China’s Vocational Qualifications and Certification System

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Introduction

China’s Vocational Qualifications and Certification System

The Introduction of China’s Vocational Qualification and Certification System

China’s Vocational Qualifications and Certification System is an essential part of Chinese labor employment system, and also a special form of national examination system. It refers to fair, objective, scientific evaluation and assessment of works’ skill levels or vocational qualifications, and issues the qualified people corresponding national vocational certificates according to the vocational skill standards or qualification requirements established by the government. It is based on the vocational classification and standards, and conducted by assessment agencies approved by the government.

Vocational qualifications and certificates manifest that the person has the abilities and knowledge needed to engage in corresponding vocations. It is one’s warrants of applying, holding a post, and operating; critical reference for companies and other organizations to employ; and also valid certificates for oversea employments and external work—collaborating skill levels.

The Legal Bases of Vocational Qualifications and Certification System

The 69th issue in 8th chapter of Labor Law regulates that “it is the government to do occupational classification, set down the vocational skill standards for stipulated occupations, and carry out the vocational qualifications and certification system”. The assessment institutes authorized by government take charge of labor’s vocational skill assessment.” The 8th issue in the first chapter of Vocational Education Law stipulates that “the vocational education should meet the current needs, be adaptive to the occupational classification and standards designated by government. And the whole vocational education should be a composite of education certification, training certification and vocational qualifications and certification system.” These two laws provide the legal bases for
vocational qualifications and certification system.

The System of Vocational Qualification and Certification Institution

The foundation of vocational qualification and certification system is occupational classification and standards system. Vocational skill assessment system, which composes the system’s mainbody, is the executive system of whole institution, and at the same time, vocational skill training system, which help the workers to gain qualifications and certification, is the assistant of assessment system. Moreover, supervision system and quality management system guarantee the normal operation of those two systems, and the last, certificate application system is the momentum of whole institution. In a word, all these systems mentioned above constitute the entire Chinese Vocational Qualifications and Certification System.

![Figure0-1: Chinese Vocational Qualifications and Certification System](image)

Part? : China’s Occupational Classification and Standards

The Development of China’s Occupational Classification and Standards

The Construction Process of China’s Occupational Classification and Standards

The existing occupational standards derived from the worker-skill level standards
under planned economy, and were influenced heavily by Soviet Russia’s high centralization of state power system. Later, after three times of adjustments and revisions, there are some improvements in standards level management structure. Recent years, the Labor Law and Vocational Education Act had been established in China, which stipulate that it is up to the government to carry out occupational classification, and by which to instruct the construction of vocational education training system and vocational qualifications and certification system. This indicates that occupational classification holds the fundamental position in the national human resource development system. Chinese occupational classification and standards were mainly embodied in the Occupational Classification and Coding enacted by the government.

The Occupational Classification and Code (GB—6565) was compiled by the National Standards Bureau (not exist now) and the National Statistics Bureau in 1985, in order to meet the needs of the third National Census. The intent is to do a timely, objective and comprehensive statistics of the economic and social development trend, which can regulate effectively and reflect exactly the process of Chinese social and economic development. As a normative document in the field of Chinese occupational classification, Occupational Classification and Coding is based on the identical vocational characters of employed population.

In the end of 1980s, the Ministry of Labor (not exist now), aligned with other central industrial departments, organized related experts, scholars and technologists together to compiled China’s Work-Type Classification Catalog. And this cost 4 years‘ comprehensive exploration and adequate verification. The work types are based on the nature of working and characters of technology, according to the need of management. The China’s Work-Type Classification Catalog divides the whole country’s work-types into 46 classifications and 4700 types, each of which included code, work-type title, work-type definition, applying scope, level standard, apprentice period and proficiency period, etc.

In the middle of 1990s, two types of certificates—academic diploma and vocational qualification, were implemented simultaneously in China. The Labor Law of P.R.C magnates that “it is the government to do occupational classification, set down the vocational skill standards for stipulated occupations, and carry out the vocational qualifications and certification system”. According to this, the involved administrations reinforce the research of vocational classification, and finished the writing of the Occupational Classification Code of P.R.C, which structured the Chinese occupational classification system. Then, based on this system, China constituted the occupational standards, vocational qualifications and certification system.

The Deficiencies of China’s Occupational Classification and Standards System
Although there are some improvements in the standards level management structure after three times of adjustments and revisions, on the whole, it still didn’t escape from the constraint of old standards system. It cannot dynamically adjust to the growth of productivity and enhancement of technology; in the term of construction, it has much more frameworks and characters of discipline system rather than the requirements of vocational system; in the term of methodology, it usually uses knowledge analysis method and seeks the integrity of the knowledge system rather than seeking the realization of the occupational function and advancement of the technology and skill application. All of these problems results our occupational standards deviate a lot from the requirement of the economy, production and producers, and made it hard to meet the need of the development of enterprises and the construction of labor market.

The Character and Content of China’s Current Vocational Classification and Standards

The contents and establishment principles of the Occupational standards

Occupational standards lies in the essential position in the entire national vocational qualification system. Therefore, China established such principles of compiling national occupational standards as follows: taking the vocational activities as the guidance and regarding the vocational skill as the core, using vocational function analysis method to form a set of occupational standards. These standards must be based on the national standards and evolve dynamically, openly and flexibly to adequately meet the needs of production, technology enhancement and labor employment.

The national occupational standards are composed of four parts. They are generally vocational situation, basic requirements, job requirements and proportion tables, among which the job requirements are the key.

General vocational situation is the basic statement of the vocation. It includes: vocation names, vocation definition, vocation level, vocation condition, vocational ability characters, training requirement and assessment requirement.

Basic requirement is composed of occupational ethnics and basic knowledge. Occupational ethnics refers to the basic concepts/consciousness/characters/behavior to engage in related vocations; basic knowledge refers to some general basic knowledge that workers at all levels must master, such as basic theory, related laws and knowledge of safety, sanitation and environmental protection, and such kind of knowledge has close relationship with the corresponding vocation and runs through the whole vocations.

Job requirement states the abilities (skill and knowledge) a job needs, which is based
on the job analysis. It includes job functions, job contents, skill requirement and related knowledge.

The proportion table concludes theoretical knowledge proportion table and skill proportion table. The skill proportion table reflects the proportions of all working contents in the job training and assessment, and the theoretical knowledge proportion table indicates that how many proportions the basic knowledge and each job item takes in the training and assessment.

The occupational standards have such characters as follows:

1. The modulization of occupational standards structure

According to the vocational function analysis method, the basic framework of new occupation standards is:

- Occupation title: occupation definition and social characters;
- Occupational function module: the functional units that compose occupational activities and can be split out in many cases, which have independent functions. If necessary, occupational function module can be assessed individually and issue relatively independent certificates;
- Occupational skill module: the minimum-required skill type elements, which is the actual working steps of completing a function module unit;
- Operating specification: the specific requirements to complete the operation of skill module;
- Activity scopes: the main working scope to complete skill module, including the requirements of specific conditions, environment and circumstances;
- The content of knowledge: the basic knowledge requirements to complete skill operation. These requirements must match the skill requirements of operating specification;
- Verification methods: fully understand the verification methods and materials in skill module, including the verification of working process or results proposed in actual assessment and the requirements of ways and methods of obtaining these verifications;
- Assessment guidance: the basic requirements of assessing skill module.

2. The stratification of occupation standards

The stratification of occupation standard system is the reconstruct of occupational standards. Although there are more and more occupations, work-types and jobs created by the modern social development, there are many common occupational function modules and occupational skill modules among them indeed. Hence, there are three skill categories in Chinese vocational skill system: specific vocational skills, general industry skills, and core skills.

