

Knowledge Transfer between the UK and China

Cable & Wireless Virtual Academy President, **Professor David Mellor OBE**, explores the practical difficulties in the sharing of knowledge across continents and cultures.

Introduction

I first visited China in 1995 as part of a delegation from Coventry Council, UK. The purpose of the visit was to explore with the Lord Mayor how Coventry might be able to assist its partner city in China, Jinan, with development. Jinan is in Shandong Province and is focussed on manufacturing. It has a population of approximately 11 million.

On arrival in China in 1995 in the capital city, Beijing, there were a small number of English signs. However very few people were prepared to converse in English and all business discussions were handled via interpreters.



Professor David Mellor

As part of my initial introduction to China I found myself attending several formal banquets and visiting several factories. The highlight for me was a formal meeting with the Director of Jinan Telecommunications Bureau. Being unable to converse in Chinese I relied heavily on the interpreter who has since become a long-standing friend. Shu Hui Sun has proved to be my direct access to the understanding of the education needs of the telecommunications sector in China.

Identifying the challenge

In 1997 I was given a detailed tour of the Telecommunications Bureau accompanied by Shu Hui Sun and it was at this time that I learned why the technical competence was so high whilst business knowledge was considerably lacking and in some cases non-existent. Technical training is the responsibility of China Telecom who operate 100 training schools, six universities and a research centre. However human development is the responsibility of the local mayor whose budget rarely stretches beyond a four-week study period for each individual. With seven academic centres focussing on telecommunications engineering it quickly became apparent that China was probably more advanced than the UK in this particular area whereas management education was an area where we could be of help.

In 1998 the Premier of China paid a state visit to the UK and a member of

his delegation was President Lin Jintong of Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications (BUPT). As Chairman of the United Kingdom Telecommunications Academy (UKTA), I was invited to present how the UK could constructively help BUPT with programme development. My previous three years' research enabled me to suggest that it wasn't technical skills that were needed in China but a broad business awareness of how the sector is changing. The UKTA proposal was extremely well received and was subsequently implemented in China.

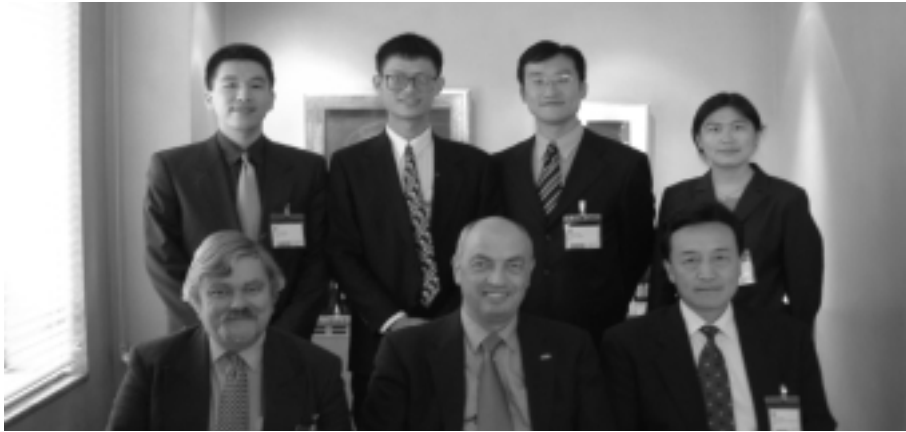
Implementation

I first presented a lecture in 1999 to a group of 70 professors at BUPT and despite asking how many understood English only two replies were received. The body language of the group told me they did not follow the spoken word. Yet the ability of the Chinese people to read, retain and write in English is of a particularly high standard. The issue is mainly perfection: the Chinese have extremely high standards and do not like to make mistakes. The initial lecture was in an extremely depressing room with only a blackboard and chalk. Moreover the desks were at least 50 years old.

I reviewed my experience after the first lecture with President Lin Jintong and it was agreed that I would deliver two lectures a year to the MBA Group of BUPT and that all participants

attending my lectures would have to attain an agreed level of English Literacy based on IELTS.

