

CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE FOR SCOTLAND'S SCHOOLS

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2021



CONTENTS

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|
| 01 | EDITORIAL
Karen Liddle, Professional Development Officer | 14 | BRITISH COUNCIL MANDARIN SPEAKING COMPETITION |
| 02 | LEARNING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC
Eva Simpson, St. Ninian's HS East Dunbartonshire | 15 | CISS SCHOLARS 2020-21
Sophie Urquhart, Susie-Jane Brown and Cameron Houston |
| 03 | TEACHING MANDARIN ONLINE DURING LOCKDOWN
Zhang Rui, Aberdeen | 18 | CISS ALUMNI
Erin Duffy |
| 04 | CHINESE BRIDGE MASTERCLASSES
Neil Redpath, Aberdeenshire | 21 | CET WELLBEING WORKSHOPS
Wang Jinxiu, Zhang Rui and Sun Jing |
| 05 | EAST RENFREWSHIRE
Confucius Hub updates | 24 | A FORMER CET WRITES ABOUT HIS TIME ON THE MANDARIN PGDE
Lei Yufeng |
| 07 | JORDANHILL
Confucius Hub updates | 25 | A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A CET
Wang Jinxiu and Lv Hongye |
| 11 | STIRLING
Confucius Hub updates | 26 | A FAREWELL FROM OUR CETs
Zhang Rui |
| 12 | WEST LoTHIAN
Confucius Hub updates | | |

EDITORIAL

KAREN LIDDLE, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICER



Dear friends and colleagues,

It is a privilege to write this editorial for the CISS summer term newsletter. I hope you are all safe and well and as we slowly come out of this pandemic and summer approaches, life can return to some kind of normality as we start to enjoy the things we have missed over the past year.

It has been a very quick 10 months since I started my role here at Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools back in August. I can't believe I've been part of the team for so long now and have yet to set foot in the office building or meet some of my new colleagues in person as the whole staff continue to work from home, wherever that may be. Working from home has its disadvantages and a video call is never the same as a face to face meeting, but I have loved working with my new CISS colleagues and partners in many schools and organisations over the past few months. It fills me with joy to hear about the experiences of some of our learners, our Chinese exchange teachers, our virtual exchange teachers and our colleagues across the country and the positive things they have to share about CISS.

Soon we will say goodbye to most of our Chinese Exchange Teachers who have remained in Scotland throughout the whole pandemic and whose 2, 3 or 4 year contracts are coming to an end. We hear from a few of them in this edition: Zhang Rui reflects on his time in Scotland with a sonnet he has written, whilst Wang Jinxiu and Sun Jing talk about the wellbeing workshops they have enjoyed in partnership with Ricefield Arts. I hope you enjoy reading their reflections.

With outdoor learning being high on the agenda in schools at the moment, the children at Armadale primary school, our Confucius Hub in West Lothian, share with us their work in their Chinese Garden. They are clearly enjoying their Mandarin lessons and have developed many new skills alongside language skills. What an enriching experience it must have been for them!

I wish you all the very best and a restful summer holiday when it comes.

Karen

LEARNING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC



EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE

EVA SIMPSON, S6, ST NINIAN'S
HIGH SCHOOL, KIRKINTILLOCH

The COVID-19 pandemic and school closures have had a huge effect on our Mandarin studies. We were unable to host our Chinese New Year show, go on any school trips or even attend classes in school. As a result of this, my passion for Mandarin and Chinese culture began to lessen. However, at the end of last year, a new student teacher called Mr Lei arrived at our school, and from the day he arrived, I found my language learning change in a way that I'd never experienced before. COVID-19 meant that my chance to exercise my spoken Mandarin had lessened greatly, which had a huge effect on my language proficiency. However, when Mr Lei arrived, I had the chance to speak Mandarin more than ever, which has been essential in getting back into language learning

and I feel fully prepared for all my coursework to achieve my Advanced Higher.

"I found my language learning change in a way that I'd never experienced before."

Mr Lei has also given our classroom a makeover, putting up new posters and signs all over the classroom that had looked the same since I came to high school six years ago. Our permanent Mandarin teacher Ms Liu, who is also an inspiring singer, and our student teacher Mr Lei, who brings a unique and relatable side to learning Mandarin are an unstoppable combination, work together amazingly and make learning Mandarin one of the best decisions I've ever made. I am more than certain that the arrival of our new teacher will encourage so many more pupils to learn Mandarin, which I am certain they will not regret.



ABERDEEN ZHANG RUI

CET in the Aberdeen City Confucius Hub, Zhang Rui, wrote about how he spent lockdown, teaching Mandarin online:

Before lockdown I'd only used platforms like Google Classroom for setting homework, but never as a tool for communicating directly with students online.

Through this experience, I learned to tell whether the students were engaged.

In normal class lessons, when I walk around the classroom and make eye contact with the students and when they respond positively to my questions and take part in class activities actively, I can tell that they are learning.

But it's quite different online. Gradually I learned that in online lessons, when they got excited and curious about what I was teaching and kept asking questions, I could tell that they were really learning. Playing some online class games such as bingo, word search, and mind map helped them to focus, which made the virtual lessons quite invigorating.

During the lockdown, I made short videos for my online Mandarin lessons.

