

Head, College of Business and Law

(Author)

**New Entry Pathway to College of Business and Law UG Programmes for Chinese Year 11 Students**

(Title of Item)

**Action requested** Approve

**Background rationale**

The international quotas for undergraduate business programmes of the College of Business and Law are consistently unfilled. This proposal was initially suggested by UCC's Shanghai representative as other international universities currently operate such policies and entry routes. This proposal attempts to address the unfilled international quotas by offering an additional entry route into undergraduate business programmes of the College of Business and Law. This is achieved by creating a pathway by which Chinese students who successfully complete Year 11 (certified) within the Chinese secondary school system followed by one-year international foundation programme delivered by an external provider may apply to enter undergraduate business programmes in UCC.

**Alignment to Strategic Objectives/External Policy Driver**

Strategic Goal 3. *Being pre-eminent in internationalisation, external engagement and contribution to society.*

Lead Action 7. *We will enhance **internationalisation** by strengthening our partnerships with universities of similar vision and by embedding a global perspective in all our activities. We will deliver on the key initiatives of our internationalisation strategy by strengthening the global UCC alumni network, exploiting further opportunities for the overseas delivery of our programmes and by increasing our international student cohort to 17%.*

Key Project 11. *Deliver on the key initiatives of our university-wide internationalisation strategy by strengthening our partnerships with universities of similar vision, strengthening the global UCC*

*alumni network, exploiting further opportunities for the overseas delivery of our programmes and by increasing our international student cohort to 17*

### **Resource Implications**

Minimal resource implications as key resource input will be evaluation of IFY results and Year 11 attainment. This would be very similar to consideration currently given to students who apply through the existing pathway for Chinese students that have completed the full three years of Senior High School.

### **Brief description / summary of the item**

An extension to entry routes into College of Business and Law programmes by creating a pathway by which Chinese students who successfully complete Year 11 within the Chinese secondary school system can progress to take a one-year International Foundation Year (IFY) programme, as accredited by Northern Consortium UK, provided by third party providers (For the proposed pilot period the provider would be Dublin International Foundation College). Entry to UCC would be subject to successful achievement of UCC specified attainment levels in the IFY coupled with high levels of certified attainment in the Senior High School Entrance Examination (the Huikao) of 6 A's. An English language course is included in the IFY programme and the results may be used as an alternative and equivalent to IELTS.

Approval is sought to pilot the programme with Dublin International Foundation College as the IFY partner after which a review will be undertaken.

The proposal to attract additional Chinese students was developed by Mr JB McCarthy and Dr Darius Whelan in consultation with UCC's Shanghai Representative, DIFC and staff of the Business School. The proposal was considered by the **Business School Board on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2016**. The Board were in favour of the proposal across the Business School Programmes but would favour implementation on a pilot basis. It was subsequently considered by the **College Internationalisation Committee on 04 October**. The following is an extract of the minute of that meeting which was sent to College Council.

#### ***"Policy – New Entry Route to UG Programmes via DIFC***

*Mr JB McCarthy introduced this proposal which is designed to attract Chinese students who expect to undertake third level education abroad, given the limited number of places in top tier home institutions. Mr McCarthy outlined the proposal which would be piloted in the College of Business and Law. It will offer an entry route to UCC subject to successful achievement of the International*

*Foundation Year (IFY) at an NCUK (Northern Consortium UK) accredited centre which for pilot purposes would be Dublin International Foundation College (DIFC). Mr McCarthy noted that student would also have to provide documentary proof of Huikao or appropriate High School Certificate in addition to achieving the standards required in the IFY to ensure that UCC matriculation requirements were achieved. Some concerns were expressed as to whether students exiting the Chinese education system in year 11 would possess this. The proposers indicated that certification was often issued after completion of the year and should be available by the time applicants completed their IFY study. Mr McCarthy noted that students could take the IYF with NCUK accredited providers subsequent to the pilot programme period during which DIFC will be the provider. Students would present with certification of English standards from DIFC as an equivalent to IELTS requirements. On the basis of these assurances the Internationalisation Committee agreed that that the proposal be recommended to College Council to run on a pilot basis with a review thereafter.”*

The Proposal was considered by **College Council on 12 October**. It was noted that Mr McCarthy stated that as a higher percentage of Chinese students (compared to Indian) come to the College of Business and Law so it is important to further expand this market and the pathway is designed to capture the students earlier in the process with a conditional offer linked to UCC. Peers in the UK, US and Australia already offer this opportunity which is accredited by NCUK with 12 northern UK colleges involved. With regard to IELTS, English is an academic programme in the foundation year at DIFC and is therefore applied English. It is proposed that the pathway is run on a pilot basis for a year. The question was raised as to how it aligns to the CAO model. Mr McCarthy replied that the IO has a table of CAO rankings which it, and not the College, administers. College Council approved the new pathway for forwarding to Academic Board for consideration.