The scope of specific vocational skills can be considered as the scope identified by the National Occupational Classification Code. For example: there are 1838 occupations
in China at present. The national occupational standards, corresponding vocational qualification and certification test are based on these occupations. In the practice, we can make some adjustments to adapt to the development of production and technology.

The scope of general industry skills is broader than that of specific vocational skills. They can be seen as a set of common skills and knowledge that exist in the occupation groups which have the same or similar attributes and characters. In the real operation needs, there are more than 300 national vocational education-training subjects.

The core skills are the narrowest but most generalized skills. They are indispensable in one’s vocational career, even in the daily life. Besides, they have the character of general applicability and broad flexibility. Their influence can spread to the fields of general industry skills and specific vocational skills and finally affect one’s lifetime development and achievement a lot.

3. Occupation ethics

Another factor that can influence the growth of enterprises and employees is occupation ethics. Occupation ethics determines the degree of the employees’ hard working, active attitude and dedication. It is the elementary conditions in which the employees’ knowledge, skills and other comprehensive or specific abilities can work.

4. The internationalization of crucial standards

In recent years, China has known more about the basic situation of foreign-born vocational qualifications and certification and the development of occupational skill assessment examination, through the Collaborating Project of Vocational qualification and Certification Between China and Britain; through the Collaborating Project of Vocational qualification and Certification Between China and German; through the dual communications between China and Korea, China and America, China and Japan, China and France, and China and Canada; and through the multi-communications among China and the ILO and the World Bank. As China entering the WTO, we will follow this trend to lay out vocational standards, and promoted the integration of our own standards and advanced international standards in some industries, vocations and work-types. Meanwhile, we can introduces some advanced foreign occupational standards and certificates in certain important product and labor service areas directly, or designated some internationally-recognized certificates (dual or multiple), for the purpose of keeping pace with international standards.

5. The specialization of working institutions

These responsibilities will be assumed gradually by the Committee of National
Occupational Classification Code and Vocational Qualification, with the Experts Committee of National Occupational Skills Assessment. In the push of vocational qualification, the Committee of National Occupational Classification Code and Vocational Qualification is the highest level of collaborating and technological support working organization. Under the committee there are one bureau, two instructive institutions (That is: the Skill and Method Instructive Committee and the Occupational Ethics Instructive Committee) and one expert working institution—the Experts Committee of National Occupational Skills Assessment. Under there are different professional committees based on the characters of industries/vocations/work types. These committees instruct the writing of occupational standards and relative work. The tasks of the Experts Committee of National Occupational Skills Assessment is changing from only doing the research of occupational classification and instructing the constitution of occupational standards into instructing the constitution of assessment specification and training outline, developing vocational training courses, writing vocational training teaching materials, developing national question database, and providing assessment services and instructions.

The Instruction of Occupational Classification Code

The National Occupational Classification Code of P.R.C is the first authorized documents on occupational classification in China. It divided the Chinese occupations into 4 levels, from broad to narrow, they are: Category I (8), Category II (66), Category III (413), Category IV (1838). The Category IV is the narrowest type, and it means specific occupations. The 8 items in Category I are:

- The first category in Category I: the principal of state Ministries, Party group organizations, enterprises and institutions, including 5 middle categories, 16 small categories, 25 detail categories;
- The second category in Category I: professional technologists, including 14 middle categories, 115 small categories, and 25 detail categories;
- The third category in Category I: affair employees and relative employees, including 4 middle categories, 12 small categories, and 45 detail categories;
- The fourth category in Category I: business, service employees, including 8 middle categories, 43 small categories, and 147 detail categories;
- The fifth category in Category I: the employees in agriculture, forestry, stockbreeding, fishery, and irrigation, including 6 middle categories, 30 small categories, 121 detail categories;
- The sixth category in Category I: the employees in production, transportation, equipment operation and relative people, including: 27 middle categories, 195 small categories, and 1119 detail categories;
- The seventh category in Category I: soldiers, including 1 middle category, 1
the employees that cannot be divided into categories, including 1 middle category, 1 small category, 1 detail category.

Part two: China’s Vocational Skill Assessment System

The establishment of occupational classification and standards system makes possible the construction of vocational qualification and certification system. China’s vocational qualification and certification system is based on occupational classification and standards system. And vocational qualification assessment system is the most important part of China’s vocational qualification and certification system, and refers to the objective, fair, normative evaluation and assessment of labor’s skill level or vocational qualification, which is based on occupational classification and standards and conducted by the assessment institutions designated by government.

The Origin and Development of China’s Vocational Qualification Assessment System

The original form of vocational assessment system is Worker Appraisal Regulation, which is published by the Ministry of Labor in 1990 for the worker appraisal. However, with the thorough development of market economy reform, the original regulation could not meet the new requirements. Therefore, the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Personnel published the Vocational Qualification and Certification Regulation in 1994. The Ministry of Labor constituted the corresponding Vocational Skill Assessment Regulation and National Occupational Standards, and the Ministry of Personnel constituted the Provisional Means of Vocational Qualification and Certification System, both of which were based on the Vocational Qualification and Certification Regulation. Since then, the vocational qualification assessment system has been established. In the later 10 years, the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Personnel have published a series of policies and regulations which stipulated in more detail the operations of vocational qualification assessment. Meanwhile, the local administrations of labor and personnel also set down corresponding implementing methods. Now, the vocational qualification assessment system has systematically evolved to some scales.

The Types of China’s Vocational Qualification Assessment System
Back to the origin of institution, we can find that in the initial authority—responsibility partition, the *Vocational Qualification and Certification Regulation* magnated: the Ministry of Labor and Social Security take charge of the distribution and management of skill vocational qualification assessment and certificates, and the Ministry of Personnel take charge of the distribution and management of professional technologists’ vocational qualification assessment and certificates. So, there must be existing some differences in vocational qualification and certification systems which were under control of different ministries. On the whole, those factors mentioned above led to the existence of two systems and three modules in China’s vocational qualification assessment system. (Seeing the following figure)

When putting the vocational skill assessment system into practice, the MOLSS used different methods of construction for some big industries, which led to create two types of vocational qualifications and certification system in the labor administrations.

- National Cross-occupations System—the vocational qualifications and certification system managed by labor administration sections;
- Industrial Cross-occupations System—the industrial vocational qualifications and certification system managed by the relevant industrial departments under the approval of MOLSS.
The Vocational Qualifications and Certification Institution Led by MOLSS

The vocational assessment institution is socialized management institution led by government. According to the laws and regulations, the vocational assessment institution led by relevant labor administration department is organized by vocational skill assessment instructing center, and relies on the working systems of evaluation and recognition conducted by the vocational skill assessment stations.

The implementation system of vocational skill assessment consists of all vocational skill assessment agencies under the supervision of central and local departments of labor and social security administration. The relationship among them is as follows:

1. Assessment forms

China skill assessment adopts a combination of examination and appraisal. It can be divided into two parts: knowledge examination and operation skill appraisal. The former adopts a form of written test; the latter depends on field operations.

1) Operation appraisal
It includes field operations and simulation operations.

2) Non-operational comprehensive assessment
   It includes written test, oral test, comprehensive test and so on.

3) Computer-simulation assessment
   As this kind of assessment requires high technique, it is only applied to assess typists’ skills in China. Applied Softwares of other vocational assessment are being explored.

2. Duties of relevant departments and agencies

1) For the central and local labor and social security administration departments

a. Duties of the MOLSS
   - Comprehensively manage the whole country’s vocational skill assessment, establishing planning, policies and standards;
   - Check and approve relevant industries’ assessment agencies;
   - Organize experts and professionals to develop test questions of vocational skill assessment and establish vocational skill assessment test questions database, according to Workers Skill Level Standards and National vocational skill standards.

b. Duties of local labor administration departments
   Comprehensively manage local skill assessment, check and approve all kinds of vocational skill assessment centers and stations. The specific implementation regulations and methods include developing:
   - The application qualification and assessment procedure of applicants;
   - The appraising methods of professional knowledge and operation skill;
   - Working regulations of appraiser and assessers; the principles of membership of assessing teams and management methods;
   - Examination room regulations of vocational assessment stations;
   - Procedures of seal and distribution of Skill Level Certificate.

