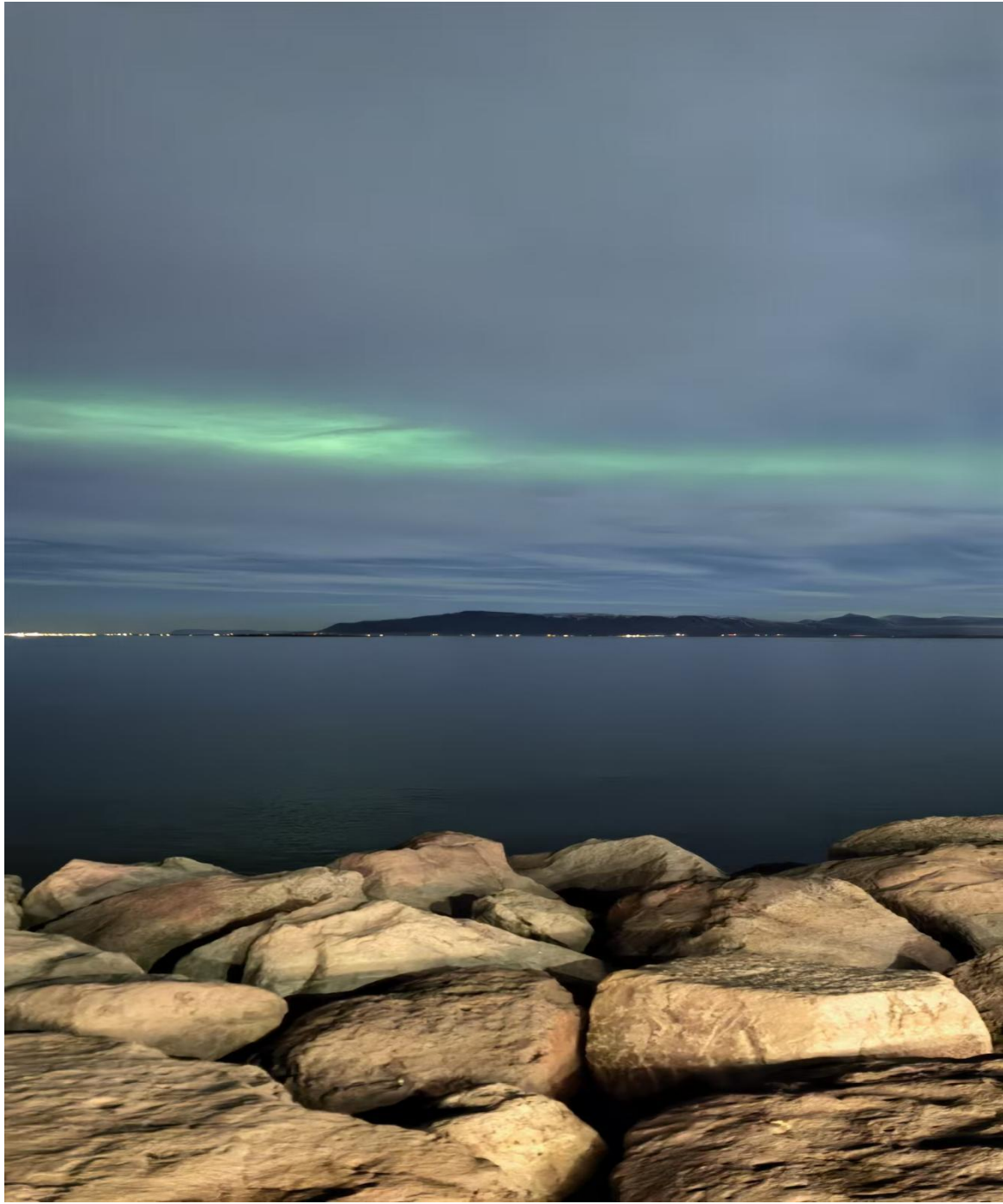




8<sup>th</sup> of December, 2025

Editor in chief: Daniel Zheng

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*Northern light, Reykjavik*

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# Inside HOPE

## Parents' Salon Focuses on 3<sup>rd</sup> Age's New Passion

On the evening of 28<sup>th</sup> November, the HOPE Parents Online Salon invited Daniel Zheng, MD of Hope, Nancy Wang, the former principal of an international school in Shanghai, and Julie Zhou, Hope's Project Manager of Study Tour, to discuss a trendy topic "study abroad for 50+, the 3<sup>rd</sup> age"! This online session, not only broke the boundaries of traditional retirement planning but also sketched a vibrant picture of a second chapter in life.

The livestream opened with Daniel Zheng, MD of HOPE, sharing the unique origins of the '50+ Project.' The birth of this initiative stemmed from a profound insight: a growing number of professionals continue to maintain a strong thirst for knowledge and a spirit of exploration after retirement. They are no longer satisfied with traditional leisure-based retirement lifestyles; instead, they yearn to continue growing, connecting with the world, and realizing their self-worth.



