

# SQA HND

## Guide for Parents and Students

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# About **SQA**



SQA is Scotland's national body for qualifications.

SQA is a world leader in education and training. We are accountable to the Scottish Government for the work we do, and we work on educational projects with governments throughout the world.

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# What is an **SQA HND**?

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An SQA HND is a Higher Education qualification. HND stands for Higher National Diploma. HNDs are qualifications for work, and are a common way into some professions. They emphasise practical approaches to learning, including project and assignment work, team and group work, and research. They prepare students for employment, and can also be used to progress to degree programmes and beyond, eg Masters.

## How HNDs work

HNDs use practical approaches to learning. Study methods include project and assignment work, team and group work, presentations, case studies and research into business practice. The central purpose of HNDs is to develop the high-level transferrable skills and academic knowledge that are required for work or degree study.

SQA has been offering HNDs in China in partnership with Chinese Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE) since 2003.

HNDs are specially designed to meet the needs of employers. They are developed by SQA in partnership with colleges, universities and employers.

Because employers and universities recognise HNDs as good evidence of a student's ability, having an HND will help them to progress into university. This could be in the UK, or in other English-speaking countries such as the USA, Australia and New Zealand.

For those people who are serious about getting a job and a career with prospects, getting an HND is one of the best ways to achieve their ambition.



*SQA HND students Chen Xianglong and Lv Pinpin outside the Scottish Parliament on a visit to Scotland.*

Scotland is one of the four nations of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, along with England, Northern Ireland and Wales. The population of Scotland is 5.1 million. The main cities are: Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness and Stirling.

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# Studying for **the HND**



HNDs are made up of 30 Unit credits. Each Unit comprises 40 timetabled learning and 40 hours self-guided learning and study. They usually take two academic years to complete but this timeframe is flexible. Two mandatory additional Units are studied: Workplace Communications in English and Research Skills. All students must meet SQA's specified English language entry requirement to progress into HND year 1.

Normally, students complete between six and eight Units in a semester. Units can be worth single, double or perhaps even triple credits. Students must complete all the Units to gain their HND.

As with all courses of study, the final year can be more difficult. The student's results in the first and second year Units will determine whether they have the ability required to move on to a degree course in the UK or elsewhere.

## How HNDs are assessed

HND assessment may be quite different from what students are used to, but it will prepare them for a degree in countries such as the UK. Of the 30 Unit credits, 27 are assessed on a pass or fail basis. All 27 must be achieved. There are many different ways of assessing these Units, depending on the subject – it could be projects, research, or doing a piece of practical work, for instance.

In addition, depending on the HND subject, there are also two or three 'Graded Units'. These Units assess the knowledge and/or skills from all of the Units that make up the HND. There will be one Graded Unit assessment in Year 1 of the course and one or two Graded Unit assessments in Year 2.

# HND subjects available in China

- Administration with Information Technology
- Business
- Business with Accounting
- Business with Human Resource Management
- Business with Information Technology
- Business with Marketing
- Computing: Networking
- Computing: Software Development
- Computing: Technical Support
- Electronic Engineering
- Financial Services
- Global Trade and Business
- Hospitality Management
- Supply Chain Management
- Travel and Tourism

The Graded Unit assessment will be an examination, a case study, an investigation or a practical assignment (depending on the HND subject). The result will be an A, B, C or Fail and will be graded as shown in the table. C grade is the minimum grade required to pass each Graded Unit.

Grade	Mark
A	70%+
B	60% - 70%
C	50% - 60%
Fail	< 50%

## Case study: Chen Xianglong

Chen Xianglong studied an HND in Financial Services at Wuhan University of Technology and then progressed directly into the final year of a BA Honours Degree in International Business Economics at Bradford University in the UK. He chose the HND because he wanted a qualification that would be recognised around the world, and he wanted to progress to a Masters degree in the UK.

‘The HND is not just about learning knowledge from

a teacher or books,’ Chen Xianglong said. ‘I took part in projects, debates, real life case studies and role plays. It required different skills, such as research skills, presentation skills and the ability to work in groups to meet a deadline.’

