

## **Accelerating and scaling up education opening-up and significantly improving the international influences of China's education sector**

The Opinions on Accelerating and Scaling Up Education Opening-up in the New Era from Ministry of Education and Seven Other Government Departments (“The Opinions”) was recently released. This document states that the opening up of education to the outside world (‘opening-up policy’) is a distinct characteristic of and important driving force for China’s education modernisation. Guided by Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, China’s education endeavours should adhere to its opening-up policy, and proactively strengthen mutual understanding, communication and exchange with all nations, in order to achieve a more comprehensive, wide-ranging and multi-faceted opening-up.

The Opinions sets the tone for internal and external coordination, improvement on quality and efficiency, active leadership, and progressive opening-up, and lays out the priorities for education opening-up in the ‘New Era’.

1. Education opening-up should implement an expanded in-depth reform agenda. The Opinions focuses on removing institutional barriers, strengthening the reform of TNE operations, improving Chinese HEIs’ education delivery overseas, reforming Chinese HEIs’ approval policies regarding their foreign affairs, and continuing reforms related to overseas Chinese students and foreign students, experts and teachers in China.
2. Education opening-up should prioritise the development of globally competitive talents. The Opinions calls for enhancing the global competitiveness of talent development in the higher education sector and speeding up the cultivation of high-level international talents with global perspectives; encouraging better accessibility to vocational education and faster development of an internationally advanced vocation education system with Chinese characteristics; improving the opening-up of the elementary education sector and developing a young generation of the New Era with all-round moral, intellectual, physical and aesthetic grounding with a hard-working spirit and global perspective.
3. Education opening-up should push to develop the full potential of high-quality higher education. The Opinions states the intention to improve the balance in overseas education, build up a reputable ‘Study in China’ brand, deepen international cooperation in education, encourage mutual recognition of academic credits and mutual awarding of degree by Chinese and foreign institutions, and to expand the global influence of China’s online education offer. In the meantime, high-quality international educational resources should be supplied to less developed institutions located in central and western China through “Internet +” and “Smart Technology +” provisions.

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4. Education opening-up should actively contribute to the global education governance with Chinese solutions. The Opinions puts forward plans for upgrading education-related projects under the “Belt and Road” initiative, expanding the international supplies of public educational offers, deepening cooperation with key international organisations, and implementing education objectives under the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals by 2030; establishing a framework for developing and promoting international education programmes with Chinese characteristics, improving international assimilation of the Chinese language and supporting an increasing number of countries in Chinese language teaching.

The Opinions makes clear the responsibilities of Party Committees and governments of all levels, and emphasises that under the unified leadership of the Party committee, the government should give full play to the role of overall planning and coordination and set education opening-up as a priority in the agenda. The document also calls for establishing and improving the inter-departmental joint-action mechanism within the government, enhancing assurance measures and intelligence-based support, mitigating risks effectively, and mobilising a wide range of social resources to support the efforts of education opening-up.