In November 2002 I delivered a lecture with almost 100 delegates present and the participation level was of an exceptional standard with well-formulated questions. Moreover, this time the facilities of the lecture theatre were of a very high standard.



Professor Mellor with Michael Hilton, FCO, President Lin Jintong, and students

As a Visiting Professor to BUPT I have now been invited to develop a 30 hour module on telecommunications regulation as part of the International Telecommunications Union Centre of Excellence Programme.

The key to building relationships in China is to demonstrate you have something measurable to offer. Arriving as a new friend, you will steadily become an old friend and your knowledge will be valued. Patience is the key!

Supporting programmes

Having identified that management skills were in short supply, a number of UKTA Management Programmes have been delivered in China in several provinces. However the individuals receiving the knowledge need to be rewarded academically for their efforts.

In conjunction with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Cable &

Wireless have supported a considerable number of Chevening Scholars on Master's Degree Programmes at various universities. The MSc programme at Coventry has been well received by the Chinese since it has a practical application of the various management skills they require and the considerable benefit of experiences from other parts of the world is a key ingredient in the programme.

Although the Cable & Wireless Virtual Academy has developed a number of relevant e-education programmes at master's degree Level, the Chinese are not yet ready to study in English online. However I predict that this will become a prominent methodology used in China within five years.

New learning styles

In 2002 I was invited by South West University for Nationalities (SWUN) in Chengdu to comment as to how e-learning might assist with their teaching challenges. The University is endeavouring to educate the 54 minority nationalities of China - some 300,000,000 people.

Professor Chen Yu Ping is the President of SWUN and together we are exploring learning styles.

The conventional style of teaching in China is that approximately 100 students per class sit behind desks and are told by the professor what they should know.

However the social skills of the Chinese are extremely high. During an early visit to Jinan, I was hosted for lunch by the Assistant Director who had given no indication during the business meeting of his ability to speak in English. I was one of eleven at lunch and the Assistant Director then declared that everyone should ask questions in English. As the drink flowed and food was consumed everyone was encouraged and helped to converse in English and the standard was much higher than I had anticipated during the business discussions.

To see how these social skills can be harnessed for learning, Professor Chen and I are planning to attempt to run a weekend workshop on a voluntary basis using round tables and flip charts where the students do all the work and we merely facilitate. The proposed topic is 'What is Management?'

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Conclusion

The culture of the Chinese people is very different from the UK and they demonstrate a high regard for their superiors. The barriers to knowledge are being broken down. Considerable satisfaction can and will be gained by those who share their ideas. Presidents Lin and Chen are extremely grateful for the help their respective Universities receive from the UK and are both influential within the education and political structures of China. Without their support I would have been unable to achieve the valuable links I have established between UK and Chinese communications sectors.

Feature

Advertising update

The Changing Face of Recruitment Advertising

Piers Pennington, Head of ACU's Advertising and Recruitment Services, explores the changing nature of recruitment advertising for higher education



Fifteen years ago, placing an advertisement for academic vacancies in the press was a straightforward procedure. All you had to do was to send the typewritten copy to your advertising agency; they might by then have begun to expect word-processed text from their more technologically advanced clients but would still not be surprised to receive hand-written scrawl from others. The agency would then pass the advertisement on to the relevant journals, usually by mail or messenger, having processed it as an order but otherwise unchecked and unchanged, and would pocket its sizeable commission.

Each journal would then set the text, normally 'semi-display', which meant a small heading and a block of uniform print alongside several dozen nearly identical advertisements, and the client would several weeks later receive a cutting revealing the laughable misprints and transpositions of phone numbers

which explained why nobody had responded to the invitation to apply.

True, a few academics might be tempted by the requirement to 'simulate' rather than 'stimulate' research activity but would no doubt be put off by having to do so in the 'faulty' laboratories instead of those provided by the faculty.

Image awareness

This picture changed quite rapidly. Universities began to appreciate the importance of a corporate image and realised that recruitment advertising offered a useful means of presenting it. At first this meant little more than the addition of the university logo to the copy. This offered further opportunities for typesetters to subvert the desired message; the logo of one distinguished Asian university depicted a figure standing at a lectern which, turned sideways, was transformed into an old-fashioned motor-horn with a squeezable rubber bulb. Such misfortunes helped to persuade advertisers to take control of the process and switch to display advertising, so that camera ready copy

was prepared by the agency rather than the journal and checked by the client before appearing in print.