Chen Xianglong’s father added, ‘We are very proud of our son. We can see how the HND gave him the drive to achieve his goals. Throughout the process we have seen him become more mature and confident both when working on his

own and with others. We are sure he will go on now to achieve all his goals.’



*SQA HND student Chen Xianglong receiving an SQA award. Pictured here with his parents.*

# Gaining entry to university

Currently, at least two thirds of students completing an HND in China go on to a degree in a university in the UK, USA, Ireland, Australia or New Zealand.

Students who complete an SQA HND programme in an SQA-approved Chinese university will be able to apply to a university in these countries. There is a list of the universities that participate in this programme on SQA's China website <http://cn.sqa.org.uk/FAQs/Universities/index>.

## Topping up to a degree

Students who have completed their HND will be able to apply to university for entry into year 2 or year 3 of an undergraduate

Honours degree programme. Entry into these programmes depends on successful completion of all 27 HND Unit credits and getting a specified set of results in your Graded Unit credits (this is known as a 'Graded Unit profile'). The Graded Unit profile is specified by the university and not by SQA. To date, most SQA HND students from China studying for a Bachelor Honours degree have progressed to a Masters degree.

The university will also require some evidence of English language ability. Depending on the degree you select, some form of bridging programme – either in China or in the UK – may be necessary.

## Selection of universities offering HNDs in China

Beihang University	Inner Mongolia Normal University
Beijing Institute of Technology	Mingde College of Northwestern Poly-Technical University
Beijing International Studies University	Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics
Beijing Jiaotong University	Ningbo University
Beijing Normal University	Ningxia University
Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications	Ocean University of China
Capital Normal University	Renmin University of China
Central South University of Forestry and Technology	Shanghai Finance University
Central University of Finance and Economics	Shanghai University of Finance & Economics
China University Of Petroleum (East China)	Sichuan University
Concord University College, Fujian Normal University	University of International Business and Economics
East China Normal University	Wuhan University of Technology
Fujian Jiangxia University	Xiamen University
Guangdong University of Finance	Xi'an Kedagaoxin University
Guangdong University of Finance and Economics	Xianda College of Economics and Humanities, Shanghai International Studies University
Guizhou Normal University	Xinjiang Agricultural University

# Information on students' certificate

If a student successfully completes their HND, they will receive a certificate containing:

- a commemorative certificate stating the title of the HND
- backing pages listing the titles of all the Units passed
- the same backing page(s) will show the name of the Graded Unit and the grade awarded

Note that if a student fails a Unit, this information will not appear on the students' certificate — only Units that are passed are reported on the certificate.

## Preparation for the world of work

The Units you will do in your HND course cover important skills that you will need when you eventually look for work. These important skills cover areas such as working with others, problem solving, communication skills and using information technology.

### Case study: Lv Pinpin

Lv Pinpin's career ambition was to work in national or international finance. She was very keen to widen her horizons and also develop her English language skills. So, when Lv Pinpin's mother read about the SQA's partnership with CSCSE, it seemed ideal.

Lv Pinpin was encouraged by the fact that some of her friends had already undertaken the SQA HND and had moved on to university in the UK. She is now in her second year at Capital Normal University,

Beijing, studying an SQA HND in Financial Services.

'With the HND I do a lot of project work,' Lv Pinpin explains. 'I carry out the research, reach my own conclusions and then present my ideas. I also take part in a lot of group work and need to be able to communicate my opinions.'

Lv Pinpin hopes to go straight into the final year of a Bachelor Honours degree programme at a UK university after she has completed her HND course.



*SQA HND student Lv Pinpin receiving an SQA award from Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs.*

# Contact **us now**

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## Need more information?

More information on the content of each of the HNDs currently available in participating Chinese universities can be found in the booklet 'Information on SQA HNDs'. Alternatively check the SQA China website at **[cn.sqa.org.uk](http://cn.sqa.org.uk)**.

If you would like to find out more about how to enrol on an SQA HND course, please contact the Chinese Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE).

**[www.cscse.edu.cn](http://www.cscse.edu.cn)**

Search SQA中国 at **[www.weibo.com](http://www.weibo.com)**

