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中國研究院 China Institute

Chinese Studies at University

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Executive summary

1. a university is NOT a language school
2. great variety of programmes with no clear common set of standards
3. university departments have responded to greater variety of applicants

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SOAS BA Chinese – typical learning outcomes

- Advanced Mandarin proficiency (HSK 5 or higher)
- Confident reading both simplified characters 简体字 and full-form characters 繁体字 (full-form was the standard script in the PRC until 1956 and is still the standard in Taiwan and Hong Kong)
- Elementary to intermediate reading ability in classical Chinese 古汉语 (classical Chinese was the official language of education in China until 1920, and the official language of government until 1949)
- Good general knowledge of Chinese culture and cultural history
- Ability to reflect critically on issues pertaining to Chinese culture, drawing on both Chinese-language and English-language sources

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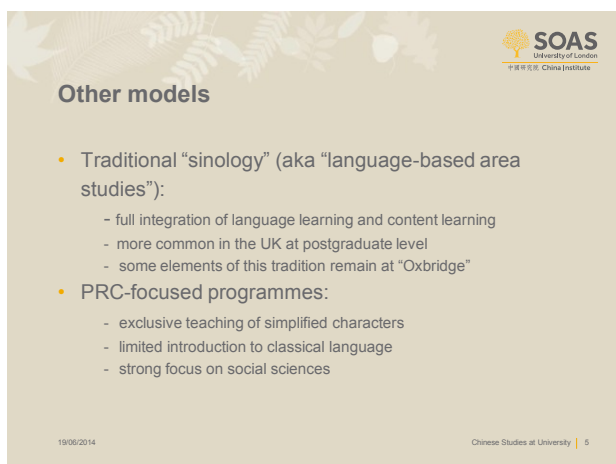


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Joint degrees and “Studies” programme

- Intermediate to advanced proficiency in Mandarin
- Confident reading simplified script, basic familiarity with full-form script
- Understanding of what classical Chinese is and why it is important, plus at least elementary reading ability
- Good general knowledge of Chinese culture and cultural history
- Thorough grounding in at least one academic discipline (incl. transferable analytical skills and academic writing skills)

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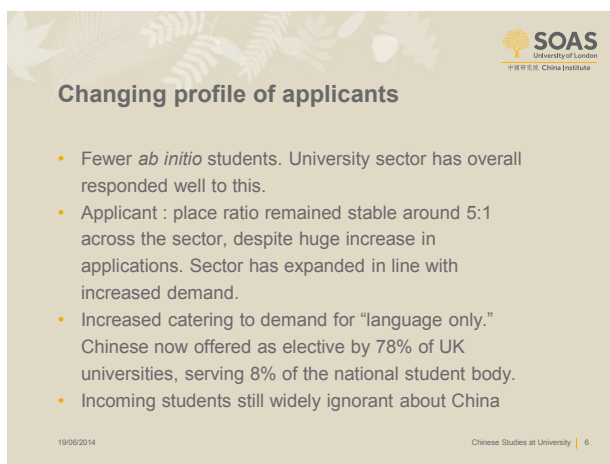


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Other models

- Traditional “sinology” (aka “language-based area studies”):
 - full integration of language learning and content learning
 - more common in the UK at postgraduate level
 - some elements of this tradition remain at “Oxbridge”
- PRC-focused programmes:
 - exclusive teaching of simplified characters
 - limited introduction to classical language
 - strong focus on social sciences

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Changing profile of applicants

- Fewer *ab initio* students. University sector has overall responded well to this.
- Applicant : place ratio remained stable around 5:1 across the sector, despite huge increase in applications. Sector has expanded in line with increased demand.
- Increased catering to demand for “language only.” Chinese now offered as elective by 78% of UK universities, serving 8% of the national student body.
- Incoming students still widely ignorant about China

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