To help the students learn more effectively from me, I created some short videos for my online lessons, which built trust between us and helped the learning process be more engaging.

During Chinese New Year 2021, I made a short video introducing festival greetings in Mandarin and the pun for "福到了"(good fortune has arrived), which helped many students learn about CNY.

At the end of the lockdown, I attended a virtual graduation ceremony for my students.

I was so honoured to be invited to attend the graduation ceremony of Modern Languages for Secondary 1 students of Oldmachar Academy in May 2020. This offered a memorable day for the students, their families and myself. I proudly awarded the Mandarin Certificate of Achievement to one of my students, Cameron Finlay, in recognition of his determination this year.

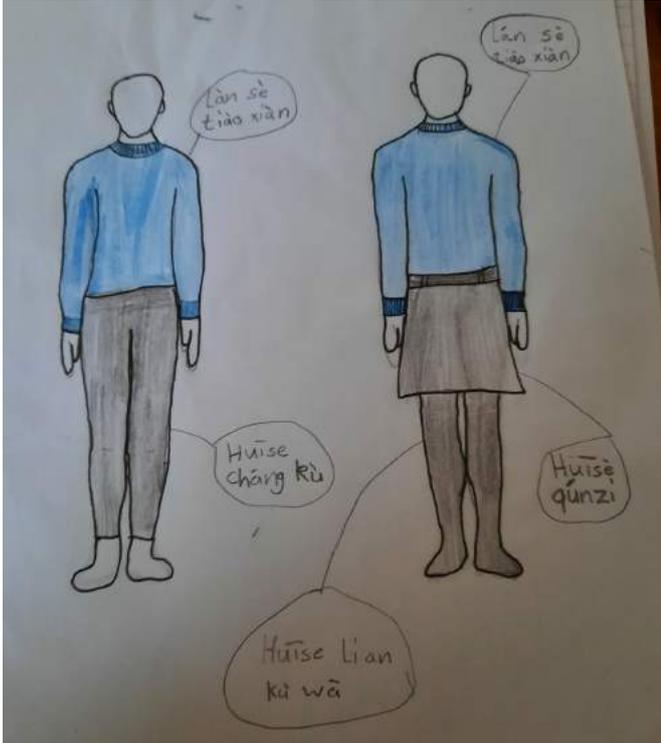


CHINESE BRIDGE MASTERCLASSES

CISS AND ECNU



In collaboration with East China Normal University in Shanghai, CISS ran a 10 week programme for beginners covering a range of topics. The course was intended to be live classes but with the lockdown each lesson was reworked into a pre-recorded video for pupils to access anytime, anywhere. Primary pupils in Aberdeenshire shared their work with us from the masterclass lessons.



NEIL REDPATH, CLASS TEACHER, ABERDEENSHIRE

"This has been a fantastic course to offer to our pupils here at Auchnagatt Primary School in Aberdeenshire. I have enjoyed passing this onto my class during the home learning process, with a different Mandarin task to complete each week. I hope you like the students work."



Càidān

Mi fan	£5.99
mian tiao	£5.99
Bao zi	£7.99
jiao zi	£7.99
Pi sa	£10.99
han bao	£8.99
Shu tiao	£2.99
san ming zhi	£5.99





EXPLORING NEW ASPECTS OF CHINESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN ST NINIAN'S HIGH SCHOOL

At the start of May, our pupils were provided with new experiences to enhance their Mandarin learning.

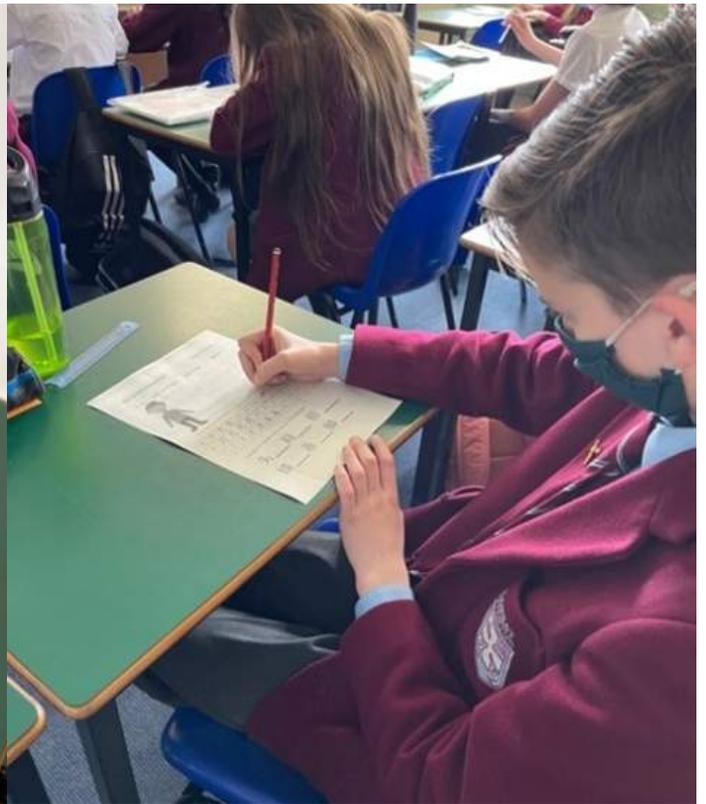
Our S2 and S3 pupils were taught new ways to learn Mandarin involving vocabulary jigsaws and colour-coded grammar cards. The grammar cards allowed our pupils to gain a better understanding of Chinese grammar and were an effective tool for constructing sentences. Pupils found the cards very helpful as they made learning easy and fun.