This transformation was aided by the willingness of the media, spurred on by increasing competition, to offer volume discounts, particularly to consortia of advertisers, and of the advertising agencies to begin to share with clients some of the commission they received.

So while advertisements tended to be larger, the additional expense was not as great as it might have been, and the end product was better designed and in the clients' control. Thus ACU members using our own advertising services began to benefit not only from the improved appearance of their advertisements but also from substantial discounts amounting to around £60,000 per year.

But while technological developments were transforming press advertising, they were at the same time threatening it as the World Wide Web began to flourish. In its early ideological days

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couple of clicks on the mouse can bring up full details on the job, the location and perhaps even an on-line application form to complete. If candidates register their interest with ACU Advertising Services, details of relevant vacancies can be emailed to them automatically; and while there is an argument that many applicants still prefer to browse through pages of vacancies in print at their leisure or on their journey to and from work, the rapid advances in internet access via handhelds and mobile phones are making online advertising ever more attractive and cost-effective.

Educational publications have so far been reluctant to separate their print and website advertising, with income from the latter relying on additional features such as university profiles and 'job of the week' promotions which offer additional prominence to advertisements. It may well be that this will soon change, and the traditional media will seek to compete directly with 'website only' advertisers by offering more cost-effective online advertising of their own.

when the internet was a vehicle for sharing information, rather than a huge virtual shopping mall, it was not unusual for universities to place recruitment advertisements on their own sites. Most journals also launched websites that carried the same advertisements as their printed versions at no extra charge.

ACU's advertising and recruitment services

ACU responded by launching its innovative International Noticeboard service which offered (and continues to offer) a unique combination of printed and electronic coverage (including websites, the *Guardian Weekly* journal and our own printed vacancies bulletin) for a small fixed charge (currently £185).

In the UK the launch of the www.jobs.ac.uk website in January 1998 provided direct competition to the educational press by providing a format which gathered together recruitment advertisements from a rapidly expanding number of universities on a single site. Thus it became much cheaper to advertise on this website than in the traditional media. The site also became an integral part of the International Noticeboard service offering ACU members access to a wide range of staff actively seeking academic posts while providing the new site with an international dimension to broaden its appeal.

The future of recruitment advertising

While few institutions have yet been tempted to advertise exclusively online, there has been a noticeable decline recently in the volume of press advertising placed by universities. In many ways it is easier for potential applicants to obtain further information from website advertising, where a

ASSOCIATION OF COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITIES		
University	Post	Ref.
AFRICA & THE CARIBBEAN		
Botswana	SL Educational Foundations (Research, Design, Statistics)	W5088
Botswana	SL Educational Foundations (Gender Education & Development)	W5089
Botswana	PIAP Educational Foundations	W5089
Botswana	SL Educational Foundations (Psychology)	W5089
Botswana	SL Primary Education	W5089
Botswana	SL/L Environmental Science (Tourism)	W5089
Botswana	SL/L Environmental Science (Management/Economics)	W5089
Botswana	SL Economics	W5089
Rhodes (South Africa)	SL/L English	W5090
West Indies (Trinidad)	L English Language Foundation Courses	W5090
West Indies (Trinidad)	L/LAL History	W5090
NEW ZEALAND		
Auckland	SL/L Law	W5090
Christchurch (Dunedin)	SL/L Physics	W5090
Victoria (Wellington)	SL/L (Organic) Chemistry	W5090
PACIFIC		
Malaya	P Geography (Physical/Human)	W5090
Malaya	AP Social & Preventive Medicine	W5090
Malaya	L Medicine (Primary Care/Anatomy)	W5090
Malaya	L Education (Mathematics/Chemistry)	W5090
Malaya	L Applied Economics	W5091
National Univ. Singapore	Dean, NUS Business School	W508
UNITED KINGDOM		
Oxford	P Orthopaedic Trauma Surgery	W5090

Abbreviations: P - Professor; AP - Associate Professor; SL - Senior Lecturer; L - Lecturer; AL - Assistant Lecturer.