### Live broadcasting of HOPE parents' Salon

"We heard many voices saying, 'My career has ended, but my learning journey is just beginning,'" Daniel stated. "These highly educated individuals have accumulated a wealth of knowledge and experience. Now, they need a platform to deeply connect their internalized wisdom with the external world."

The broadcasting disclosed preliminary market research findings targeting this demographic. The data revealed that most of the retired individuals with higher education expressed a desire to continue systematic learning after retirement, while also aspired to integrate deep cultural experiences and educational elements into their travels."This data confirms our judgment," shared Julie Zhou, HOPE's project manager for the 50+ programme. "Today's

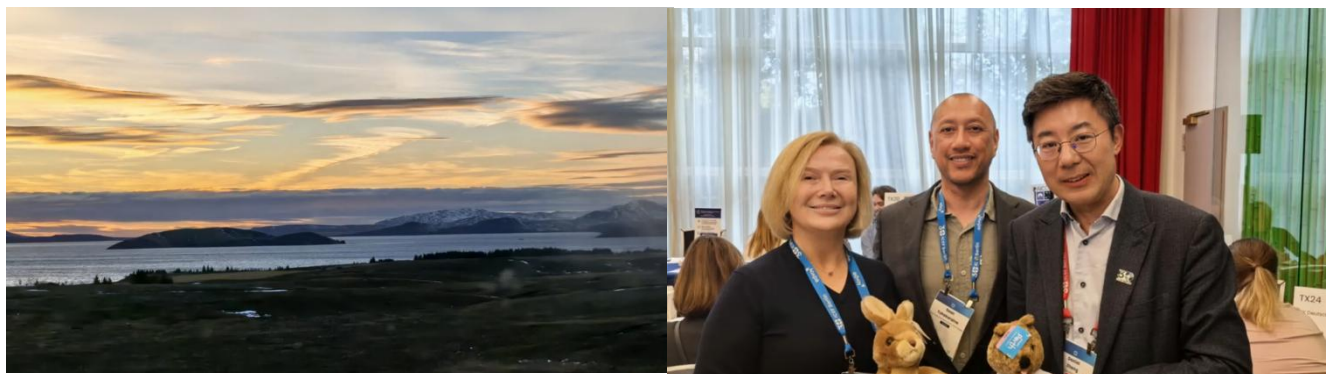
retirees are not 'withdrawing from society' but rather 'changing tracks.' They seek experiential learning that offers depth, connection, and growth."

One of the highlights of the broadcasting was the exploring visit to Arts University Bournemouth shared by Nancy Wang. She used to be a principal of a leading international school in Shanghai. Through her narration, the audience felt as if they were strolling along the beautiful beaches of Bournemouth, basking in the warmth of the sunshine.