Academic Board are asked to give the proposal favourable consideration on a pilot basis.

# Proposal to add pathway to College of Business and Law UG programmes for Chinese Year 11 students who successfully take the DIFC International Foundation Year.

## **Strategic Rationale**

Dr Huang Haibo of the UCC International Office is based in Shanghai and has highlighted an opportunity for UCC to increase UG recruitment by approving a pathway for Chinese Y11 (students who have completed Year 11/second year of their senior middle school) with appropriate grades who can be accepted into the Dublin International Foundation College (DIFC) International Foundation Year (IFY) Programme before coming to UCC. The quota for international students for UG programmes in the College of Business and Law is not being met at present and as such the College is interested in exploring this opportunity as an initial pilot in 2016/2017 and if successful extending the advertisement of the pathway for 2017/2017 and beyond.

The reports highlighted in this paper state the China market is transforming from a mainly PG market to more a mix of UG and PG. While the numbers of Chinese students have grown in recent years, CUBS expects to grow the Chinese market significantly to get our international student ratio to at least 30%. The Chinese market is key to this since we have had larger numbers of 2x2 students in the past yet we still fail to fill our UG international student quotas.

While we have a pathway for Senior Secondary Graduation Certificate (those that finish three years) we do not have a pathway for the year 11 student market (those that finish two years) which has a large potential for UCC according to Haibo. Since our peers and competitors have these pathways and are ahead of us with rates of international students it would seem rational we take this input on board and open up this new pathway since it is not duplicating anything we have and is designed to capture the students earlier in the process with a conditional offer linked to UCC.

## **Background to Chinese Education System**

Chinese Year 11 (Senior High School Year 2 Gao Er) students that intend to travel abroad to go to university in an English speaking country need to successfully complete an International Foundation Year programme with DIFC (or equivalent) before gaining unconditional acceptance. Typically, Chinese Y11 students will need 6 x A's in six of their year 11 academic programmes. Senior High School Entrance Examination is considered to be between GCSE and GCE A level standard. Those students with high grades may be considered for admission to access or foundation level programmes according to UCAS

(<https://www.ucas.com/sites/default/files/2015-international-qualifications.pdf> )

According to a NUFFIC report on the education system in China, the *Huikao* has been replaced in a number of provinces by a new Academic Proficiency Test (*Xueye Shuiping*

*Ceshi/Kaoshi*). Exams are conducted twice a year and excellent students can sit the exam from the second year of senior secondary/ middle school onwards. However, three compulsory subjects of Chinese, mathematics and a foreign language are only examined in the third year of the senior secondary school cycle. Therefore, students presenting the *Xueye Shuiping Ceshi/Kaoshi* are **not** included in this pathway and should leverage the existing pathway for students that complete the full three years of Senior High School.

**Educational stages in China (Wikipedia)**

| Typical Age | Education   | Levels       | Compulsory |
|-------------|---|--------------|------------|
| 18–22       | University or college                                   | Varies       | No         |
| 15–18       | Senior high school (middle school) or Vocational school | Grades 10–12 | No         |
| 12–15       | Junior middle school                                    | Grades 7–9   | Yes        |
| 6–12        | Primary school  | Grades 1–6   | Yes        |

**Growth in Chinese 3<sup>rd</sup> Level**

China’s higher education system continues to expand at a breakneck pace. Enrolment levels and participation rates are all trending sharply upward, and the system continues to grow at the equivalent of roughly one new university per week (BBC report). China is now one of the world’s top study destinations, and attracted nearly 380,000 foreign students in 2014. International enrolment in China increased by 15% between 2012 and 2014, and the country aims to host 500,000 students by 2020 (IECF report).

UNESCO statistics indicate that gross enrolment ratios (the percentage of the college-aged population enrolled in tertiary education) have spiked over the last five years as well, from about 24% in 2010 to just under 40% as of 2014. This translates into nearly 42,000,000 students in tertiary education programmes in 2014, and compares to an enrolment of roughly 20 million in the US higher education that year.

The growing strength of Chinese higher education is contributing to a shift in outbound mobility patterns as well. For example, whereas most Chinese students in the US have traditionally pursued graduate studies, the balance has shifted over the last 15 years to the point where now roughly equally numbers of Chinese students are enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. This is in part because more Chinese scholars are staying home to do their postgraduate work and research at domestic institutions (ICEF report).