For further details of any of the above staff vacancies please contact ACU Advertising, 36 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PF, UK (internet, tel. +44 (0)20 7380 67 [UK office hours]; fax: +44 (0)20 7380 6776; e-mail: adverts@acu.ac.uk), quoting reference number of post(s).

For full details and a wide range of information on employment opportunities Commonwealth universities visit our website <http://www.acu.ac.uk/adverts>. Want to continue teaching - and experience a new country - after you retire? Visit <http://www.acu.ac.uk/adverts/ret>

Promoting educational co-operation throughout the Commonwealth

Paper: Guardian Weekly
 Classification: Appts
 Date: Thursday 10 July 2003
 Size: 150 x 122 (15 x 3)
 SCC: £ 28.50
 Media Cost: £ 1282.50 less discount = 897.75
 Production: £ 0
 Client Ref: ACU/295 - Piers Pennington
 Filed: L:\clients\UAC\ACU\ACU03 Jul\ACU-295

THIS PROOF MUST BE CHECKED AND SIGNED BEFORE ACCEPTING FROM OR RETURNING TO BARKERS EDUCATION

OPERATOR/CHECKED:	Beth	PROOF No. 01
ACCOUNT ADMIN (NB Final - Exec/Dir)		
Checked by:		Time:
CLIENT APPROVAL		
Client Initials:		Time:
APPROVED	Number of PMTs/Time:	

Placing an advertisement with ACU's services

Piers Pennington is Chair of the University Advertising Consortium and has worked for ACU's advertising and recruitment services for more than fifteen years.

ACU Advertising provides cost-effective recruitment solutions for the international higher education sector, from print advertising to web-based services.

Details of ACU's services can be found at www.acu.ac.uk/adverts or by emailing adverts@acu.ac.uk

Feature

International Volunteering

American Students Launch 'Marshall Plan' for Rwanda's First Public Library

By **Lauren Baer** and **Zachary Kaufman**, Marshall Scholars

Marshall Scholars for the Kigali Public Library (MSKPL), a group of young American students studying in England, has joined with the American Friends of the Kigali Public Library (AFKPL) and the Rotary Club of Kigali-Virunga to build the first public library in Rwanda. With more than a million dollars in pledged funds, the Kigali Public Library campaign is nearing its goal of enabling all Rwandans to access knowledge freely and therefore to gain the tools to build a democratic society.

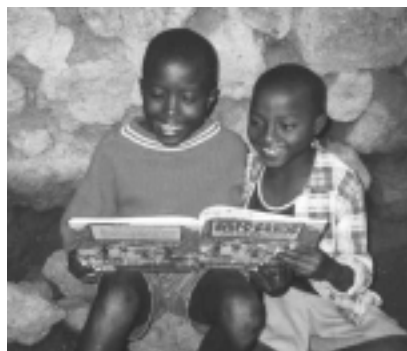


Zachary with Raj Rajendran and Edson Mpyisi, of the Rotary Club of Kigali-Virunga, at the site.

The Kigali Public Library campaign has received strong support from both the Rwandan community, including Rwandan President Paul Kagame, and the international community. The Government of Rwanda has donated a centrally located plot of land in Kigali, Rwanda's capital, and promised US\$500,000 to support the effort. Foreign governments, international institutions, multinational corporations, non-governmental organisations, and individual donors have offered their generous support. The European Union, PEN International, Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International, the Boeing Company, Rotary Clubs on three

continents, and the Governments of Canada and Switzerland are among the contributors.

Through the establishment of this library, a sanctuary for knowledge and a forum for the free exchange of ideas, it is our hope that the tools people used to kill their neighbours in the brutal genocide of 1994, will be replaced with the tools to help rebuild Rwandan society. Successful completion of this monumental effort will mark a watershed in Rwanda's history, finally providing unfettered access to a treasure trove of knowledge that has so far been unavailable to a population of over eight million people. The library will also be a monument to serve as a permanent reminder to all Rwandans and the rest of the world that the atrocities committed in 1994 will never be forgotten.