**Campus tour and seaside walk of Bournemouth (photo by Nancy Wang)**

"An visit is more than just a 'tour,'" emphasized Nancy. "It is an immersive dialogue—a dialogue with academic traditions, a dialogue with peers from different cultural backgrounds."



**Daniel's European Tour for new business (photo credited to Daniel Zheng)**

Daniel then shared his rich experiences from his recent European tour, from Paris to Nice, from Berlin to Reykjavik, explaining how these cultural landmarks can be transformed into learning environments as well as new business for Hope. During the tour, Daniel visited universities and colleges in France and Iceland which can offer bespoke programme for 50+. And in Berlin, he attended the annual ICEF conference where he had 35 “speed dating” over two days to explore new institutional partners and new business.

A core philosophy ran throughout the livestream: to find joy in learning and encounter brilliance through study abroad while journeying with like-minded friends.

"The most precious part of this project is not the destination itself, but the people you travel with," emphasized Daniel. "We gather people with similar backgrounds, interests, and aspirations. The sparks generated from these cross-disciplinary exchanges often become the most memorable part of the journey."

The broadcasting concluded by future plans. HOPE is actively developing more in-depth tour routes, with projects in France and Italy already in the preparation stage. Furthermore, routes such as a Nordic journey and a US journey are also in the planning stages, aiming to build a lifelong learning network covering major cultural regions globally.

This special broadcasting event ultimately pointed to a more profound theme: in an era of increasing lifespan and continuously improving health, retirement is no longer the finale of life but rather the beginning of another wonderful journey. "Learning has no retirement age, and exploration has no final station," the livestream concluded with these words. "We are the new 50+ youth!" commented by one of the parents attending the event.

While the young students' passion for studying overseas is declining, the third age can probably be the target of overseas institutions in China market.



# HOPE Attended Loughborough University China Partner Retreat 2025

Upon invitation, Mr. Daniel Zheng, Managing Director and Ms. Alice Zhang, International Partnership Manager from HOPE attended Loughborough University China Partner Retreat 2025 in Sanya, Hainan from 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> Nov.



As sports related programme has been ranking world No. 1 in QS for 9 years, beach sports such as bowling with “coconut” ball, Frisbee game were used as warming up and ice breaking for the event so that everyone can feel Loughborough’s sports spirit. Sand painting was another way to have a taste of Loughborough’s renown programme - Arts and Design.



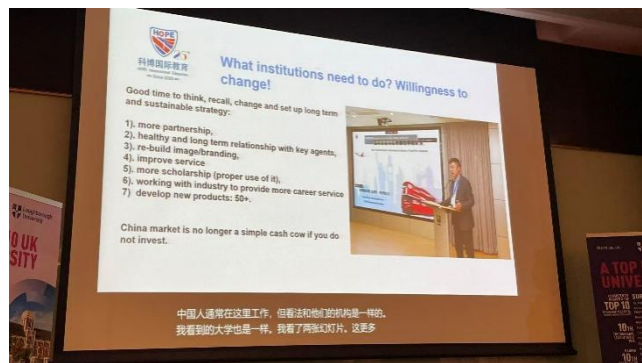
The hot moment was certainly the group discussion on Loughborough's advantages and promotion methods.

During the meeting session, Professor Sam Grogan, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) of Loughborough University addressed a speech themed with Delivering differentiation: an exceptional education and student experience in a disrupted landscape. We the audience, were assured of Loughborough's passion, confidence and dedication in helping students grow in the changing world.



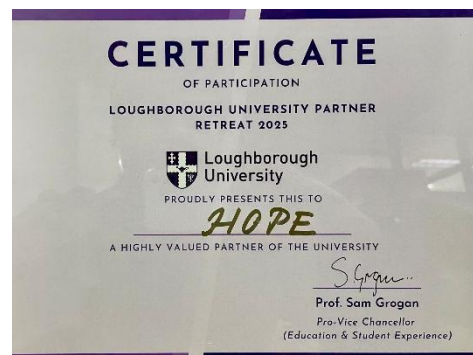
Later, Mr. Daniel Zheng, Managing Director of HOPE International Education, was invited to be the representative of China agents to give a speech themed with Market trend and time for change and innovation. Daniel pointed out that China market has changed after Covid, due to comprehensive reasons, such as safety and international politics, Economic downwards and tuition fee increase, difficulty on job market, and government policy. Some Asian countries/regions thrive to meet the market demand and TNE is getting more popular. UK has also been facing more new rivals, such as HK and Malaysia. Lower birth rate also means a shrinking market.