In a word, the labor administrative departments do not take part in the specific implementation and operation. It mainly assumes the functions of establishing, managing and supervising relevant rules and regulations.

   The duties of the MOLSS mainly are embodied in the construction of the whole system.

It includes: setting down relevant policies, and what is more, establishing the planning of vocational skill assessment (such as which vocations must be assessed and what assessment standards should be built), and developing testing questions database. At the same time, the MOLSS carry out some management functions, for example, at present we are assessing some vocations which need the whole country’s uniform appraisal, and these must be carried out by the MOLSS.
The duties of local labor and social security administration departments are the development and management of detailed operation rules; They can establish detailed operation rules and put into use those rules down-to-earth (except those vocations which need uniform assessment by the MOLSS), but it is not their duties to do some planning, such as deciding which vocations should be assessed or leading some reform, which are in the charge of the MOLSS as we mentioned above.

2) The duties of all the levels of vocational skill assessment agencies

a. Duties of vocational skill assessment guiding centers under the Ministry of Labor:
   - Participate in the establishing of national vocational skill standards and developing of testing questions database;
   - Do some research on vocational classification, occupational standards, skill assessment theories and provide consultation service;
   - Promote national vocational skill competetions.

b. Duties of the vocational skill assessment guiding centers under provincial, municipal and the directly under the jurisdiction of cities’ labor administration departments:
   - Organize local vocational skill assessment and train the assessers;
   - Do some research on vocational skill assessment and provide consultation service;
   - Promote local vocation skill competitions.

c. Vocational skill assessment stations approved by the labor administration departments is primary organization of vocational skill assessment and carry out skill assessment activities. The contents include:
   - Accept application of vocational skill assessment and check the assessers’ qualifications, and then issues the testing permission via the assessment center’s approval;
   - Organize assessers to attend relevant test in proper time, at proper place and through proper ways;
   - Coordinate relevant matters happened in the assessment process;
   - Gather assessment results and send them to the assessment center;
   - Provide assessment reports to the assessment center and put forward advices for the assessment teams;
   - Help the center handle relevant certificates procedures, and issue vocational qualifications to the assessers who passed the examinations;
   - Take charge of consulting and statistical work of assessment.
2. The process of vocational qualifications and certification

All the laborers of society are objectives of China’s vocational qualifications and certification. The applying organizations or individuals voluntarily propose their application to local vocational skill assessment stations which issue the examination permission and forward the testing need to national skill assessment center. Finally, it is up to government to conduct the examinations. The skill assessment was conducted by provincial labor departments. Applicants take the examinations or appraisal at the designated time and means. After the examinations and appraisals, the government issue the corresponding vocational certificates.

2- 3 flows of national uniform assessment

( the same as the cities and municipalities)
Vocational Qualifications and Certification Institution

China’s vocational qualifications and certification institution stipulates: training and assessment take apart, and people can take part in the vocational qualification assessment voluntarily. The training agencies, which meet the requirement of relevant regulations and are approved by the labor administrative department, can take on the training activities.

China’s vocational qualification training system is still in progressing. At present, a junior vocational qualification education network has shaped, which includes technique colleges (senior vestibule school), vestibule school, occupational training center, companies’ worker training center and vocational training agencies held by community.

1) The junior vocational qualification training is mostly assumed by occupational training centers, middle professional schools, occupational high schools and some vocational training agencies approved by county’s labor and social security administrative departments.

2) The intermediate vocational qualification training is mostly provided by occupational training centers, vestibule schools and such agencies approved by the provincial labor and social security administrative departments as middle professional schools, occupational high schools, occupational training centers, worker training centers in enterprise and some vocational training institutes held by community.

3) The senior vocational qualification training is provided by the technique colleges (senior vestibule school) and senior technical workers training centers approved by the provincial labor and social security administrative departments.

4) The technician and senior technicians’ training are provided by technician schools or enterprise through on-the-job training.

Industrial Vocational Qualifications and Certification Institution Led by Labor departments
Due to the unpopularity of some industrial skill certification, MOLSS has approved 16 industries to build respective vocational skill assessment guiding centers according to the *Vocational Skill Assessment Rule*.

**Vocational Qualification Assessment**

1) **Duties of Labor Administrative Departments**
Release the authority and responsibility of management to relevant industrial administrative departments.

2) **Relevant industrial administrative departments**
Relevant industrial departments (e.g. State administration of traditional Chinese medicine, PRC) mainly take responsibility of establishing corresponding measures of industrial skill administration, organize the industrial vocational skill assessment guiding centers, decide the scope of authority and responsibility of organizations at all levels in this system, take charge of evaluating assessors’ qualification, examine the testing questions of vocational skills assessment, and supervise and manage the entire system.

3) **Duties of vocational skill assessment guiding center**
According to corresponding rules and regulations and relevant industrial administrative departments, the general duties of all industries include:
- Participate making occupational skills standards of special work-types outside the national occupational skills standards;
- Organize the occupational skill assessment activities for special work-types and the appraisers’ qualification training activities;
- Do researches and consulting services about occupational skills assessment issues;
- Promote competitions of occupational skills in its own industry.

Besides the authority and responsibility mentioned above, there are some small differences in different industries, but they are largely identical. For example, there are regulations in the *Rules of Occupational Skills Assessment of Special Work-types in Traditional Chinese medicine industry*:

- establish the qualifications of occupational skills assessment stations of traditional Chinese medicine industry and take charge of the examination activities; prompt the cooperation and harmony of local centers of occupational skills assessment;

*Rules of Occupational Skills Assessment of Special Work-types in Railway Industry* promulgated by the Ministry of Railroad add the responsibilities listed below:

- take charge of qualification examinations of occupational skills assessment stations
- prompt the cooperation and harmony of local centers of occupational skills assessment
4) Duties of vocational skill assessment stations
It is largely identical with authority and responsibility of labor administrative departments.

Obviously, industrial administrative departments assume some authorities which formerly belong to labor administrative departments after approval of MOLSS. Vocational skill assessment guiding centers in different industries have the authority and responsibility of both ministries and provincial skill assessment guiding centers. This system consists of “supervise–guide–implement”. Every industry is a relatively independent subsystem with its functions exhibited below:

![Diagram of industrial skill assessment system]

Figure 2-5: The System of Industrial Skill Assessment

2. Operation process
It is almost the same as occupational skills assessment by labor administrative departments in each industry.

The Training Institution of Vocational Qualifications and Certification

Training system mainly contains two parts:

1) former vocational skill training agencies in labor administrative system
   In the actual process the occupational skill assessment station and the vocational
training system of labor administrative departments cooperate to put it into practice, and mostly entrust to other agencies.

2) According to regulations in labor administrative system, industrial skill assessment center use the original training agencies, or the new occupational skills training agencies approved by both of provincial labor and social security departments and industrial governing departments. At the same time, we find the examination and training are still combined together in practice and the assessment centers make the outline of examination together with the training handbooks, which indicate that the occupational qualification training system is yet not mature.

**Vocational Qualification Certification Under MOP System**

According to “Vocational Qualification Certificate Rules”, MOP has issued “Vocational Qualification Certificate Temporary Rules” specially for the technical professionals based on the former rules of granting the title of a technical post. In practicing, the certificate of technical professional includes two levels: practicing qualification and practicing license. The practicing qualification consists of first-grade certificate professional and second certificate professional and the first-grade is higher than the other.

