

MANCHESTER
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The University of Manchester



2021 ANNUAL REPORT

PREPARED BY

CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE

at The University of Manchester

www.confuciusinstitute.manchester.ac.uk



OVERVIEW

We maintained our language teaching and cultural activities under the continuing challenges associated with COVID, adjusting to and learning from our new working conditions. One of our key events was the opening of the *Qing: China's Multilingual Empire* exhibition at John Rylands Library in October, which attracted 800 visitors each day for the five months until March 2022. Amongst other achievements in 2021 we celebrated the Institute's 15th anniversary. A new musical composition was commissioned and *Illustrations of Grand Ceremony*, inspired by the long illustrated scroll at the exhibition, was produced for the occasion.

This year in October the University of Manchester and Beijing Normal University signed a new agreement on the Confucius Institute (CI), embarking on a new phase of collaboration between the two institutions.

We have demonstrated flexibility, creativity and professionalism in our work and continue to service our language learning community, our teaching community, our students on campus and the general public.



TEACHING & LEARNING

We ran three 10-week blocks of teaching and one intensive summer course, offering Comprehensive Mandarin, Conversational Mandarin, Advanced Mandarin, HSK Preparation, Chinese Characters and one-to-one tuition. Our total adult student number was 279.

One notable change in 2021 is the number of students taking up Comprehensive Mandarin courses. In the past, many students chose Conversational courses to improve their speaking and listening skills. They seemed to feel that learning Chinese characters was too difficult. The new trend of more students taking up Comprehensive courses reflects the realisation amongst our students of the importance of Chinese characters when learning Mandarin. It also reflects improvements and innovation in our teachers' pedagogical approaches. We expect this to have further impacts on our curriculum development, the teaching materials and resources we use in the future.



Our work with local schools continued remotely through recorded lessons for Stockport Grammar School and support to our four Confucius Classrooms.

To meet the demand of learning at one's own pace, we embarked on a project of developing an online Beginner Chinese course. Two pilot units were completed and positive feedback was received from testers. The full course will be finished and available in two years' time.



TESTING & TEACHER TRAINING

As part of our role as an HSK test centre we held two home-based HSK tests in June and December and 148 people took part. The online aspect of the tests has proved efficient and popular. We also organised mock exams and put on additional information sessions for the test-takers. This was to familiarise students with the technology and testing environment to reduce the strain of exam conditions. Despite a fee increase of 30% by the International Testing Centre, we kept our fees unchanged.

As a major teacher training centre in the UK, we continued to provide teacher training to UK-based teachers. In November, we held the Mandarin Teacher Training Workshop for 80 teachers. We adopted an innovative approach combining teaching demonstrations with expert feedback and found this to be successful over the course of the workshops. Five Manchester CI volunteer teachers demonstrated their classroom teaching and reflected on their journey as new teachers. This resonated with other participants and provided useful pedagogical material for learning new skills.



In addition, Manchester CI provided training for other CIs and language organisations such as the Royal Science Academy International Chinese Education College, Cambodia and CIs in Poland.

Our teachers performed well at the first UK Mandarin Teaching Championship Central & Northern England Competition and won first and second prizes, representing the region for the final competition. Their excellent performance is not only a reflection of their hard work and quality of teaching, but also represents the high standard of teaching delivered by the Institute.



CULTURAL PROGRAMMES

We programed and ran a full year of cultural activities ranging from online talks to exhibitions. The long-awaited *Qing: China's Multilingual Empire* exhibition opened at the John Rylands Library, with an online talk by the curators Dr Johannes Lotze and Julianne Simpson on 22 October.

Our annual Language Partner event returned in person on campus and attracted over 90 students. This provided a unique opportunity for those returning to campus to make new friends and find a language partner to support their language learning.

We delivered 10 popular online talks on Chinese gardens, Chinese food and health, women writers of Science Fiction and curating Chinese exhibits at University John Rylands Library and National Museum of Scotland. In addition to the public talks on China, we developed two new series: wellbeing and career talks. Our guest speakers shared their insights working as a Mandarin language teacher and as an architect in the UK and described how they had navigated and successfully applied for Graduate schemes.



The *Soul of the Black Earth* woodblock print exhibition moved from Alliance Manchester Business School to the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures in September and was displayed at Samuel Alexander Building until April 2022. A virtual exhibition of the same prints with some additional material was created in August and made available online via our website. This attracted thousands of viewers across the world.

In November, we sponsored the Asian Triennial Manchester (ATM21), where Asian arts were showcased including the installation of *Islands* by Mingming Zhou. Zhou's work reflected on the reality of the pandemic in China. This was a collaborative project between Manchester CI and MMU School of Art.



OUR COMMUNITY

We supported various aspects of language learning and cultural exchange, both on and off campus. Our exhibitions and language partner events were highlights of campus life and as a member of the Chinese Film Forum UK, we supported Chinese film screenings at HOME. We also delivered Mandarin tasters at the International Mother Language Day for the Manchester City of Literature and we sponsored the *Island* installation as part of the Asia Triennial Manchester (ATM21).

We supported the Mandarin learning community by providing learning and training opportunities and enabling our teachers to improve their skills and our students to develop their potential. At the 20th Global University Students Chinese Bridge Competition UK two of our contestants, Ola and Julia, won Best Talent prize for a flute performance and the overall 2nd prize respectively. It is especially noteworthy that Julia had been studying Mandarin for less than two years when she entered the competition. We also took home a Best Talent prize and Second prize of “最·中文” with one student’s story of learning the Five-Stroke Input Method of Chinese Characters.



This year we also supported the Mandarin teaching community by providing teacher training workshops and sharing our experiences with other Mandarin learning organisations. Our annual workshop took the innovative approach of combining demonstrations with expert feedback, and in this way, directly involved the participants allowing for an exchange of information and a participatory learning approach that proved effective.

Our community reach included providing language support to Chinese students studying at the University of Manchester, especially, at the request of the Advice and Response team, for students who had struggled with their studies due to ill health.

All these varied actions and activities run by the Confucius Institute helped to enable a community of exchange and language learning.

FINANCE

2021 Income and Expenditure

Unit: US\$

Income	577,911
Funding from UoM	327,800
Tuition Fees	78,291
Funding from BNU	124,670
Carry-over from 2020	47,150
Expenditure	509,100
Staffing	266,620
Activities	48,220
Administration	194,260
Fund Carried forward to 2022	68,811