To cope with the situation, Daniel suggested institutions need to change and set up long term and sustainable strategy, for example, build more teaching partnership programmes with Chinese universities, improve service, more scholarship but should use it wisely, working with industry to provide more solid career service, develop new products such as for 50+. He also gave advice to agents to diversify businesses in terms of developing



products, innovative marketing and promotion events, and build a healthy and sustainable agent-institution relations.

At the event, HOPE was awarded A Highly Valued Partner of The University.





## INSIDE HOPE - Photo news of November



On 15<sup>th</sup> of October, HOPE Shanghai office held Glasgow University interview, with dozens of students attending both online and offline from Shanghai, Hangzhou Anji and Ningbo. After conversation with students, admission officer from Glasgow University gave out offers for both undergraduate and postgraduate students.



On 4<sup>th</sup> November, HOPE Shanghai Office and Julian, the Headmaster of Cardiff Sixth Form College (which has ranked first in the U.K. for A-level results for 14 consecutive years), and Florence, visited Shanghai Xi Wai Foreign Language School. They conducted a lecture and interactive session on the topic of 'Oxbridge Application and Interview Skills' for over 20 high school students in the elite class. During and after the event, the students actively raised questions, creating a lively and engaging atmosphere.



In order to further standardize foreign exchange activities in the education system of Pudong New Area Shanghai, the third training session on international cooperation and exchange work for the education system of Pudong New Area was successfully held on November 14, 2025 by HOPE Shanghai Office. The training focused on three areas: requirements for official overseas trips, standards for organizing foreign-related activities, and security precautions in international engagements.



HOPE International Education was awarded the ‘Excellence in Education Leadership’ by the University of Glasgow, a world Top 100 university in the UK. Glasgow will celebrate its 575th anniversary next year. The award was presented on a cruise along the Huangpu River. This recognition is not only an honour for HOPE but also reflects the innovative spirit of world-renowned universities, emphasis on the Chinese market and commitment as well as its confidence in Chinese partners.





Daniel Zheng, attending ICEF Berlin from 2-4 November to explore new partner and business. This year is also ICEF Berlin's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary.



Daniel Zheng attending EnglishUK conference in Guangzhou on 20<sup>th</sup> November

## News from local media

### **China mandates no less than 2 hours of daily physical activity for school students**

Xinhua | Updated: 2025-11-19 17:09

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202511/19/WS691d8950a310d6866eb2a55d.html>



A fifth grader takes part in a running game at a school in Fuzhou, Fujian province. XIE GUIMING/FOR CHINA DAILY

BEIJING -- Primary and middle school students in China are expected to engage in comprehensive physical activities for no less than two hours a day, education authorities said on Wednesday.

Schools are urged to offer a full range of physical education (PE) and health courses and to allocate sufficient hours for them, according to a newly released document on strengthening students' physical health.



Schools are also encouraged to arrange one session of quality physical activities in the morning and one in the afternoon between classes, each lasting no less than 30 minutes, the Ministry of Education said.

Undergraduate programs are required to provide a minimum of 144 class hours of PE courses, while vocational colleges must offer at least 108 hours, the ministry added.

The document also calls for cultivating more sports talent, strengthening the ranks of PE teachers, and improving the evaluation of their teaching performance.