More than 300 S1 pupils in St Ninian's HS are continuing with another series of Chinese taster lessons to encourage interest in choosing Mandarin as a subject when they progress into S2. S1 pupils found the course interesting and gave lots of positive feedback.

One S1 pupil said, "Mandarin is such a fascinating and complex language and to learn it would be really great".

Another S1 pupil said "I think it is cool to learn a different and unique language like Mandarin."



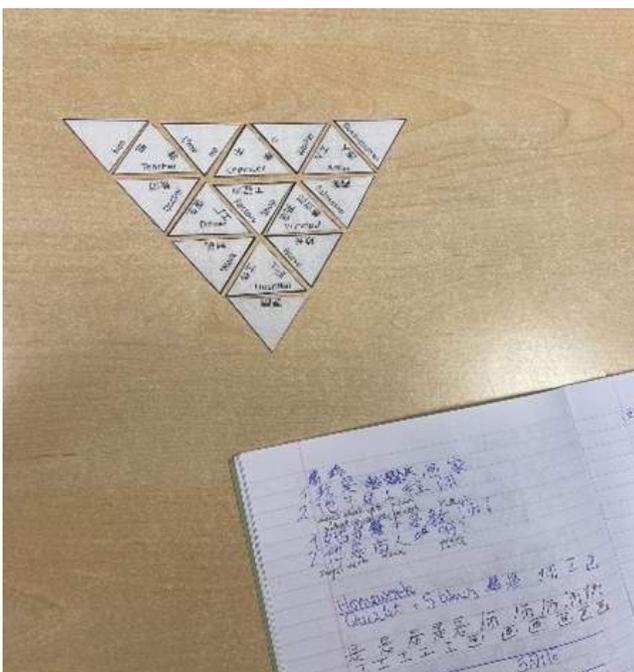


Pupils learning Mandarin were also invited to our weekly lunchtime Tai Chi club. Pupils were provided with traditional Tai Chi clothing whilst they practised a Tai Chi formation called "24 steps". Pupils were given a spacious classroom and meditation music during this relaxing, cultural activity. This experience taught pupils

the importance of understanding customs and culture when learning Mandarin. Pupils were delighted with this cultural experience and enjoyed this form of exercise.

Finally, two of our students were selected for the British Council Mandarin Speaking Competition 2021 at Intermediate level and Beginner plus level.

These activities helped pupils in their Mandarin learning and opened their eyes to China's vast culture!





CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

**CARLA ANDERSON, S3,
JORDANHILL SCHOOL**

This year, the celebrations for Chinese New Year were very different due to the pandemic. However, we adapted to the situation and had a great time.

Due to the fact that we were at home, all of the students taking Mandarin from S3 and above had an online party on Microsoft Teams. The party started out with our teachers telling us about their family traditions and celebrations at new year. Then we heard some traditional Chinese stories, such as the origin of the Fortune Cookie. After that we played a few games, including one which involved the twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac and the qualities that represent them.

During the celebration we were encouraged to eat Chinese food.

Before the party my friend and I went shopping for some new Chinese food to try. I ate vegetable dumplings with noodles, lychee pudding and matcha rolls, and drank fruit tea.

Once we had played the zodiac game, we took part in a scavenger hunt, during which we completed various tasks in order to win points. There were three categories of tasks: things to find, such as a pair of chopsticks; things to take a picture with, for example a tree outside your house; and things to make a video of ourselves doing, including speaking in Mandarin, French and English, making a snowball, and singing a traditional Chinese song. We were given twenty minutes to complete as many tasks as we could, and then we came back together and added up everyone's points.

Overall, this year's Chinese New Year celebrations were a great success and I thoroughly enjoyed learning more about Chinese culture and traditions.

NEWS

FROM JORDANHILL HIGH SCHOOL

Many congratulations to **Alistair Hillis** who won the Silver Achievement Award with his poem, 'My School Timetable', in this year's Mother Tongue Other Tongue (MTOT) multilingual poetry competition organised by SCILT.

Many congratulations to **Anna Hazard** who has won Third Prize in this year's British Council Mandarin Speaking Competition Final – Individual Category

And many congratulations to **Olive Hicks, David Sweeney, Carla Anderson and Anna Hazard** who won Second Prize in this year's British Council Mandarin Speaking Competition Final – Group Category. Oliver, David, Carla and Anna worked on their group project over a period of four weeks. They first developed their own script in Chinese. They then practised individually and together as a group on-line. Finally, they starred in their very own 'Talent Show'. The end product was marvellous! The team deserve high praise for their outstanding accomplishments. To achieve such results is a difficult challenge at the best of times; to do so during lockdown is exceptional.