**Practicing Qualification System**

Practicing qualification stands for the occupational standards such as knowledge technology and skill that technical professionals should achieve and is issued by the special department in province? self-government region or city directly under the jurisdiction of central government. MOP stipulates that the one who holds the following conditions can be issued the practicing qualification:

- technical secondary school degree, at least one year working experience and checked out by the organization.
- Junior technical position in his own area or pass the technical professional examination and get the junior qualification, checked out by the organization.
- In his own position and have the certificate issued by the nation or according department.

**Practicing License System**

Practicing license means that some technical vocations, which are related with heavy responsibility and universal characteristics, should have special abilities to engage, as stipulated by the government. The occupational standards include special knowledge? technology and skill. The one who wants to have a practicing license should pass the examination or appraisal and then register to the according organization.
Practicing license assessment system is being built up by MOP and industry supervising ministry. MOP has the opportunity to monitor the system.

SGA: self-government region
CUJCG: city directly under the jurisdiction of central government.

**Authority and Responsibilities**

1. **Responsibilities of personnel department? industry supervising department? certifying committee and vocational association**

   - Industry supervising department conducts the registering? certificating management; publishing guidelines of examination; designing the questions? assessing criterion. At the same time conducting the training and helping holding exams.
Personnel department holds the exams. Revise and confirm the guidelines of examination? questions database and assessing criterion; organizing the exams and personnel department supervises and manages all the system with the industry supervising department.

According to different vocations, personnel department builds vocational appraisal agency with the industry supervising department. We call them certifying committee which consists of professionals from departments and industries. The committee works out the guidelines? questions and criteria and executes the exam.

**Duties and responsibilities of central government and local government**

State Department constitutes the industry supervising department? personnel department to conduct the register and license work. Here gives an example about Certified Public Architects:

- Supervising the practicing work of training? examination? register and license of Certified Public Architect.
- Confirming the Certified Public Architect practicing qualification and license from Taiwan? HK? Macao according to the mutual equal principle.
- Instructing and supervising other works.

The supervising and instructing responsibilities of Personnel departments of province? self-government region and city directly under the jurisdiction of central government about Certified Public Architect can be list as follows:

- Carrying out the rules and regulations about training? examination? register and license work of Certified Public Architect.
- Supervising the according region work.
- Instructing and supervising related work of second-grade Certified Public Architect.

Summarily speaking, central government mainly has the duty to issue the policies and regulations while the local government executes accordingly. Central government supervise and monitor the work of first-grade qualification and the local government do the same work of the second-grade. In the same time, local department do not have the right to issue region practicing license standards. For instance, “About strengthening the reformation of the title of a technical post by State Department” figures out that without the permission of central government and State Department the region regulations about title of a technical post is invalid and must be revised. No
department should execute such rules without signature of MOP. But in practicing, some provinces and cities disobey that and do such work based on region regulations.

Such as the grade testing of commercial marketing skill in Jiangsu province. It is organized by the personnel bureau of Jiangsu, and the vocational certification is accepted in the only province while other provinces reject it. Jiangsu personnel bureau administrate this system and the organization founded by that bureau of Jiangsu personnel social level test leader makes out the test-outline, testing reference book, builds up the topics-gathering, and fixes the standard of the test. The test work is conducted by national testing agency. In addition, many more local certification, such as Beijing senior accountant certification, junior certification of constructive engineering in Hangzhou city, are existing in many other provinces.

Central and local administrate committees are responsible for conducting the testing and registrating work, also drawing up the testing outline under the control of trade administration department.

(?) continuing training institution

The MOP has build up the institution that all the people receiving the certification also need to get the yearly special training in China, otherwise the certification that people getted must be taken back. For example, the practitioner-architect need to get 40-hour special training each year, or their certification will be cancelled. While, there are several way to take place of the time, for example, taking the international special academic conference will substitute 10 hours.

(?) practitioner- qualification training institution

practitioner- qualification training is administrated by the trade administrating department. All the organizations that suit the standard can appellate to the province-level vocational administrating department and the personnel department. Nowdays, these training organizations can be divided into 3 types:

- centres of practitioner- qualification registration indeed, they undertake a lot of training, such as the centre of practitioner- qualification registration of construction committee in Guangdong province.
- The practitioner- qualification training organization affiliated to many vocational association
- Other training organizations that got the permission of the government

(?) The public servant institution testing institution

In order to normalize the public servant institution, the MOP build up the national public servant testing institution that the people who want to get the qualification of public servants must take a special assessment concluding test, audition and appraisal.
Local and the central personnel department build the public servants assessment committee to conduct the assessment, and the test is implemented by the personnel testing center the audition is assessed by personnel department and the employer.

Now, the public servant assessment institution has been set up in China.

Other vocational qualifications and certification system

Part of vocational qualifications and certification are adjusted by the law, including Chinese certified public accountant (CICPA), practitioner- qualification pharmacist, and lawyer. Now we take the CICPA as the example to show the system.

By the end of 2002, little than 60,000 people got the CICPA certification and more than 70,000 got it but have non- practitioner qualification in China. The system is under the control and instruction of all layers of the Ministry of Finance, including the Chinese institute of the CICPA and accounting corporation. Test is the only way to pass the assessment of the CICPA. The Ministry of Finance take charge of the test institution, while the test is conduct by institutes of the CICPA.

The people who passed the test with two-year audit-experience can apply for the registration to the institute of the CICPA. If his or her application is accepted, he or she can take the vocation on his or her own at that time. At the same time, you should take part in the institute of the CICPA and afford the annual survey.

The institute of the CICPA take charge of the training and the testing.

Vocational Qualification Certificates and their Applications

1? Time limits of Vocational Certificates

- **MOLSS.** At the present time, not all the vocational certificates have their corresponding time limits. Firstly, in term of legislation and policy, MOLSS and its all levels of labor administrative departments haven’t established corresponding regulations ye. However, in some industrial regulations, some industries have make their own time limits according to their needs (generally 2 to 3 years). For example, the internal Certified Human Resource Manager introduced by the Research Institute of Chinese Human Resource Development stipulates that the effective time limits of this certificate are 3 years.

- **Ministry of Personnel.** The vocational qualification certificates governed by the
Ministry of Personnel have detailed provisions concerned with effective time. This effective time is closely aligned with enrollment, and is usually about 2 years. After 2 years the certificates must be enrolled, otherwise you will lose the qualification of holding a job.

2? The Use of Vocational Certificates

✓ General Use
The industrial certificates include Technique Level Certificate, Technician Eligibility Certificate and Senior Technician Eligibility Certificate. These certificates show that the country recognize laborers’ professions (work-type), knowledge and skill capabilities, and is the credence of laborers’ vocational skill level, the main base of applying, holding a job and doing business, and the valid licenses of laborers’ external employment and laborer outsourcing.

✓ Different use: vocation admission
To some types of work (occupations), whose technique is very complicated and which involve national property, people’s life security and the benefit of consumers, MOLSS stimulates that 90 vocations must have admission systems, that is, laborers should first receive trainings, then begin to work after they pass the training and receive corresponding vocational qualifications level certificates.

✓ Different use: compensation differences

■ National policies and regulations
The government has developed regulations about the people who have been assessed, and require to increase the compensation level of certified people, e.g., the Notice about Some Problems to Push the Introduction of Vocational Certificates of MOLSS (1997), which stipulates that: based on the introduction of vocational certificates, all levels of labor administrative department, industry supervision department and labor and capital institutes should instruct the employers to carry out the systems which combine training, assessing and employing together and are related to compensation, considering the practice of local areas and departments. Further improve the certified vocation system and pay distribution system, which are based on work skills, responsibilities, intensions, work conditions and actual contributions. At the same time, in the covering of overall pay designated by the nation, actively instruct employers to construct technique level standards and duty allowance standard according to the positions, and position pay standards and duty allowance standards according to technical duties. Ensure and improve corresponding pay treatments of the workers who have received vocational certificates after assessment when they engage in work corresponding to technical positions. In addition, gradually improve first-line technicians, senior technicians’ position allowance standards according to the practice.
But, not all the provincial labor departmental/industrial governing departments make corresponding detailed rules according to this notice, so the actual instance is not very ideal.