## **HKU leads as 5 Hong Kong universities make Asia's top 10 in QS rankings**

Xinhua | Updated: 2025-11-05 09:38

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202511/05/WS690aaabca310f215074b90c2.html>

HONG KONG -- In a significant achievement for higher education in the region, five universities from Hong Kong have made it into the top ten of the QS Asia University Rankings 2026, with the University of Hong Kong (HKU) claiming the prestigious number one spot, according to the latest release from Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), a leading international higher education research organization.

According to the rankings released on Tuesday, HKU has climbed from second to first place, while the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology has risen from 11th to 6th. City University of Hong Kong has improved its position by three spots, tying with Chinese University of Hong Kong at 7th place, and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University has moved up from 17th to 10th.

Across various indicators, Hong Kong's universities achieved world-leading standards with excellent performance in such indicators as "academic reputation," "employer reputation" and "international faculty."

Secretary for Education of the HKSAR government Christine Choi Yuk-lin wrote on social media that the presence of five Hong Kong universities in the top ten in Asia fully

demonstrates the robust strength of Hong Kong's higher education sector and highlights the effectiveness of relevant government measures.

"Hong Kong's education system consistently achieves outstanding results in multiple international rankings, underscoring the city's appeal as an international talent hub," she said.

"We shall continue to actively align with the national strategy on building a leading country in education, deepen Hong Kong's role as an international hub for post-secondary education and a converging point of global talent, seize opportunities, leverage our strengths, and contribute to the development of both Hong Kong and the nation," Choi noted.

In response to the rankings, HKU President Zhang Xiang emphasized that this recognition not only confirms the university's academic prowess but also underscores its pivotal role in the global higher education landscape.

As the leading institution in Asia and among the world's best, HKU is committed to helping Hong Kong evolve into an international education hub and a center for innovation and technology, aligning with national goals for high-quality development, he said.

## **Ministry kicks off a campaign to crack down on misconduct in academic papers**

By Li Menghan | chinadaily.com.cn | Updated: 2025-11-26 19:56

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202511/26/WS6926eadba310d6866eb2b8f0.html>

In line with China's emphasis on research integrity, the Ministry of Science and Technology and relevant departments have launched a special campaign to crack down on misconduct in academic papers, according to an announcement issued Wednesday on the ministry's official WeChat account.

The campaign primarily targets retracted papers published by Chinese scholars in international journals within the natural sciences. It will conduct rigorous investigations and take appropriate actions against behaviors such as plagiarism, data or image fabrication or falsification, paper trading, and the fabrication of fictitious peer-review experts and review opinions, the announcement said.

The results of these investigations and subsequent actions will be publicized to enhance the deterrent effect and serve as a warning to others. Severe cases will be recorded in the database of scientific research misconduct in accordance with laws and regulations. This database will be referenced in project applications, academician selections, and the awarding of scientific and technological prizes, it said.

The announcement also proposed establishing a long-term governance mechanism to continuously monitor academic misconduct in retracted papers, with the Ministry of Science and Technology taking the lead.

Relevant departments and local science and technology authorities are required to establish and enhance their working mechanisms, strengthen oversight of institutions with frequent academic misconduct in retracted papers, and ensure these institutions fulfill their primary responsibilities.

A proactive prevention mechanism for scientific research misconduct will be refined. The announcement said that verified cases of misconduct will be strictly handled. The process will integrate scientific research integrity education and training, using investigations to promote education, reform, and management. This approach aims to enhance researchers' integrity awareness and encourage them to actively resist scientific research misconduct.

Institutions that conceal, make concessions to, cover up, or condone scientific research misconduct by their researchers will face severe consequences once verified, it added.

This special campaign, along with the establishment of the long-term mechanism, aims to significantly improve the academic integrity environment in China's scientific research field, promoting the healthy and sustainable development of scientific research activities, the announcement noted.

## **China plans to implement key education reforms**

By ZOU SHUO | CHINA DAILY | Updated: 2025-12-01 07:08

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202512/01/WS692cce77a310d6866eb2c23b.html>

China is set to expand the scope of free education and consider extending its compulsory schooling system as part of its upcoming 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30), marking one of the most significant education reforms in recent years.

