

Go West 西行求知



With more Chinese students choosing to study abroad than ever, REDSTAR looks at the advantages and pitfalls for taking a course overseas.

越来越多的中国学生选择到国外留学，红星在此向你介绍海外留学的优劣。

More and more Chinese nationals are opting to complete their studies in places like the UK, the US or Australia and, increasingly, universities in those countries are becoming more and more reliant on their fees in order to meet their funding targets in the face of a global economic slowdown. In April, Ministry of Education figures for the 2009 to 2010 academic year revealed that, "a total of 229,300 Chinese students were being educated abroad, up 30 percent from the previous year." Around the same time, the BBC noted that China has now over taken India to become the largest single group of overseas students. These statements represent a sea of change in the way in which Chinese students are educated, and in how China will operate once all these students have graduated and returned home, if they choose to come home at all.

James Huang is a Briton, born to Chinese parents in Liverpool. REDSTAR spoke to him on the subject of Chinese studying abroad, something he has written extensively about. Asked whether or not he would recommend that students make the trip - and their parents absorb the expense - he told us: "Yes! But warned that "there are pitfalls too."

Studying overseas, says Huang, gives students much better odds of a receiving their degrees from an internationally-recognised centre of excellence, as only a tiny minority of Mainland Chinese universities "are ranked in the top 500 globally. Foreign universities welcome Chinese students (and their money) with open arms."

He says too that Chinese are brilliant students, another reason they are welcomed by the world's top universities. "It's simply part

of Chinese culture. This work ethic has been passed onto Chinese children in Britain; Chinese score the best out all the other ethnic groups."

Finally, he says that studying abroad makes it easy to improve your English too [and that experience of international culture] "is becoming more and more important in today's globalised economy."

These observations mirror the expectations of students that REDSTAR spoke to in preparation of this article. Faya is currently studying her final year of A levels (the qualifications needed for UK university entrance) at Qingdao's Oxford International College. She told us that she wants to study chemical engineering in the UK, "at UCL or Imperial College." Despite these heady scientific aspirations (she is taking maths and chemistry but also

taking drama, a course that is not widely available in China) she is not solely focussing, for now, on equations and formulae. "I think my personality is best suited to studying abroad as Chinese universities are too constricting. I would also have to spend an extra year graduating." For Faya then, experience and culture are as important to experience than the cold hard number crunching that her degree will demand of her.

For Tong, another of QDOIC's drama students, her reasons for studying abroad are even more entrenched in the world away from the Chinese version of strict academia. "I am going to take film studies, and the best courses are only available abroad." She says she wants to make movies after graduation and do that, "I must get work experience overseas."

Work experience is a common refrain from all those REDSTAR has spoken to in preparing this article. It is, along with mastering English and the quality and type of education available overseas, the main reason people are choosing to travel for their education. It is another way in which to attain Huang's "differentiation." Tong says that to work on film in the UK will open doors to working elsewhere in the world, "and with that I will be able to come back to China and be taken seriously about making movies here." Asked how long they planned to remain in the UK, both Tong and Faya told REDSTAR that "after a couple of years post graduation" they envisage returning home.

This last leads us, inevitably, to some of the pitfalls that studying abroad can steer students towards. Huang says that aside from the cost (and it can be eye wateringly expensive to study abroad: course fees keep on rising, and the cost of living in the UK or the US can be much, much higher than at home) he says that "unfortunately, studying abroad is no guarantee of getting a good job abroad" and many are forced to return home and go up against the millions that have graduated there.

He warns too of the culture shock: however westernised Chinese students think they are, they will very often come across cultural barriers that prevent their integration. "It's hard to overemphasise how different Eastern and Western cultures are and Chinese students often form their own exclusive groups - eating, studying and playing together."

REDSTAR asked Tong and Faya about this and both were confident that they would mix with all types of students, or at least try. "Faya said: 'I'll be friends with people who interest me; I don't care where they come from.'" Tong agreed: the students on my course will all share a passion for film that crosses national barriers."