**Actual Operation**

There are few researches about the compensation difference between the vocational certificates holder and non-holder, so we can’t provide precise data and foudings. But we can still see from some cases that there are actually some differences between them. The compensation implicating case of China Railroad, 19th bureau group Co. can at least tell that there are some difference between employees of some corporations and industries which give technical allowance to the personnel who are still in original position after assessment. The intermediate workers receive 25 yuan per month, senior workers 35 yuan per month, technicians 50 yuan per month and senior technicians 100 yuan per month.

3? The popularity of Vocational Certificates

✓ The Analysis of the certificated individuals quantity

Since 1993 when vocational certificate system was first introduced, it has been primarily constructed in China and gained comprehensive effect. Up to year 2001, there are 8336 vocational skill assessment agencies, 143,000 assessors, and form a vocational skill assessment network covering the whole country. During the past 3 years, the number of applicants to the assessment increased rapidly. In 2001, increased to 660,000 people, and the increase rate was 19%. Now, national vocational certificates have covered more than half of the enterprise labor force, and include more than 80% of students in the vocational education and training institutes. The vocation range is increasing gradually, the development of new vocations and new work-types are strengthened, and their influence on society is spreading.

Meanwhile, the certification institution led by the Ministry of Personnel, after 10 years’ development, have 23 categories of qualification institution, such as Certified Architect, Certified Structuring Engineer, Certified Asset Evaluator, Auctioneer, Estate Evaluator and so on, which cover many industries and professional areas, like economy, engineering and architecture, law, sanitation, quality management. The China’s license institution has evolved to be more and more healthy and mature, and have been the focus of society. 21057 people have obtained the license, 18568 of which certified practicing.

■ The acceptability of certificates

There are few researches concerned with the acceptability of certificates. But, to single case, the types of recognition of SOE and foreign enterprises are different. As to the types of certificates of human resource management, foreign companies more recognize the certificates of PHR and SPHR, while the SOE more recognize the human resource professional technology certificate from the Ministry of Personnel.
Although foreign companies more values internal general certificates, due to the scarcity of some able people, foreign companies attach importance to the internal certificates, for examples the China’s Certified Public Accountant and Actuary Qualification Certificates.

4?The Relationship Between Vocational Certificate and Academic Degree System

In china, the degree diploma and vocational certificates are the same important. The Labor Law and The Vocational Education Law enacted in 1991 and 1996 have made clear regulations on national vocational certificates institution, and include it into the adjustment range of juristic system. In June, 1999, The Center Committee of Chinese Communist Party and the State Department distributed the Decision about Deepening the Education Reform and Enhancing Competency Education Completely, in which they emphasized again that “it is necessary to carry out system which pay equal attention to academic degree certificates and vocational certificates in the whole society”.

In the practice, the disintegrity of China’s vocational qualifications and certification system and the shortage of some certificates quality lead many companies to value degree certificates. Meanwhile, to some industries or occupations which require more technology like IT, vocational certificates and degree certificates play different roles in different stages of ones’ carrier path. Vocational certificates are “knocking stone” of entrance of industry since the company need the people who can engage into work. As moving upward the career path, the degree certificates will be highly emphasized.

To bridge these two certificates harmoniously, some provinces took the lead in some attempt, especially the reform of HuBei province.

In May this year, Hubei Province introduced mutual-recognition system between the two certificates as pilot practice. To the whole day students, carry out the system called “One education and two certificates”, which means individuals can receive the two certificates by one kind of education format. To the social personnel, carry out the system called “certificates in exchange for degree”, that is, individuals who have at least one kind of vocational certificates, and the time limit is less than 6 years, can convert the vocational certificate into credit hour according to set ways and proceedings. And if they reach the set credit, they can receive corresponding degree. So, even if a rural worker can receive college degree as long as he receives vocational certificate through training. At the same time, Hubei Province has made certain adjustment to the lessons, credit hour and skill operations demanded by degree education and vocational qualification training. High vocational academy and general technical secondary school reduce cultural basic lessons and specialty basic lessons, and increase the proportion of practice and skill operation; technician school and other training institutes increase the proportion of cultural basic lessons and specialty basic lessons, at the premise that former practice and skill operation level and quality will
not decrease. The mutual-recognize between degree certificate and vocational certificate makes the degree level correspond with vocational qualification rank, make professional correspond with vocational certificate, and make theory, knowledge, skill correspond with the knowledge and skill in vocational qualification standard.

Besides Hubei province, several provinces have made relevant changes. For example, in the city of Shenzhen, the government stipulated that the people who apply for technological job have no chances without corresponding certificates issued by government, otherwise will be punished 1000-3000 RMB. In Anhui province, the local government has establish a system that link the subject setting of professional school and employment trends together, and link the content of class and national vocational qualifications together, which improve the quality relative value of the vocational qualifications certificates.

The problems of China Vocational Qualification and Certification System and its future progress

Various companies more and more concern “vocational qualifications certificates”. According to the report of Beijing labor market survey, companies pay more attentions to vocational qualification certificates, and the companies which have definite skill level requirements account to 29.15%. Applicants’ vocational qualifications certificates play more and more crucial roles in the process of application besides educational degrees certificates.

It has been claimed that the concern of companies for vocational qualifications certificates have increased for 14 months. Educational degree and vocational qualifications certificates will play equal roles and acquiring these “dual certificates” is the unique method to being an employee easily.

Developing vocational skill assessment and implementing vocational qualification certification system are important elementary job for fostering and enhancing labor market. Establishing unified, open, competitive and formulated labor market and creating healthy market environment are essential contents of China employment system reform. Laborers can freely select their jobs and employers can freely select employees through developing vocational skill assessment and implementing vocational qualification certificates system which provide competitive labor market with sound base and facilitate the collocation of human resources.

In the future, the overall goal of government for implementing vocational qualifications certificates system is that, treating entirely improving laborers’ competences and strengthening the labors’ abilities of employment and obtaining jobs as starting points, and treating “social interests first ” and “quality first ” as essential principles, the socialized management system of vocational skill assessment should be more perfected to enlarge the covering scope of vocational skill assessment and
improve assessing quality and enhance the authority of vocational qualifications certificates in society; step by step carry out the recognition of vocational qualification certificates and educational degrees, and relate the vocational qualification certificates system with employment system. With the effort of 3-5 years period, national vocational qualification certificates system will be entirely implemented in the occupations that have complex technology and involve national assets, people’s health and safety and consumers’ interests.

The problems of China vocational qualifications and certification system

First, some certificates are issued by various institutes, which has become the most obvious and difficult problems in the implementing this system. For some jobs like restaurant service and lamplight/sound controller, applicants must pass the assessment done by personnel department if they have obtained the certificates issued by government. These phenomena weaken the authority of national vocational qualifications certificates and also confuse the applicants. Some department driven by economic interests issued some certificates, then increase the cost of applicating for a job, which lay more burdens on the laborers’ shoulders. Therefore, we should strength the macro management of vocational qualifications certificates.

Second, although government have published several statutes and regulations to manage the vocational qualifications and certifications system, some industries and local government did not obey those statutes and regulations, and we still need some corresponding policies or making appropriate adjustment to adapt to the new changes in society.