Chinese Language Centre, Jordanhill School May 2021





BRITISH COUNCIL MANDARIN SPEAKING COMPETITION

DAVID SWEENEY AND OLIVER HICKS, S3, JORDANHILL SCHOOL

During lockdown, our Mandarin class participated in a group Mandarin speaking competition organized by the British Council. Usually, contestants would go up on stage to perform, however this year the competition had to happen slightly differently. Instead of competing in person, contestants had to make a video. It was quite challenging to do because in person interactions were limited due to lockdown. Every Monday and Wednesday, after online school, we would meet up on a Microsoft Teams call for about 30 minutes to an hour to discuss ideas and plans for the video. We ended up with the idea of a talent show. Our group had 4 people. We each arranged to play

2 characters: a judge and a contestant in the show. We also made 2 adverts for the intervals between the talent show acts. We did all kinds of acts such as shuttlecock kicking, playing instruments and dancing. After the script was written, the lockdown restrictions were eased a little, so we were allowed to meet up outside to film the video in person. We originally tried to film it outside, but the wind interfered with the audio, equipment, and props. We eventually ended up filming the judges' parts in school and the contestants' parts and adverts at home. After hours of editing, we finished the video and submitted it. After we submitted the video, we had to wait a while to find out the results. The wait was definitely worth it because our performance came second. We found the experience quite challenging, but enjoyable.

ANNA HAZARD, S3, JORDANHILL SCHOOL

Learning Mandarin with Jordanhill has been and still is an amazing experience. When I had my first Mandarin class, singing about tigers without tails, I never imagined how much I'd come to enjoy the subject. I'm lucky to have been given as many opportunities in Mandarin as I have: the SCEN Youth Summit, poetry competitions, and of course the British Council's Mandarin speaking competition, which last year brought us all the way to London to compete in the finals.

Things were a little different this year, but the competition was just as fun and fierce as ever. I'm grateful that I was able to compete in the Group as well as the Individual Category. Although I wasn't expecting much, I was overjoyed to make it to the finals again, even though it was a shame that the event would be hosted online, and not in London.

"This competition has been an amazing experience both this year and last year, and hopefully I'll get to take part again in the future!"

With exams rapidly approaching and the finals just days before, I definitely had my work cut out for me. Not only was there a speech to memorise, but I also had to work on the possible scenarios I'd be given to talk about for a minute. This was by far the scariest part of the competition, as the subject could be anything from speaking about a family member to discussing shopping options in the UK (the latter of which I was given).

In the final round I was taken aback by both the ages and talent of the competitors. I'm so happy to have received third place as I really wasn't expecting anything at all. This competition has been an amazing experience both this year and last year, and hopefully I'll get to take part again in the future!



ST MARGARET'S MANDARIN JOURNEY

MARTIN DONALD, CLASS TEACHER AT ST MARGARET'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, COWIE

Our Primary 7 class at St Margaret's Primary, Cowie, began learning through the VET (Virtual Exchange Teacher) programme last year. They were one of the first classes to participate and there was a great deal of excitement at chatting live to our teachers in Chengdu. However, it also meant there were some technical issues to be ironed out. Hearing our teachers could be a bit of a challenge and, although the children were picking up some key vocabulary, there was some frustration at not being able to communicate freely and clearly.

Despite this, the opportunity to take part in phase 2 of the programme in April was too good to miss. From the outset, all the technological barriers had been removed and the step change in the learning was clear. The focus of our Mandarin teachers on cultural learning, as well as the language, really engaged the children.

Week 2 brought up a discussion about schooling in China, and the contrast with Scotland (comparing lunch meals was especially controversial!) Questions from the children came thick and fast, and they loved sharing facts about schools in Scotland. It was summed up by the simple comment of one girl at the end of week two; "I enjoyed that!"

With this spark, the children's interest was fully engaged. Following our next lesson, we had a 10-minute conversation (prompted by the children clarifying their understanding) about how we could tell the difference between the radicals for the moon and sun (the children decided the sun reminded them of a window!).

The natural interaction between our teachers in Chengdu and the children has made such a difference. It has allowed the children to explore things that are relevant and of interest to them and satisfy their curiosity about Chinese culture. The vocabulary and topics are obviously planned by CISS on behalf of our Chinese tutors, but our pupils also have a degree of ownership about where our learning goes...and they love it!



OUR CHINESE GARDEN ARMADALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Armadale Primary has been developing their wonderful Chinese Garden with the addition of a gazebo to serve as an outdoor Confucius Classroom. During lockdown, Armadale Primary ran a competition for all primary pupils in West Lothian to design an engraving that will be used on stones within the garden. We can't wait to see the winning designs in the garden.



Pupils in P7a wrote about all the hard work they put in to creating their Chinese garden.

CERYS, LUCY & ARRAN, P7A

Armadale Primary School is the Confucius Hub for West Lothian. We have a Mandarin teacher that comes to class to help us learn about Chinese culture and language. Miss Zhou (our Mandarin teacher) taught us Chinese numbers up to 50, Chinese culture, festivals, the Chinese calendar and lots more. We really enjoy getting taught Chinese as it's so unique and special.

This term Primary 7a was challenged to create a Chinese garden! It was a lot of work in the rain but great fun! To help us, we researched some of the features of a Chinese garden. This enabled us to design and create our garden footprint. Armadale Primary asked all of the schools in West Lothian to design a pebble to identify their school. These pebbles will then be engraved to identify the schools and placed into our garden. We asked CISS and our twinned school in China to design a pebble as well!