MSKPL emerged from the desire of the 2002 class of Marshall Scholars to live up to the spirit of post-conflict reconstruction that underlies their prestigious fellowship. Created by the British Government as an act of gratitude for the post-World War II European Recovery Program, the so-called 'Marshall Plan', the scholarships

annually enable 40 of America's most promising young scholars to pursue at least two years of postgraduate study in the UK.

It was important to us that we not only receive this generous award graciously, but that we give something back in return. Marshall Scholars are chosen in part for their commitment to George Marshall's ideals. We seek to demonstrate this commitment not only with words, but also with action.

Rwandan Prime Minister Bernard Makuza placed the cornerstone of the new library on 11 May 2001, and construction began in October 2001. We plan to open Rwanda's first public library in 2005.

For more information about the Kigali Public Library, please visit our website at www.marshallscholarship.org/kpl.

To make a donation contact Zachary Kaufman at zachary.kaufman@aya.yale.edu Or telephone: +44 (0) 7787-150-158.

Marshall Scholarships finance young Americans of high ability to study for a degree in the UK. The scheme is funded by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and administered by the Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission in the UK, for which the ACU provides the Secretariat.

For further details, see www.acu.ac.uk/marshall

National Academic Recognition Centres

Helen Ward explains NARIC's work, while ACU Librarian Nick Mulhern identifies comparable initiatives across the world

The UK National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) is contracted by the Department for Education and Skills to provide comparability information on the UK level of overseas qualifications. ACU and UK NARIC have recently agreed to work together to provide further support and information to their respective members.

The UK NARIC is a member of the network of NARICs throughout the European Union, and a wider operation of a European Network of Information Centres (ENICs) across Europe, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and USA. The network is coordinated by the Directorate General of Education and Culture of

the European Commission and the Council of Europe. Their work also falls within the framework of UNESCO, linking the UK NARIC/ENIC to other regional offices worldwide.

As well as working closely with the NARIC/ENIC network and other key partners across the world, the UK NARIC services are accepted by the many universities, government bodies, professional bodies, employers and other organisations who are members in the UK and overseas.

UK NARIC membership provides:

- Year-long access to the international database – containing over 180

country files and comparability statements for 2000+ overseas qualifications

- Updates three times a year with new features, qualification and country updates
- Access to the enquiry team to help with more complex qualification queries
- Membership rates for specialist training and research
- One free entrance to the UK NARIC Annual Conference in November

For further information or the free quarterly newsletter please e-mail membership@naric.org.uk or visit www.naric.org.uk

International Qualifications Comparability

The NARIC (National Academic Recognition Information Centre) network was a European Commission initiative, established in 1984, to encourage better recognition of qualifications in Europe, and thus further student mobility.

A comparable network, as mentioned above is ENIC (European Network of Information Centres) (Details are accessible at: www.enic-naric.net).

What organisations exist elsewhere?

Australia: The National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) aims to 'help the overseas-trained to work and study in Australia by providing information, advice and assistance in relation to the recognition of overseas qualifications and skills', and to

encourage improved international arrangements for such recognition. To promote this, it issues a series of 'Country Education Profiles' which summarise the education systems of some 80 countries and detail the comparability of overseas qualifications to Australia (www.dest.gov.au/noosr).

Canada: The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC). Likewise, it 'collects, organises, and distributes information' as well as being 'a national clearing house and referral service to support the recognition and portability of Canadian and international educational and occupational qualifications' (www.cicic.ca).

US: NAFSA: Association of International Educators promotes educational

exchange to and from the US. Many of its members work as international student advisers and as a network it circulates information on overseas institutions and qualifications (www.nafsa.org).

UNESCO has been a significant coordinating agency in the recognition of international qualifications, influential both in its support for a series of conventions and agreements, and its publications. A 'World Directory of National Information Centre for Academic Recognition and Mobility' was first prepared and published by UNESCO in 1995, with a revised edition information being issued in 1998. (It remains available online, though some of the information has been superseded.) (www.unesco.org/education/educprog/am/world/index.htm)