Finally, China vocational qualifications and certifications system is not fully socialized and marketized. If you have not obtained certain educational degrees, you may have no chances to apply for a job though you have certificates issued by government. In western countries, vocational qualification certificates are mainly issued by institutes and associations, and the whole operation is driven by market mechanism.

The future progress of China vocational qualifications and certification system

Although there are some problems in the system, the government is endeavoring to perfect the vocational qualifications and certification system. There are several tasks that government must accomplish in the future.

First, reinforce the macro management of vocational qualifications and certifications system. One way to reinforce the macro management of vocational qualifications certificates is through executing corresponding laws. Because this system has been written in Labor Law and Vocational Education Law, so any illegal activities should be banned and punished. The MOLSS should continue its powerful administration.
and execution to preclude these phenomena.

Second, make great efforts to enhance the authority of vocational qualifications certificates. Now, some people thought certificates were not important for their employment and preferred obtaining educational degrees. These phenomena indicate that we had not established the authority of vocational qualifications certificates and society was not entirely accepted vocational qualifications certificates issued by government. One crucial way to improve their authority is to improve the quality of vocational skill training and assessment and the values of those certificates. We should control the whole process of issuing vocational qualifications certificates. The supervision should be conducted by the labor administrative departments.

Another point in enhancing the authority of vocational qualifications certificates is “ready employment system.” According to the statute published by central government, we should strength the importance of vocational qualifications certificates in policies, making vocational qualifications certificates the primary credence in applicating and hiring.

To enhance the authority of vocational qualifications certificates we should strength the incentives of policies and attract laborers to participate. Definitely, after strengthening the incentive mechanism, the enthusiasm of people attending learning skills will be motivated.

Third, quicken the course of implementing vocational qualifications and certifications system. The government should try its best to regulate the relationship between the labor administrative departments and industry departments, and formulating the vocational qualifications and certifications system. Government should strength the propagandas by media, such as newspapers, magazines, televisions, Internet, etc., letting the whole society supervise the entire process of implementing vocational qualifications and certifications system.

Finally, step by step make vocational qualifications and certifications system more and more marketized. “Facing market, extending scope, perfecting system and improving quality” is our guideline. When the unified, open, competitive and formulated labor market and healthy market environment have been established, the government should gradually put the vocational qualification and certificates into market environment, making market the primary director and mediator in implementing vocational qualifications and certifications system. Then, government will play a role of supervisor and controller to manage the macro operation of vocational qualifications and certification system.

In a short, Chinese government should make great effort to build an advanced mechanism to regulate and mediate vocational qualifications and certifications system. There is an urging need to develop a real system that has characteristic of facing
Part 3: Foreign-bored certificates in China

Asking for Foreign-bored certificates

From 1993, China began to build up vocational qualification system and relevant policies and regulations. In some areas, such as fundamental industry, they have made great progress. China also plans to develop national vocational qualifications and certification institution for some special vacations which is technologically complicated, highly generalized, and concerning the national assets, public healthy and custom benefits in the coming three to five years. Compared with the history of vocational qualification system, we can draw the conclusion that China has won its success and is walking towards the international market. But, as we all know, China is still a developing country, they still have to do a lot of things to improve vocational qualifications and certification system, policies and regulations. We also can list the main problems existing as follows:

- The certification procedures need to be enhanced formally.
- The standards and quality of vocational certificates, especially for some new vocations and some high technical areas, are much less advanced than those of the developed countries, and narrowly accepted.
- The range of vocations covered by certificates is much less than it should be.

In the same time, some developed countries have much experience about building up the vocational qualifications and certification system and many certificates issued by large companies are also widely accepted in international market. These certificates with high quality mean that you can do well in your job if you can hold one. So China can learn from the developed countries and introduce their suitable vocational standards to help build their own system. Also China can directly introduce some most accepted foreign-bored certificates or cooperate with them to issue some certificates by both sides. That is just what is happening in China. We collect some examples: The MOLSS do not only issue the vocational certificate of administrational service and secretary but also introduce the corresponding certificate of NVQ system
from British. They also cooperated with London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examinations Board and the City & London Institute to conduct the certification activities. Actually these certificates are more famous and more widely accepted, so they can satisfy both employees and employers, especially when some vocations need advanced and high technology and knowledge.

As we mentioned above, compared with the cooperation of governmental departments and foreign organizations, much more foreign-bored certificates are being carried out by the foreign companies and organizations directly. Though these certificates are not brought into the national vocational qualification system, they still widely accepted in China and can benefit the holders. These types of certificates mainly centralize in new vocations and high technical areas such as network service, computer, software, etc. Of course, accomplishing with the entrance of WTO, there will appear more and more foreign-bored certificates in China and, therefore, the control over them is need.

The improvement of the vocational qualifications and certification system will cost China a lot of time, so, to rapid the process many things need to be learned from the developed countries. The cooperation can benefit China greatly and help China’s vocational qualifications and certification system win the international recognition.

**The existing foreign-bored certificates in China**

Now the existing foreign-bored certificates in China can be divided into two groups. One includes those that are issued by the governmental departments (i.e. MOLSS and MOP) and the foreign organizations. This type of certificates has been brought into China vocational qualification and certification system and can be used as national recognized certificates. The other includes those that are issued directly by the foreign companies and organizations. In a whole, most famous foreign-bored certificates belong to the second type, as we can see from the tablet below.

Generally speaking, the first type of certificates are shown as follows:

1. The certificates, which concern management work of retailing service? motor engineering? international tour and telecommunication technical work, are issued by both the Occupational Skill Testing Agencies of MOLSS and the City & London Institute of British.
2. NVQ system, which is held by the Occupational Skill Test Association of MOLSS and London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examinations Board, almost cover all the vocations, from the new employees to the supervisors and all levels of the vocational standards. This program is undertaking and now they only issue such certificates about company administration management which concern about administrational organizing? work practicing? business communication? office equipment operating and training practice, etc.
3. The national certificates about information technology issued by the Occupation
Skill Test Association and Microsoft Corporation. These certificates now finish the pretesting work and are being held in twelve main provinces or cities.

4. In order to improve the quality of the company managers, the MOLSS decide to cooperate with the TSL (British) to build the general management skill training and certification system. Those lessons imported from abroad will be revised according to the culture and situation of China. Now they have finished the textbook and carry it out in October, 2003.

5. The Cambridge Occupation & Professional quality certificate system, which is hold by CIE(Cambridge International Examinations). The system supplies the managers and wide and useful lessons that can benefit the managers much.

The second type of certificates is mainly held directly by the foreign companies or organizations and are not officially recognized by the government. But most of them are more professional and special. Because these certificates are harder to take, the holders can benefit much from them and those certificates are widely recognized and accepted. We list some of them and describe them as what the table blow shows (see tablet 1):
The Current International Business Certificates in China:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IT Certificates</th>
<th>Instruction</th>
<th>Relevant Test in China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft Certificates</td>
<td>MCPS, MCSE, MCDBA, MCSD.</td>
<td>National Computer Grades Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cisco Certificates</td>
<td>CCNA, CCDA, CCNP, CCDP, CCIE</td>
<td>Computer Skill Qualification and Level Test for Software Profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOVELL Certificates</td>
<td>CAN, CIP, CNE, Master CNE</td>
<td>Computer Application Level Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBM Certificates</td>
<td>IBM mainly collaborated with its partners to develop certification which are mainly for students. If to sign up or accept training, contact directly with the university of IBM?</td>
<td>National Computer Applied Skill Certificate Test (NTT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUN Certificates</td>
<td>SCJP examines the concepts and abilities of the program design of Java; SCJD further examined the abilities of developing applicative program using Java.</td>
<td>NCNE&amp;NCIE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIW Certificates</td>
<td>CIW Certificates were recognized and subscribed by following 3 international internet expert association: IWA (International Network management Association), AIP (Association of Internet Profession) and ICII in Europe (Institution of Certification of International Internet).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Other famous Certificates include Unix/Linux. There are lots of internal enterprise certificates that are accepted widely: Adobe certificates, Lotus certificates, 3COM certificates, Macromedia certificates.