We measured the planters to find the amount of soil needed. We measured the pergola for the number of lanterns needed, we ordered red and yellow large garden beanbags and choose a water feature. We then placed our orders and waited for them to arrive!

We visited our local garden centre and learned about the types of plants that we could plant in the garden. The owners helped us by suggesting that we arrange the planters in pairs because repetition happens a lot in Chinese gardens. The whole class picked 2 plants each.



The hard work began, shovelling soil in the pouring rain, designing the layout for our plants, making the lanterns and water feature, not to mention dragging bags of soil everywhere. The plants and trees were delivered and we began to arrange them into the planters. We now have a spectacular Chinese Garden for everyone to enjoy!



PARTNER SCHOOL GIFT EXCHANGE

Pupils at Armadale Primary have been exchanging gifts with their twinned school in China. They sent us a photo of the gifts they received recently from China.

BRITISH COUNCIL MANDARIN SPEAKING COMPETITION

CONGRATULATIONS EMILY!

On Tuesday 18th May 2021 the British Council hosted the final of the 2020-21 edition of the Mandarin Speaking Competition. Huge congratulations to Emily Crawford from Grove Academy in Dundee, who overcame tough competition from across the UK to be awarded 1st place in the beginners level group!



Emily began the school year as a complete beginner in Mandarin, and through the CISS "Discovering China" online course, with the guidance of CISS teacher Xiaoyan Zhou, she made quick and impressive progress. Emily competed against very strong candidates and impressed the judges with her poise, calm and confidence. Congratulations to Emily and her teacher Xiaoyan on this wonderful achievement, and to all of the other participants from Scottish schools.

COMMENTS FROM EMILY'S TEACHER XIAOYAN ZHOU:

The Chinese language is increasingly becoming one of the most popular languages in the world. I am so proud to be a Mandarin teacher at CISS, especially after Emily won first place at the 2021 Mandarin Chinese Speaking Competition! Emily started to learn Chinese through our Discovering China online program at the end of August 2020. Like her classmates, Emily is learning Mandarin online, having never met me face to face. I'm also proud of all of my pupils' achievements in their online Mandarin learning during this unprecedented year.

I greatly appreciate my colleagues' support and the school's collaboration work, this has greatly aided me in helping my pupils achieve their highly impressive feats. There is a Chinese saying that "a single tree cannot make a forest". I am passionate to work with more schools to give more pupils an opportunity to learn Mandarin next academic year in Scotland through the Discovering China course.

Click for some articles on Emily's win:

[Grove Academy pupil wins prestigious Mandarin competition – less than a year after starting language \(The Courier\)](#)

[Can digital learning be a good thing? How e-Sgoil is creating success stories across Scotland \(The Press and Journal\)](#)

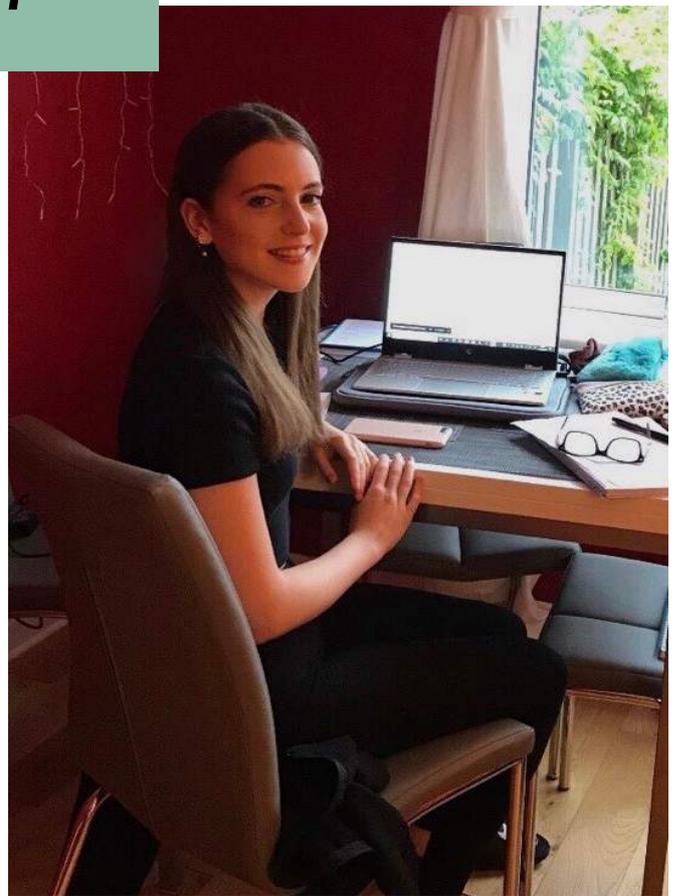
REFLECTING ON A DIFFERENT KIND OF SCHOLARSHIP

The CISS scholars look back on their online learning experience.

SOPHIE URQUHART

大家好! (Hello everyone!) Where do I start? 2020/21, a year like no other. Now in the final few weeks, I wanted to share with you my experience as a CISS Scholar. Flashback to the Summer Immersion Course in 2019. The two weeks that I was lucky enough to spend in China by far exceeded my expectations and made me realise that I wanted to experience more of this unique country, culture and language.

