

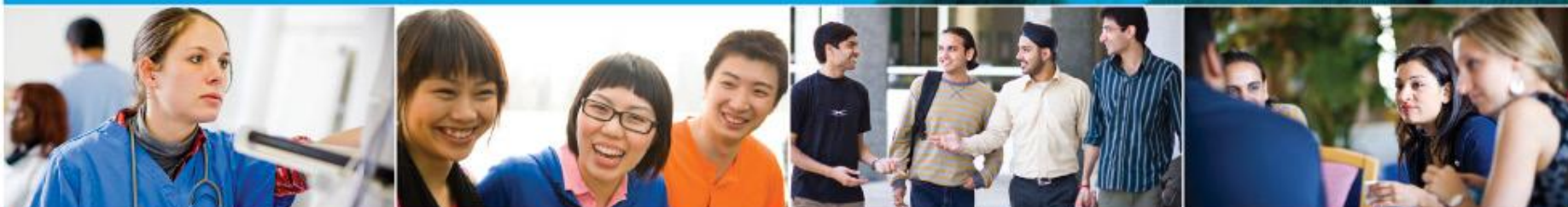
Driving China's Economy: Can Education Deliver?

Graduate Employability

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China's employment market

- Main characteristics:
 - Unemployment rate stays considerably high in urban areas:
 - Every year, around 20% (more than one million) of the students from higher education institutions cannot find a job when they graduate.
 - Serious hidden unemployment situation
 - A large number of surplus labour both in rural areas and state-owned enterprises
 - An increasing tendency of informal employments
 - Industry (monopoly) and ownership (state-owned) preferences
 - The posts in monopoly industries /state-owned enterprises/"within the system" are overheated.
 - The quality of graduate employment is declining
 - The starting salary value for college graduates is going down.
- Situation in primary and secondary labour markets are different:
 - The primary market seems a buyer's market: oversupply
 - The secondary market has appeared some signs of seller's market: labour demand outstrips supply

Skills that industry is looking for

- Companies' skill demands of students vary across educational levels of students.
 - According to the result of an employer survey, among the 58 indicators which are specified for graduate employability, the top 10 indicators are:

Ethics, teamwork , dedication, responsibility, problem-solving skills, hard-working, loyalty, toughness, learning skills > are basically the indicators about personality and attitude.

- In the 25 indicators associated with professional skills and general ability, the following indicators rank top 10 by employers:

Teamwork, problem-solving skills, learning skills, execution, hands-on skills, communication skills, logical thinking ability, practical ability, analytical ability, resistance to stress > which emphasis on the ability of problem-solving and knowledge application .

Education system holds back economic growth

- The development of education has contributed to the boosting of China's economy in terms of improved human capital stock.
- Problems of education in quantity, structure and quality are hindering China's economy from fast and healthy growth:
 - Undersupply: a great difference in the supply of education resources, esp. the high-quality ones.
 - Structural imbalance: The big gap between urban and rural areas and the wide regional disparities; the lack of innovative talent and high-skilled professionals.
 - Highly centralized system: both too much or too little control - absence of government function and the lack of autonomy and distinguishing features of universities.
 - Rigid mode of talent cultivation: The convergence of the knowledge structure: 1) lack of general education and too narrow professionals 2) lack of specialised skills.

Proposed solutions to the challenges

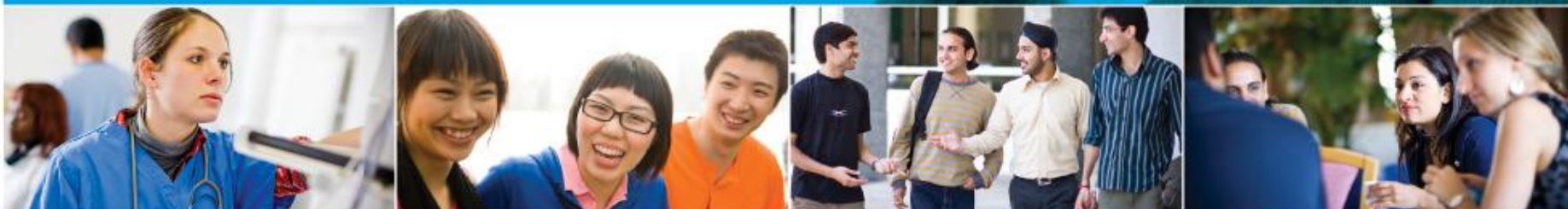
- To increase investment in education and to allocate educational resources more rationally so as to narrow down the huge gap in education inputs.
- To form a platform for fair competition among universities/colleges of various types at all levels.
- More autonomy should be given to universities and colleges to increase their characteristics and diversity.
- Reform the educational approach and content of courses > aim for improvement of students' employability.
 - Both knowledge transmission and healthy personality and sense of team cultivation should be paid attention to.
 - Both professional knowledge and general knowledge should be considered.
 - Encourage the employer engagement in education, and promote the reforms of education and teaching.
 - Adjust professional structures according to the market demands.
 - Develop students' innovative consciousness and innovative ability and enhance students' entrepreneurship education.

University – Industry Links

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University-Industry Link

- Importance of employer engagement
- Consequences of lack of collaboration between higher education institutions and industry
- Chinese government policies to promote university-industry collaboration
- Case study of Wuhan University of Technology

Importance of employer engagement

- Effective connections between universities and employers for students' better employment on the basis of universities' advantageous disciplines and majors.
- Various ways for employers to have knowledge of universities so as to promote students' employment.
- Students' access to employers to help them with their future career plan and improvement of their employment quality.

Collaboration or isolation?

- Universities: social institutions of training talents and conducting scientific research.
- Universities' development: effective collaboration between universities and enterprises and other social institutions for the universities' development and the improvement of their strength.
- Modern university systems' requirements: students' going out of campus into society and conducting various kinds of collaborations with different social institutions.
- Enterprises as places of commercialising of universities' research: more opportunities for technology transfer and teachers and students' practice through interaction between universities and enterprises.

Chinese government policies

- China's Ministry of Education and Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security have both issued favourable policies to promote graduates employment.
- The Ministry of Education's "*Outstanding Engineers Plan*" and majors of new strategic industries >to make graduates better meet the requirements of economic and social development.
- In 2012, "*2011 Collaborative Innovation Plan*" by the Ministries of Education and Finance to advance co-operation among universities and enterprises, scientific research institutes, governmental departments and international institutions for joint talents training, scientific research and social services.

Case study of Wuhan University of Technology

Wuhan University of Technology (WUT):

- WUT cooperates with state ministries and local governments
- WUT establishes Boards of Directors with industrial companies
- WUT and enterprises establish joint research centres
- WUT sets up placement bases in enterprises