越来越多的中国学生选择到英国、美国或者澳大利亚留学，相应的这些国家的大学经费也越来越依靠留学生的学费，特别是在全球经济不景气的时候。今年四月据教育部统计2009年到2010年学年，“共229,300名中国学生外出留学，比去年增长了30%。”同期，BBC指出中国已经超越印度成为最大的海外留学生群体。由此可以看出中国学生教育方式的翻天覆地的变化，以及留学生学成回国后的安置问题。

出生于利物浦的英国人James Huang，父母都是中国人，曾写过大量关于留学的文章。红星在采编此专题时，询问其本人是否赞成学生西行留学，父母承担学费，他告诉笔者“简而言之：去。但是海外留学也有其劣势。”

James介绍到，海外留学提供给学生更多获得世界知名大学国际公认学历的机会，中国只有极少数的几家大学入选世界大学500强。国外大学欢迎中国学生的到来（也期盼他们的学费）。同样，中国学生优秀，也是世界顶级大学喜欢中国留学生的另一个原因。“这也是中国文化的一部分，在英国中国学生刻苦钻研，中国留学生比其他国家的学生更能取得优异成绩。”最后，James提到，海外留学可以更好的提高英语水平，也可以经历多元化文化，这点在当今全球化经济中尤为重要。

这些问题在红星采访到的学生中都有体现。Faya现在在青岛牛津公学进行A-level（英国大学入学考试的资格）最后一年的学习。她告诉我们，她的目标是到英国伦敦大学或者帝国理工学院学习化学工程。尽管拥有远大的科学愿望，但是她在数学和化学的同时，也热衷戏剧（戏剧课程在中国并不广泛）。并没有单一专注于各方程公式。“我觉得我的个性比较适合国外的教育方式，中国的教育太严格。终于再有一年就可以毕业了。”对于Faya来说，体验不同的经历和文化，同学习成绩同等重要。

Tong是青岛牛津公学学习戏剧的学生，她出国的原因更加明确，远离中国严格的教育体制。“我将去国外学习电影制作，接受最好的电影学习课程。”Tong想在毕业后从事电影行业，这样“我就必须有海外的工作经验。”

工作经验是红星在采编时最常听到的。除此之外还有掌握英语、海外教育质量和方式，这是留学的三大基本原因。这是另一种方式达到James口中的“区分”。Tong认为能在英国从事电影行业，将打开在任何国家从事电影行业之门。“这样我就可以回到祖国，也会得到中国电影圈的重视。”问及他们打算在海外呆多久时，Tong和Faya都说“毕业几年之后吧”，最终的打算都是回国发展。

这不可避免的让我们意识到海外留学的劣势。James提到，除了海外留学学费日益增加、在英国或者美国的生活费用较高外，“很不幸的是，海外留学并不是能在海外找到理想工作的保证。”很多留学生不得不返回祖国，同众多本土毕业生争夺就业就会。

James认为，文化上的冲击也不可小视。已经西化的中国学生是这么认为的，他们往往会碰到文化壁垒，使他们难以融入其中。“很难去过分强调中西文化的不同，中国学生常常有他们自己的小全体，一起吃饭、学习、游玩。”

笔者就此采访过Tong和Faya，他们都很自信可以融入不同的同学中去，至少一定会去尝试。Faya说道“我会和所有对我友善的人成为朋友，不论他们来自哪里。”Tong也赞成“我的同窗都是爱好电影之人，电影没有国界。”





Huang warns however that if “Chinese students don’t break out of their own groups then they lose many of the opportunities and benefits of living abroad and in some instances English fluency digresses because of a lack of practice.”