The opportunity to be a Scholar was going to enable me to further explore China and improve my competency in Mandarin but with the benefit of being immersed in the hustle and bustle of daily Chinese life...or so I thought. As the words 'stay at home', 'social distancing' and 'quarantine' began to circulate more frequently the slow realisation that the expected date of travel from Glasgow to Chengdu would not materialise began to dawn.



Amid peak pandemic and despite all the significant challenges, CISS pulled out all the stops to provide us with an alternative Scholarship opportunity. 21st September 9am was my first day at Southwest Jiaotong University (西南交通大学). With the 'new normal' so focussed on working remotely I was more apprehensive that my technology would fail me than being daunted with the task ahead of upskilling my understanding of Mandarin. Thankfully everything ran smoothly on the technology front and I soon got into the swing of my 9am-12pm daily zooms to Chengdu.

The teaching staff were enthusiastic and committed to support us even teaching into their evening to accommodate the time difference. Moreover, whilst supportive of our studies they were always keen to learn about all things Scottish (in particular lots of questions to be answered about the well-known tartan 'skirt!') so it was very much a two-way learning exchange.



SUSIE-JANE BROWN



Honestly, I really wasn't sure about doing the scholarship when I first heard about it. I knew people from my old secondary school had loved it, but I wasn't completely sold on the idea. I went into the interview thinking I'd probably turn it down if offered a place. To be fair that did make it a bit less stressful for me.

It wasn't until I'd actually been offered a place that I really started thinking about how exciting and life-changing it could be. I thought about how much my speaking would improve being surrounded by native speakers 24/7, the excitement of living away from home for the first time and how I could sharpen my bartering skills at local markets. Despite eventually plucking up the courage to travel hundreds of miles away to live in a country where I could barely speak the language, I've ended up doing most of the course sitting in my bedroom.

Even if I was hesitant at first, I am so glad I've done this programme. Embarrassingly, I had some pretty unfair assumptions about what the teaching would be like. The image of strict, unforgiving teaching I had in my head was immediately dispelled by kind, encouraging people who were just as curious about life in Scotland as we were about China.

They really take care to make sure you understand everything. Having classes over Zoom has actually been quite helpful in this regard. If you make a mistake (speaking only for myself, there are quite a lot), it's often corrected immediately by a teacher in the chat box, no need to interrupt class or wait behind over small mistakes. That's not to say that you can't ask for help if you're really struggling. I have become well acquainted with the phrase "我不知道" (I don't know). Genuinely the teachers are the best thing about this course, just a bunch of incredibly lovely people.

It's not just the teachers, the whole team have been fantastic. They're always happy to answer any queries or offer other support. I've also been doing some online evening classes courtesy of CISS. Safe to say that saying yes to this scholarship was the best decision I almost didn't make.



CAMERON HOUSTON

I first heard about the Tianjin scholarship in my first year of high school and I knew immediately that I wanted to apply. In my sixth year, I got that opportunity. Unfortunately, due to coronavirus, the Tianjin scholarship was cancelled and instead of going to China like we had hoped, we were staying at home. But not all hope was lost as the people at Southwest Jiaotong University kindly agreed to conduct online classes for us.

The scholarship members were streamed into two classes depending on their Chinese level. Having never learned Chinese before I was placed in the lower group. Then for 3 hours every day from 9 till 12, we were taught Mandarin by SWJTU students. Our lessons were divided into 3 parts, comprehension where we learned the vocabulary and grammar rules necessary to pass the HSK exams, reading where each day we would read a paragraph in Mandarin about an element of Chinese culture, be it history, or shopping habits, and lastly we would have listening and speaking where we would practice exam-style questions and try talking about our interests in Chinese. These lessons took me from almost no understanding of Chinese to HSK 3 level between September and May.

Throughout the year the people at CISS and SWJTU arranged a number of workshops. My favourite of these was when Ling Yun, the sword lady, came in and gave a talk on the Chinese martial art Emei Kung Fu. These seminars allowed us to experience a fun and new way to learn about Chinese culture.

I am eternally grateful to both my teachers at SWJTU for their time and hard work as well as CISS for providing this opportunity. I would highly recommend this scholarship to all people with an interest in China or learning Chinese no matter their current Chinese level.

CISS ALUMNI

CATCHING UP WITH THE ALUMNI

ERIN DUFFY, CISS SCHOLAR 2015-2016

"Since I left China in 2016, Chinese language and culture has remained an integral part of my personal and professional life. The experience sparked a love of foreign languages and travel that I have explored and built upon every year since."

2016: I worked as an assistant Mandarin Teacher at the Glasgow Chinese School. As I had attended a few Chinese classes there at the age of 16, this was a real full circle moment for me!



2017: I returned to China to work in the British Embassy Beijing. I camped overnight on the Great Wall of China with my work colleagues. It was one of the best experiences of my life! My Chinese language skills improved a lot whilst communicating with my colleagues in the Visa Office.