Data from the Chinese Ministry of Education reveals that both the total number of outbound students as well as the number of returnees from study abroad reached record levels in 2015. However, growth has slowed over the last two years and is notably below the average annual growth of recent decades. A “blue book,” or government report, published by the Ministry on 25 March 2016 indicates that 523,700 Chinese students headed abroad to study in 2015. This represents a 13.9% increase over 2014 levels but marks the second consecutive year – after 11.1% growth in 2014 – of growth levels below the 19.1% average annual growth over the past four decades. At a press conference announcing the report, Qi Mo, head of the Ministry’s Overseas Study Department, noted that returnees are coming home in greater numbers because the domestic job market is more appealing than those overseas. This may be especially true for students of Business or other non-STEM subjects in the US, for whom opportunities to stay and work are more limited than is the case for graduates of science, technology, or engineering programmes.

A related survey of 25,000 new returnees, or “sea turtles” as they are popularly known indicates that the most popular study destinations remain the US, the UK, Australia, South Korea, and Japan. The US was noted as the most-popular choice for PhD studies among responding returnees, and South Korea for undergraduate studies. Nearly half of survey respondents intended to work in one of China’s leading cities – Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen – and nearly three in ten (29%) hoped to work in a multinational company. Roughly a third (30%) planned to work in the financial sector, 10% in education, 8% in culture, and 7% in software and IT services. Six in ten returnees tracked in the survey were women and most are between 23 and 33 years old (with an average age of 27).

The forecast for students that might register in UCC for September 2017 is less than 10 in total since we are late in the recruiting cycle but we would hope to grow this in future years as more agents become aware of this pathway. Approval of this pathway early in semester 1 in 2016 would be very timely so we can start to advertise it with the Chinese agents.

### **Targeted Programmes in UCC**

The programmes that would be most attractive to these students include:

**[CK201]** [HYPERLINK "http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com002.html"](http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com002.html) [HYPERLINK](http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com002.html)

["http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com002.html"](http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com002.html) BComm [HYPERLINK](http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com002.html)

["http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com002.html"](http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com002.html) (Hons)

**[CK202]** [HYPERLINK "http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com004.html"](http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com004.html) BSc (Hons)

["http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com004.html"](http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com004.html) (Accounting)

**[CK203]** [HYPERLINK "http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com005.html"](http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com005.html) BSc (Hons) (Business

["http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com005.html"](http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com005.html) Information Systems)

**[CK204]** [HYPERLINK "http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com006.html"](http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/commerce/com006.html) BSc (Hons) (Finance)

**[CK502]** [HYPERLINK "http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/food/food003b.html"](http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/food/food003b.html) BSc (Hons) (Food Marketing and Entrepreneurship)

**[CK506]** [HYPERLINK "http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/food/food010.html"](http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/food/food010.html) BSc (Hons) (International Development and Food Policy)

[\[CK301\] HYPERLINK "http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/law/law018.html"](http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/law/law018.html) BCL (Hons) (Pathways)

[\[CK307\] HYPERLINK "http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/law/law017.html"](http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/law/law017.html) BCL (Hons) (Law and Business)  
Degree

### **DIFC IFY Programme and Acceptance to UCC**

The IFY programme run by DIFC is accredited by a consortium of UK universities called NCUK (Northern Consortium United Kingdom) <https://www.ncuk.ac.uk/> . Partner universities and institutes that accept DIFC graduates are listed below.

| <b>NCUK PARTNER UNIVERSITIES and INSTITUTES</b>  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Ireland (12)</b><br>University College Cork<br>National University of Ireland Galway<br>Maynooth University<br>University of Limerick<br>Queens University Belfast<br>Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)<br>Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)<br>Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT)<br>Cork Institute of Technology (CIT)<br>Shannon College Hotel Management<br>National College of Ireland<br>Griffith College Dublin / Cork | <b>UK (17)</b><br>Queen Mary University of London<br>Kingston University<br>*Manchester Metropolitan University<br>*Leeds Beckett University<br>*University of Manchester<br>*Liverpool John Moores University<br>*University of Liverpool<br>*University of Leeds<br>*University of Sheffield<br>*Sheffield Hallam University<br>University of Bristol<br>*University of Bradford<br>*University of Huddersfield<br>*University of Salford<br>Aston University<br>University of Kent<br>University of Birmingham |

Note: \*The universities that own NCUK and underwrite the NCUK guarantee Note: \*Guarantee does not apply to Medical courses  
Study Programmes: Business, Health & Science (Medicine), Engineering (IT)  
- NCUK has its own application system / no need to apply initially through CAO/UCAS  
- EAP = IELTS (no need to sit IELTS for application for entry to University)

Acceptance to a UCC programme is based on marks the student received for their DIFC IFY examinations plus documentary proof of Huikao or appropriate High School Certificate. Final matriculation to UCC is not possible until the student has presented the appropriate High School certificate and achieved the required result in their IFY tests. Prior to this, students will be made aware by DIFC that they have achieved only conditional acceptance to UCC until all entrance requirements are met.