| Economic and managerial Certificates |

- Adobe certificates
- Lotus certificates
- 3COM certificates
- Macromedia certificates
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certificate Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Related Qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDFA Certificates</td>
<td>The abbreviation of Financial Qualification Certificate, and is published by ACCA. ACCA was founded in 1904, and is one of the biggest professional accountant organizations.</td>
<td>The Test of Accounting Qualification, the Test of Certified Public Accountants, Certified Asset Assessor, The Qualification of Certified Revenuer, Auditing Technology Qualification, Statistical Technology Qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGA Certificates</td>
<td>CGA (The Certified General Accountants Association of Canada) certificates are the internally—recognized accountants qualification and certificates. The holder can get financial job in Canada and all over world.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICMA Certificates</td>
<td>IMA founded in 1919 is a professional organization which has more than 700,000 members. The Management accountant certificated by IMA is a well—identified accountant test and have a high repute in America.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIA Certificates</td>
<td>These certificates are held by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) whose headquarter is in America, and are applied in more than 50 counties and are tested in about 20 languages. The test was taken since 1974, two times per year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPMA Certificates</td>
<td>The international project management profession certificate is the total title of four levels of project management profession certification systems held by IPMA. IPMP is a kind of comprehensive verification of project management people’s knowledge, experiences and capabilities.</td>
<td>The Test of Accounting Qualification, The Test Economic Technology Qualification, The National Vocational Qualification and Certification of Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMP Certificates</td>
<td>These certificates are held by Project Management Institute of America (PMI). PMP has only one level, and the requirements of PMP students are the same with those of IPMP Level C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finance and Insurance Certificates</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CFA certificates</td>
<td>These certificates were founded by the Institute of Certified Financial Analyzer (ICFA) in 1964, and have been recognized by the entire industry.</td>
<td>China Actuary Test, Security Practitioner Qualification Test?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CII certificates</td>
<td>These certificates are founded by Chartered Insurance Institute which is a professional and educational organization in the global insurance and financial services industry. There are two types of CII test.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Additional Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIA certificates</td>
<td>These are the test of actuary qualification, the actuary test of Britain and the actuary test of Japan held by the Actuary Institute of North America.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Test</td>
<td>The Test Committee in Cambridge University of Britain holds these certificates. The test is from the listening, speaking, reading and writing aspects to examine the language level.</td>
<td>CET TSE Oral Test PETS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEC certificates</td>
<td>The Test Committee in Cambridge University of Britain holds these certificates. The test is from the listening, speaking, reading and writing aspects to examine the language level.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETS certificates</td>
<td>TOPE (Vocational English Test) and TOEIC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Important International Certificates</td>
<td>A series of tests of World Business Strategist Association (WBSA)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Certified International Business Negotiation Expert (CIBNE)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Test of Commission of Graduates of Foreign Nursing schools (CGFNS)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Certification of Health Insurance of Association of America (HIAA)</td>
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</table>
According to the data in the tables above, we could classify into three types the international certificates which are not directly included in China vocational qualifications and certification system yet widely accepted:

The first type of certificates held by some famous foreign certification agencies have their own testing centers and supervised by MOLSS. To obtain this kind of certificates, applicants have to be trained adequately and accept evaluation, so that it is difficult to pass with great authority. For example, WBSA is organized twice annually in China; HIAA has set up examination centers in Beijing, Shanghai and Nanjing in 1999. PMP entered China in 1999 and held examinations in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Wuhan and other major cities. SOA has set up 5 examination centers in Beijing, Tianjing, Guangzhou, Shanghai and Changsha. ACCA has set up examination centers in Beijing, Shanghai Nanjing, Tianjing, Wuhan, Guangzhou, Dalian Changsha Shenzhen and others. CGA has set up representative offices in Beijing, Shanghai, Zhuha, Guangzhou and other cities. All of these certificates are quite difficult to obtain. Domestic certificates are incomparable to them. China’s occupations and certification system will develop these ways, and of course, there’s a long way to go.

The second type of certificates is held by domestic agencies which are commissioned by foreign certification institutes, their cooperation based on commercial terms and accepting supervision of MOLSS. These domestic agencies organize training programs and examination. The quality of this type of certificates has a big amount, and some are very authoritative and widely accepted such as CIW, TOPE, BULATS, CGFNSCP and CIBNE etc. At the same time, some international certificates are only popular with particular groups. Most of them are introduced to China by some domestic training institutes which cooperate with some foreign authenticators from developed countries. It takes time to verify their popularity.

The third type is corporate agencies. Some companies set up their own examination centers or commission other training organizations to hold training and examination. The only criterion to test this kind of certification is their acceptance. Most of IT certificates belong to this type because of the fact that there are lots of companies with big market share, strong market positions and widely applied products in IT industry, so that talents who are proficient in different products of these companies are in great demand. Meanwhile, marketing promotion could enhance products’ sales. Many famous hardware and software manufacturers such as Microsoft? Cisco? Novell? Adobe? HP? IBM? Oracle? Sun have their own certificates and corresponding examinations. Each examination has different levels ranging from advanced to modest ones. For example, Cisco’s certificates have three levels including CNNA ? C NNP and CCIE. The most famous and widely accepted computer certificates are issued by Microsoft and Cisco, and some other certificates are also popular because of their strong applicability, one of which is Adobe certificates that are getting more and more attention because of its strong function and popularization worldwide.
In summary, international certificates prevail in domestic market, especially in high-tech industries and new vocation fields at present, hence, there are two trends as follows:

First, China’s vocational qualifications and certification system is gradually entering high-tech industries and new vocations. The newly issued certificates in 2003 includes some high-level vocations such as HRM staff, corporate information management staff, corporate administration management, corporate trainer, project manager, E-business manager, computer net management staff, computer programmer and multi-media works maker. These certificates are much less popular compared with international certificates because they are newly born.

Secondly, some international certificates have some problems as China’s education and training market opens further after China’s entrance to WTO. As more organizations and persons enter international certification training market, most economic power of training agencies and teachers’ quality are uneven, thus training quality is not guaranteed Some training agencies with poor reputation offer outdated textbooks and unqualified training although their advertisement gave an extravagantly colorful description. What is worse is that some agencies issue certificates without any training but paying a sum of money. To ensure international certificates’ quality, MOLSS has made an announcement on strengthening supervision upon international certificates which have entered China.

Values of International certificates

Until now, international certificates entering China are mainly in high-tech industries and new vocations. However, as China’s entrance into WTO, international certificates are becoming common although it’s not attractive right now. Relatively higher acceptability of foreign certificates is resulted from three aspects:

First, great demand for advanced talents means a promising future for international certificates. As official from MOLSS stated, there is a great shortage of domestic business trainers and project managers. IT industry has a great potential, and domestic computer industry, especially software manufacture is operating on a small scale. It’s incomparable to large-scale software production in US and India. China has decided to enlarge software’s production scale, the key problem here is software talents’ shortage, especially talents who have received formal training.

Secondly, domestic certification system in high-tech vocations and new vocations is not well developed, which give international certificates huge space. With limited knowledge and experience, there is not effective system to evaluate advanced talents’ skills in China. This shortage leads to talents’ high cost of academic degree, so that international certification could grasp the opportunity to meet domestic demand.
Some domestic enterprises, especially foreign managers in some foreign companies knows much less about domestic vocational qualification certificates than international certificates. Talents with international certification are in short supply. So that, domestic certification system could not compete with international certification system yet. Domestic certification system has not entered or has not received deep acceptability in most fields with international certificates.