When I returned I started working with online language learning company Radiolingua, helping to create resources, notes and social media posts related to their course "Coffee Break Chinese". It was such a great learning experience! For any prospective Chinese learners who may think Chinese language is too out of reach for them, check out the blog I wrote for them ["Learning Chinese is Easier Than You Think"](#)



2018: I worked with the English for Academic Study unit at the University of Glasgow and planned trips and fun events for overseas students to help them integrate and get to know Glasgow and Scotland's wonderful sights. Many of the students were from China and it was great to practice my Chinese with them! My knowledge of Chinese culture and language really helped me to bond with them and make them feel more comfortable and welcomed. I made some great friends!

2018/19: I moved to Huelva, Spain to work as an English teacher as part of my Spanish and Linguistics degree. After my experience in China, I knew how much living in the country of your target language could improve your language skills, and I'm so glad that my year in Spain payed off just as much as my year in Tianjin! I would advocate spending some time in the country to any language learner. I now have a great love for Spanish language and culture (and food!), and the little kids of San Juan del Puerto hold a special place in my heart.



In the same year I met up with some Chinese friends who happened to be travelling in Portugal and spent three days speaking only Chinese in Lisbon. It was wild, and such a great way to meet up with long distance friends!



2019: One of the best experiences of 2019 was hosting the opening of the Ramshorn Building for CISS. If you had told me at 18 that a few years later I would be hosting an event in Chinese in front of many native Chinese speakers I would not have believed you! I'm so grateful that CISS continue to champion me and my Chinese language-learning journey every step of the way.



In 2019 I also landed my dream job of becoming a tour guide in Glasgow. This job allows me to combine my love of history and culture with my language skills. I get to interact with someone from a different country every day and show them my home city - which I'm very proud of. I have now been working as a tour guide in Glasgow for two years and I can't wait to tour again this summer!



2020: In order to keep me motivated to work on my Chinese language skills during the pandemic and the final year of my Spanish and Linguistics degree, I started a blog called @dailylanguagepractice on instagram. The blog motivated me to practice speaking with daily videos and conversations with polyglots who could share their tips and tricks for language learning!

[Click here to see Erin's language blog!](#)

At the same time, I've been keeping up my Chinese skills with some captioning work for a company called twig education. I caption educational videos in Chinese, and it's been a great way to learn new vocabulary in subjects like biology, chemistry and social science!

2021: I'm very pleased to say that my journey with Strathclyde and foreign language study isn't over as I will be starting a Masters in Translation and Interpreting at the University in September!



Dear Miss Duffy,

Application number: [REDACTED]

Further to your recent application, I am pleased to make you a Conditional offer of a place on the MSc Business Translation and Interpreting programme. Full details of the offer are attached.

You should accept/decline your offer within 21 days of this letter. If you need more time, please contact the academic department. Contact details for your department can be found on your course web page at <https://www.strath.ac.uk/courses/>. Please quote your Application Number [REDACTED] on any correspondence. If we have not heard from you within 21 days, the University reserves the right to withdraw this offer.

Please note that this offer is made on the understanding that in accepting it you undertake to abide by the Charter, Statutes and Ordinances of the University, and also to abide by the rules and regulations which the University makes for its students from time to time. It should be noted that this offer is subject to the acceptance by you of the terms and conditions set out in the University's Calendar, available at <http://www.strath.ac.uk/sees/educationenhancement/qualityassurance/> and then clicking on University Regulations. You must therefore read these terms and conditions before accepting any offer.

Yours sincerely,

S Black

CET WELLBEING WORKSHOPS



BY THE CISS CHINESE EXCHANGE TEACHERS

CISS ran a series of online health and wellbeing workshops, in partnership with Ricefield Arts and Culture Centre, for our Chinese Exchange Teachers this term. Each session was led by a different expert and proved to be a good way for our CETs to connect and experience something a little different. Three of our CETs wrote about three of the different sessions for us.

CREATIVE DRUMMING

Wang Jinxiu, Highland Confucius Hub

The first workshop ran in partnership with percussionist Jane Bentley. I never thought drumming could be so creative and relaxing until I attended the online workshop on 2nd March.

Jane instructed us to get drumming in an engaging and fun way using various

instruments; from pencils on the desk to spoons in the kitchen. Everyone brought their own drum kit made of anything they could find around the house to make a noise with. I used a jam jar as a drum and a pencil as a drumstick.

At the start of the workshop, we tried out various beats and different styles to play along. To practise timing and find the rhythm, we made poses after each countdown. It was so great to see everyone's smiling face and lovely gestures.



Then we were asked to name three things that brightened our days. Positive words such as "sunshine", "sand and beaches", "movies", "books" and "nice

food" popped up on the screen. Jane helped turn those words into rhythm ideas and created a drum along track.

While playing along with the soothing rhythm, I felt stress-free and refreshed, imagining myself sun bathing on a beach. I could see from the screen everyone enjoying it and many moving their body freely with the music. We all agreed this was a fantastic experience.

"Lockdown has been very tough for everyone, but this workshop was one of the best things. During the workshop, we felt more connected and less lonely, which helped us reduce stress and find inner peace."



BLIND DRAWING

Zhang Rui, Aberdeen Confucius Hub

On 30th March 2021, the CISS CETs took part in a virtual "blind" self-portrait drawing session with artist Fiona Tong. This was the second wellbeing workshop for CETs in Scotland during the 2021 lockdown. Thanks to Fiona and all the participants, we all enjoyed a great experience.