There are multiple other equivalent IFY programmes (list below from Haibo) available at other universities that accept Chinese Y11 students plus IFY. Some foundation programmes are run internally within universities or in conjunction with industry partners or other universities and are equivalent to the DIFC IFY offering.

The University of Queensland (QS# 46)

<http://www.foundationyear.com/EntryRequirements.asp?menu=info>

University of Reading (QS# 156)

<https://www.reading.ac.uk/ifp/Entryrequirements/IFP-academic-entry-requirements.aspx>

University of Warwick (QS# 48)

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/study/ifp/apply/entrycriteria/>

The University of Western Australia (QS# 98)

<http://www.studyat.uwa.edu.au/undergraduate/requirements/foundation/requirements>

The University of Melbourne (QS# 42)

<http://www.trinity.unimelb.edu.au/learning/foundation-studies/apply--enrol/entry-requirements.html>

The University of Nottingham (QS# 70)

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/ugstudy/courses/foundationcourses/what-is-a-foundation-year/frequently-asked-questions.aspx>

The standard DIFC IFY programme has three streams (1) Business Studies, (2) Engineering and (3) Health Sciences.



Depending on the grades the student achieves in their DIFC IFY programme they will be offered a place on a programme they have selected in UCC or failing that DIFC Guidance Counsellors will have a second choice at a lower ranked university or IoT and possibly a third choice at Griffith College. This minimises any risk to the student and to DIFC that the student will not be placed in a higher level institution.

English language requirements for UG study (e.g. IELTS 6.0 with no sub-section less than 5.5) is covered by the English Academic Programme (EAP) study course within DIFC. The EAP ensures that potential UCC UG students will come to UCC at the required level.

DIFC plan to open a centre in Cork for students that are targeting UCC as their first choice. DIFC are hopeful that the initial cohort of students will start in their new Cork centre in September 2017. The DIFC IFY is an academically accredited programme and sample grades below highlight the standards required by various institutions for access to their programmes. The grades below are from 2015 and are adjusted annually to reflect demand and the CAO results. An “A” grade is equivalent to 120 points so the max a student can achieve is 360 points from their three academic subjects. In their EAP test the student needs to get a “C” which is equivalent to IELTS 6.0 for UG admission or for those doing a Pre-Masters they need to obtain a “B” in the EAP test which equates to IELTS 6.5.

**Sample Entry Requirements to selected UG Programmes for DIFC IFY graduates.**

| <b>University</b>                  | <b>QS Ranking</b> | <b>Finance CK204</b> | <b>Law CK301</b> | <b>Accounting CK202</b> | <b>Commerce CK201</b> | <b>BIS CK203</b> |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| University College Cork            | 233               | 340/AAB              | 320/ABB          | 340/AAB                 | 320/ABB               | 320/ABB          |
| University of Sheffield            | 80                | 340/AAB              | 360/AAA          | 340/AAB                 | 320/ABB               | 340/AAB          |
| University of Liverpool            | 151               | 340/AAB              | 320/ABB          | 340/ABB                 | 340/AAB               | 320/ABB          |
| Leeds University                   | 87                | 340/AAB              | 340/AAB          | 340/AAB                 | 340/AAB               | NA               |
| Queens University Belfast          | 182               |                      |                  |                         |                       |                  |
| University of Salford              | 651-700           | 260/BCC              | 260/BCC          | 260/BCC                 | 280/BBC               | 260/BCC          |
| University of Bradford             | 551-600           | 280/BBC              | 300/BBB          | 280/BBC                 | 280/BBC               | 260/BCC          |
| University of Huddersfield         | 701+              | 300/BBB              | 340/AAB          | 300/BBB                 | 300/BBB               | 300/BBB          |
| Leeds Beckett University           |                   | 300/BBB              | 300/BBB          | 300/BBB                 | 300/BBB               | 280/BBC          |
| Sheffield Hallam University        |                   | 260/BCC              | 300/AAA          | 260/BCC                 | 260/BCC               | 220/CCD          |
| Liverpool John Moores University   |                   | 280/BBC              | 300/BBB          | 280/BBC                 | 280/BBC               | NA               |
| Manchester Metropolitan University | 701+              | 240/CCC              | 280/BBC          | 220 /CCD                | 240/CCC               | 240/CCC          |