It’s well-known that to obtain a formal international certificate requires great effort, which need to pay a large number of money and a long time. Taking MCSE as an example, one has to pay RMB2000 to RMB 25000, 230 for training fee, and RMB 230 for examination fee, and has 7 subjects. For the case of Cisco’s CCNE, 40000 for training fee, RMB 9000 for examination fee. CCIE’s training fee is ranging from RMB100,000 to RMB 150,000. To apply for ACCA, one need to take examinations for 14 subjects respectively, to pay RMB 30000, RMB 1000 for each subject. Most Chinese couldn’t afford such a big sum of money. Only those who have several years of experience in relative fields could receive such kind of training. We must inspect the benefits of international certificates. Some data are shown:

According to a study of Network World (a subdivision of International Data Group), revenue of US certification business would be US$4.1 billion, with an annual growth rate of 15%. Employees with technical certificates of Cisco Systems, Oracle, Novell would receive great pay rise. Average annual salary of those with CCIE is 40% more than those without.

We could found salary difference among employees with certificates issued by different companies. Employees with Oracle certificates have an annual salary 33% more than those with CompTIA, 17% more than those with Microsoft certificates. Of course, one’s salary is influenced by several other factors besides certificates.

Economic benefits of different certificates issued by the same authenticator are also varied. For instance:

- Microsoft certificated staff have a growth rate of 10.9% in their annual salary which is proximately US$ 5,778
- Cisco certificated staff have a growth rate of 17.8% in their annual salary which is about US$ 10606 in average, CCNA staff have the highest return
- Novell certificated staff have a growth rate of 13% in their annual salary which is about US$ 7080 in average, those with CNA and CNE qualifications have a higher growth rate in their annual salary, which is 23% more than the average level.
- Comparing with Novell certificated staff, Oracle certificated staff have a lower salary growth rate, but their actual salary growth rate is very high which is about 12.1%, US$ 71 (average annual salary of Oracle certificated staff is US$62000, but only US$ 54500)
- Lotus certificated staff have a growth rate of 10.1% in their annual salary which
is about US$ 6168 in average, those who with CLP and CIS qualifications have higher salary than average level.

- HP certificated staff have a growth rate of 11.1% in their annual salary which is about US$ 6098 in average. Those who have HP technical support, technical maintenance and IT professional system management certificates could get higher annual salaries which is 5% higher than average level.

Cisco certificated staff’s Annual salary (US$):
- CCNA(Cisco Certificated Network Administrator): US$ 40000~60000
- CCNP(Cisco Certificated Network Professional): US$ 60000~80000
- CCIE(Cisco Certificated Internet Professional): US$ 80000~120000

The results from the survey show that those who have registered CFA qualifications can gain higher pay. The average annual pay of CFAs in America Reaches $184,000, some of them can even gain nearly $300,000 plus various allowances.

-Gang Ding, *Ten Thousands Strive For CFA In The World*, from Global Time

Based on the data of IT and Finance fields in America, we can see that the profit of gaining international certification is very high. Then how about the situations in China? Nowadays there is no researches on this topic, but we can make out some problems from a set of scattered data:

“Some people with ACCA can get RMB1000,000 per year in foreign companies. Even more there is one foreign company invite applications with a PMP with $140,000.”

Education net:*PMP will substitute MBA*

“It is reported that getting a MCSN qualification equals to getting a knock stick of RMB100,000 per year. It is also said that the income can enhance by 40%-50% with an Oracle qualification; with a MCSD qualification it can enhance by 30%-50%; if with a Cisco qualification it can enhance by 40%-60%.”
“In such a compensation system the income of HR managers is about RMB12,000 per month, fluctuating between RMB15,000 and RMB8,000. So it is not strange that why this occupation becomes the most attractive to most people.”

-Beijing Youth, *How to Evaluate the Certification in the Market*

“Nowadays the managers can gain different annual pay in different areas, but the average pays are between RMB10,000 and RMB20,000. In fact the biggest lure is not how much you can get. In China PMP is too young to have an income standard, but we should see that there are only 15,000 people in the world who get PMP qualifications while this figure in China is only 99. There must has a climbing trend of these people’s incomes.”

-Market News, Xiaoming Zhang, *PMP: the golden occupation in new century*

“Getting this kind of qualifications means higher incomes. The CCIE qualification means the person has reached a very high lever of technology in IT. It is surveyed that if you have a CCNA certification your salary must be beyond 4,000 per month, while the men with a CCNP certification can gain a salary between 8,000 and 12,000 per month. Otherwise it is conservative estimated that the ones with FIA certification can get pay between 10,000 and 30,000 per month.”

-Tonight News: *How to Evaluate the Foreign Certification*

From all above scattered data, we can see that getting the international certification have a huge effects on the compensations under the condition that there is a severe short of advanced persons with ability in China, and the ROI is also very high. Although those qualifications unworthy of the name swarm into China by the open of the domestic education and training markets, they must be washed out of China with the elevation of Chinese competences, strengthen of the customers’ consciousness and the reinforce of the supervision.

In summary, the international qualifications in domestic markets enjoy a high acceptability, while the domestic certificates are still short of the competition. The international certificates can bring the high pay with its authority and applicability in the world, and some even can provide some helps for oversea jobs. For example, if one has the international nurse certificate, he or she has the admission of holding a job. The foreign doctors who want to work in USA must have the international nurse certificates issued by CGFNS or the same level institutes. Now China quickens the speed to involve into the world after entering WTO, so it will be more frequent to communicate with the world. In a short time, getting the international certification means not only higher pay level but also broader occupation future in the condition that the domestic certification have not gain international popularity.

**The cost analysis of international certification**

You may see that if you obtain some international certificates, you will have a sharp
increase in your income. Your value in labor market is up to much higher level. However, before you get your certificates, there is still a long way to go. First, you have to attend a series of classes held by some certification center. And then, you will take the exams which may last long time. Time is just one cost that you have, and you have to spend a big amount of money on both taking classes and exams. The exams can not be easily passed.

There are two ways to prepare for the exams: taking classes in classroom or in Internet. The cost of these two methods is shown below.

Table 1: The cost of classes in classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certificates</th>
<th>Training times</th>
<th>Spending (RMB)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cisco CCNA</td>
<td>4 times</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cisco CCNP</td>
<td>25 times</td>
<td>6,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft MCSE</td>
<td>18 times</td>
<td>2,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun JAVA-275</td>
<td>4 times</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Hat Linux</td>
<td>11 times</td>
<td>3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oracle9i</td>
<td>25 times</td>
<td>19,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checkpoint</td>
<td>4 times</td>
<td>9,800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: The cost of classes through Internet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certificates</th>
<th>Training times</th>
<th>Spending (RMB)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cisco CCNA</td>
<td>60 days</td>
<td>980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cisco CCNP</td>
<td>240 days</td>
<td>2,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft MCSA</td>
<td>4 months</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun JAVA SCJP</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft MCSE+MCDBA</td>
<td>120 days</td>
<td>1,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oracle OCA</td>
<td>90 days</td>
<td>1,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lotus CLS</td>
<td>2 moths</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novell-CCNA</td>
<td>60 days</td>
<td>780</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those spending include the expending of taking exams. So, we can see that, comparing with the value increase in income, the cost of getting these international certificates is relatively low, which can explain why so many people taking the classes and the exams each year.

Foreign certificates are much higher accepted both by government and companies than domestic certificates. Each year, many people take various foreign certificates to make themselves more competitive in labor market. Why are they so highly praised?
Because the quality of those foreign certificates can be warranted through strict process of vocational certifications, the people who have some foreign certificate can create much higher value for company or government. Those famous foreign certificates, such as Microsoft, Oracle, Sun, Lotus, have a formulized and advanced process and operation which have been tested and adjusted for many years.

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