In this art workshop, we blindly drew self-portraits, where we closed our eyes and let our sense of touch lead our hands. Fiona guided us through a blind drawing of ourselves, before giving us an opportunity to reflect on our self-perceptions as we added tones, colours and even words to the final drawing.

With one hand touching the contours of our faces whilst the other hand was drawing what it felt, this technique allowed us to move freely around the paper without worrying or being too cautious of the final outcome. The idea is to let our sense of touch challenge us to "see" in a different way. With life, nothing is

perfect and with this workshop, we wanted to capture the simplicity of life by just going with the flow.

As you can see, we've got some outstanding artists in our midst and Fiona has made us believe that everyone has a creative side, we just need to find ways to unleash it!

I, along with my four-year-old daughter, took part in the virtual workshop together, which made our lockdown life in Scotland so special and unforgettable. Thank you, CISS.



PILATES

Sun Jing, East Ayrshire Confucius Hub



On Tuesday, 27th April, all the CISS exchange teachers continue their colorful wellbeing workshop. This time we took part in Pilates with a wonderful instructor Pui Lee training us how to do a physical fitness system-Pilates.

Pilates is a form of exercise which has been around for hundreds of years. It concentrates on strengthening the body with an emphasis on core strength. At the beginning of the workshop we learned several simple sections including principles. Concentration, control, center, flow, precision and breathing play crucial roles in practicing and aiming for elegant movement as well as building strength and stamina. It also focuses on promoting strength, stability and flexibility. We can not only improve our body flexibility and coordination, but also benefit our mental health from doing it for just one hour. Our mood released and created a positive feeling

in our body. What's more, Pilates exercise employs a rounded technique and really tones our muscles, all the teachers did well and grasped the key steps in terms of beginners. Moreover, we even learned that Pilates moves require us to keep proper alignment and challenge our stability to stay balanced. Pui Lee really drew out our potential energy! Seeing is believing, you can't imagine how talented we are! All the exchange teachers must be endowed with the ability of Pilates performers! Our wellbeing devoted to doing it!

Last but not least, as a Chinese exchange teacher, I really appreciate this opportunity to experience such a great workshop and all the teachers have to extend our thanks for our considerate leaders and teachers who made such terrific wellbeing workshops for us! Words cannot express our gratitude! Wellbeing exists in all of us from your terrific job during such a difficult time! By the way, pictures can tell you the truth. Look at our brilliant sunny infectious smiles! You have already felt wellbeing, haven't you?

A FORMER CET WRITES ABOUT HIS TIME ON THE MANDARIN PGDE



LEI YUFENG

Since starting my undergraduate study in Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages, I have worked in 10 schools and institutions in 3 countries. These experiences strengthened my desire to follow a career in teaching and brought me back to Scotland for my PGDE year.

The COVID-19 pandemic has touched us all — my course mates and I embarked on our PGDE journey remotely and haven't had any in-person class to this day. The regular teaching and learning in schools has been hit especially hard, exacerbating inequities and the attainment gap and affecting our placement progress. Still, my experience is one of hope and opportunity. From course lectures to placement arrangements, the university has been rethinking and revamping its approach to meet the moment head-on. We Zoomed in ways that spawned new pedagogies, more equitable classrooms, and better discussions. I have been fortunate enough to carry out all my placements in the same school, St. Ninian's

High School in East Dunbartonshire. From my first placement last October, I have seen an unprecedented level of resilience and flexibility from everyone. Rules added and varying timetables in response to the pandemic have not dampened the motivation of the students and teachers at all. Most importantly, I have met the loveliest students here - respectful to their teachers, kind to their peers, and even more so, intensely and incessantly curious about the world.

"While I do not know all the ways my colleagues will go on to change lives for the better, I am certain they will."

During placement, my course mates often shared fun and useful teaching resources and activities in our group chat. My school colleagues continued to experiment with more engaging and inclusive practices. While I do not know all the ways my colleagues will go on to change lives for the better, I am certain they will. As teachers, we are more galvanised than ever to meet the challenges of today to create a better tomorrow.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A CET



Chinese Exchange Teachers Wang Jinxiu (Highland) and LV Hongye (Perth and Kinross) take us through a typical day in their lives as teachers of Mandarin



For more videos from our Chinese Exchange Teachers, go to our [YouTube channel](#).

A FAREWELL FROM OUR CETs

As the academic year comes to an end our CETs prepare to return home to China. Aberdeen Confucius Hub CET Zhang Rui wrote a poem to mark his time here.

A farewell sonnet by Rui Zhang

Away from home I am five thousand miles,
and sang my Auld Lang Syne on Hogmanay;
in virtual party you saw my big smile,
I treasure every moment of my stay.

Here are diverse terrains I've never seen,
and chummy caring friends I'll always miss;
how I enjoy the charming Aberdeen,
and cherish the instructive help from CISS.

But the pandemic was Achilles heel,
in cyber working yet we persevered;
productive and progressive now I feel,
and erstwhile happy life has reappeared.

Now we have to away with blended hearts,
remember our days whilst we are apart.

**Confucius Institute
for Scotland's Schools, 2021**
www.strath.ac.uk/ciss

Follow us on social media!