The proposed changes aim to reduce family education costs while building a more skilled workforce for the future.

According to the recommendations for formulating the 15th Five-Year Plan adopted in October at the fourth plenary session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the country has proposed steadily expanding the scope of free education and increasing the number of years for compulsory education.

Momentum for education reforms gained ground in August when the State Council, China's Cabinet, issued a guideline to gradually implement free preschool education.

The policy, which took effect in the autumn semester, waived education fees for students who are in their final year at public kindergartens, initially benefiting about 12 million children. The country already offers free and compulsory education for children in primary and middle schools.

Experts have welcomed the proposed changes, calling them a strategic shift toward greater educational equity.

"This represents a fundamental reorientation toward 'investing in people'," said Gao Hang, vice-dean of the Renmin University of China's School of Education. "By redirecting resources from traditional infrastructure to human development, we are strengthening the government's commitment to safeguarding every citizen's right to education."

Initially, the expansion of free education will likely prioritize preschool levels, Gao said, noting that the declining birth rate has reduced the number of preschool-age children, making it financially feasible to achieve free preschool education under China's current fiscal system.

In contrast, the number of senior high school students is still growing, posing greater fiscal challenges, he added.



Xue Eryong, a professor at Beijing Normal University's Faculty of Education, said that expanding the scope of free education aims to broaden access to basic public education services, enabling more people to receive high-quality education and lay a foundation for lifelong development.

Envisioning 15 years of free basic education as an ideal goal, he proposed gradually extending free preschool education from one year to three years and expanding free senior high school education in regions with adequate resources.

Gao, from Renmin University of China, emphasized the role of compulsory education in promoting equity, building a talent pool and supporting fertility-friendly policies. He noted that compulsory education helps curb the rate of school dropouts due to financial difficulties, improves foundational knowledge and reduces household education costs, thereby encouraging higher birth rates.

Xue, from Beijing Normal University, clarified that free education does not equate compulsory education. Compulsory education must fulfill three criteria — free provision, mandatory attendance and uniformity in quality.

While preschool education may achieve free provision, making it compulsory would require ensuring mandatory enrollment and standardized quality nationwide, he said.

Xue added that extending compulsory education to the preschool level aligns better with the overall development of a child, as well as social needs, because the high school level involves diversified pathways, including academic, vocational and social learning.

Gao said that China must take a dialectical view of developed countries' reforms to extend compulsory education.

There are some questions that warrant deeper examination, like whether more years of schooling would necessarily improve national competence, and how can the country avoid a potential "education welfare trap" caused by excessive investment, he said.

As a major country with a large population, which is also at a crucial stage of technological advancement and industrial upgrading, China faces multiple challenges in considering such an extension, Gao said.

These include debates over upward or downward expansion, the trade-off between prolonged learning and delayed entry into the workforce, and the clash between growing educational demands and limited fiscal resources, he added.

Wu Ni, director of the Chinese Academy of Education Sciences' Institute of Education Strategy, highlighted the solid foundation for these reforms. With compulsory education achieving basic equilibrium in all 2,895 counties and a 95.9 percent consolidation rate, China has built the world's largest education system, he said.

Regional initiatives have laid the groundwork, Wu noted. Beijing aims to achieve 90 percent coverage of affordable kindergartens by 2025.

In Shandong province, all cities are expected to have adequate student capacity in high schools by 2026, while by 2027, over 60 percent of counties and county-level districts in Shandong are expected to achieve universal and affordable preschool education.

In the Xizang autonomous region, 15 years of free education has been in practice since 2012.

Wu underlined the importance of a phased and region-specific approach, encouraging economically developed regions to pilot reforms first. Dynamic resource allocation mechanisms should be established to align with demographic trends and fiscal capacities, ensuring sustainable and effective implementation, he said.

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