Indeed, an IELTS examiner we spoke too explained that all overseas students can struggle because of the specialised vocabulary particular to each subject, which is why universities ask prospective students to prove their vocabulary level. IELTS is an English fluency grading system required for entry into UK universities - many courses require a score over 6.5. In addition, most learning is done via lectures, demanding that students listen, write and comprehend at the same time, which is one of the hardest skills for non native speakers of any language.

James提醒到“如果中国留学生不能走出自己的小群体，他们将丧失众多机会，也不会从海外生活的经历中得到历练。例如，因为缺乏交流沟通，英文也不会有显著进步。”

事实上，雅思考官向红星解释道，所有海外学生都需要不断努力，因为每个专业都有每个专业所特有的词汇，这也是为什么海外留学需要一定英语成绩的原因。申请英国大学就需要有雅思成绩，一般需要6.5分以上。此外，大部分课程用讲座的形式教授，这就要求留学生同时具有听、记、理解的能力，对于非母语的学生来说很困难。

TAKE THE PLUNGE 冒险尝试

Emma Drynan, MD at Australian Immigration experts, Freedom Immigration, says that planning is key when arranging the necessary paperwork to study abroad. Here, she shares her wisdom.

Get clear about what you want to achieve from your study abroad

It’s your call - what do you want to do: life experience, second language, degree for use in China, or a degree/qualification for use elsewhere in the world?

What is your family’s budget?

It is not realistic nor is it safe to rely on part-time work abroad to support your living expenses.

What degree/qualification do you choose?

If you are studying a program to obtain a qualification that will permit you to work elsewhere in the world it’s important to check if the degree is international recognised and will the qualifications give you licensing that may be required to practice in your profession.

Timing

Plan ahead. Clients of Freedom Migration speak with us six to twelve months before their anticipated trip to ensure they meet the requirements of their student visa. Some countries like Australia require you to have saved your funds for your studies in the bank for a minimum of six months.

Choosing the right visa

In most western countries there is a different

student visa for each level of study you choose.

In Australia for example there are seven different visa options for students. To be granted an Australian visa you must evidence you have the funds to pay for your full period of study, your course fees and your school expenses. You must also prove you have the English skills, usually evidenced by taking the IELTS test and obtaining the required score. Student visas also require acceptance or enrolment into your chosen university and course program.

Before departure

For clients of Freedom Migration we provide a full briefing prior to departure for Australia. It’s important you know what to expect, what the differences are in the country you are travelling to and what to potential challenges you may encounter while away. You are on your own in most cases and won’t have the support of friends or family.

www.freedomimmigration.com

Emma Drynan, 寰宇移民服务公司澳大利亚移民专家，准备出国留学相关文件时计划很重要。在此，Emma将为我们指点一二。

明确在海外留学中想要得到的什么？

这就是你的目标——你想要的是什么？生活经历、第二语言、国内承认的学历，或者全球认可的学位或资质？

家庭对学习费用预算是多少？

完全依赖于在海外的打工来负担自己的生活费用并不现实也不妥当。

需要什么样的学位、证书？

希望通过学习获得证书资格，可以去世界各地找工作，你需要看看申请的课程、获得的学历是不是国际认可的，证书能否在你预计从事的领域中被认可。

时机

提前计划。寰宇移民服务公司介绍到，预计出发前的6到12个月，一切申请学生签证的材料需要准备妥当。有些国家如澳大利亚，需要你留学保证金存入银行至少六个月。

选择正确的签证

大多数西方国家，学生签证因所选择课程不同而不同。例如澳大利亚有七种不同的学生签证。想要获得澳大利亚签证，你需要证明有足够的资金支付学费和生活费用等，以及具有一定的英语水平，雅思考试的成绩是衡量标准。最好还要有申请大学的入学证明。

出发前

寰宇移民服务公司的客户，出发前往澳大利亚前还会举行一个小的说明会。了解可能会发生什么情况、各国不同的风土人情、可能会遇到的困难很重要。在国外一切都要靠自己，那里少有家人和朋友的支持。