidence of compliance with such legislation and formally report this*

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<sup>288</sup> "Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill", UK Parliament, 7 July 2022, <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2862> and "Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill (Amendment Paper), House of Commons, 13 June 2022, [https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0001/amend/higherEd\\_day\\_rep\\_0613.pdf](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0001/amend/higherEd_day_rep_0613.pdf).

<sup>289</sup> "National Security Bill", UK Parliament, accessed 6 September 2022, <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0007/220007.pdf>.

*to the EHRC along with a guarantee that the university deems the recruitment process compliant*

- iii. That the programme must, in all its aspects, embody and promote the principles of freedom of speech and academic freedom, and must not actively preclude criticism of [the name of the governing political party in the country where the foreign power is located] and its political programmes*
- iv. That it (the agreement) must be published in full by [the British higher education institution]*
- v. That any annual reports and budgets related to the operation of the programme must also be published by [the British higher education institution]*

*The Secretary of State should have the power to grant exemptions on an annual basis to specific higher education institutions from requiring agreements to stipulate certain of these terms. The higher education institution must declare such exemptions publicly, and give a reason for them.*

The Secretary of State may wish to exempt the four CIs mentioned on page 57 – those at Ulster, University College London, Cardiff and Strathclyde – from requirements i, ii and iii, at least for the time being, on condition that they restrict themselves to language teaching. Not to do so may risk undermining the provision of Mandarin teaching in schools in the United Kingdom. In making this decision, the Secretary of State ought to evaluate the success of the existing Mandarin teaching programmes, and distinguish the teaching of Mandarin to large numbers of younger children for the sake of syllabus enrichment from the teaching of Mandarin to smaller numbers of older children for the sake of fluency acquisition.

In the long run, the Government ought to put in place programmes for the provision of Mandarin teaching in British schools that are not dependant on the Government of the PRC or on CIs based in universities.

There is no good reason for which a country such as the UK ought to put its higher education sector at risk by being dependant on a foreign government for the teaching of a major world language.

## 10. Methodology

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### *Information sources*

This report relies on a variety of sources of information:

- English-language online sources;
- Mandarin-language online sources;
- A set of interviews conducted with a range of experts and stakeholders;
- A campaign of nearly 100 Freedom of Information requests to 29 universities;
- Material picked up at several Confucius Institutes in London;
- Those mentioned in this report who were contacted for comment by the Henry Jackson Society.

### *Figure 1*

Figure 1 shows qualitative and incomplete data. As well as three institutes about whose activity not enough could be established to classify it, there were eight further institutes about which the authors remained uncertain, but which were nonetheless classified.

The classification was based on the following:

- Statements made on the website of the institute in question, including archives of past events;
- Other online sources, in English and Mandarin, describing the activity of the institute;
- The institution's agreement with Hanban and its agreement with its Chinese partner university;
- The other results of FOI releases, especially work plans and reports where these were made available.

### *Figure 2 and the estimation of 'missing funds'*

The estimate of the amount of 'missing' funding that has not been disclosed by universities is rough. The full methodology for these figures is not provided here, but the authors are willing to share it. Essentially, both the upper and lower estimates mentioned in this report are based on the calculation of an average figure received by CIs of which the host universities have offered relatively comprehensive funding data. This figure is then applied to those institutes that have released no data. The major part of the difference between the lower and upper estimates is explained by the inclusion and exclusion respectively of the Strathclyde and Edinburgh outliers from these average figures. A third estimate, which included an adjustment for the number of years a CI had been operational, was used to test these first two estimates. This third estimate was also used to determine the amounts shown in red in figure 2.







Title: "AN INVESTIGATION OF CHINA'S  
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