

Learning and Employment Opportunities in Qingdao, China

Background: The Lee-wen Foreign Language School in Qingdao was founded just over a decade ago by Xie Wenshan (Mark), a Davidson graduate of '85. Lee-wen was the first foreign language school in Qingdao and is still considered the best. Lee-wen typically employs about a half-dozen foreign teachers and 8 to 10 Chinese teachers at any given time.

Classes: My workload varied throughout the year. Basically, you work on a reverse holiday system; if students are free, you're not. Summer and Winter Break were pretty tough, with daily classes. However, for the great majority of the year I worked only weekends, having five day "workweeks" free. I can't complain. Of course, your results may vary. Generally, classes were relatively unstructured, save that for most there was an accompanying textbook with chapter progress guidelines.

Compensation: If you want to live without financial worry for a year, this is the way to do it. For my situation, I was provided with a fully furnished (read: DVD player, big TV, AC) apartment and utilities. My pay came to a little over 100 RMB a day. That'll get you a decent lunch (10 RMB), a ride across town and back (2 bus, 30 taxi), a really nice dinner for two (30-50) and a big stack of DVDs or CDs (8-10 each), with something left over. Granted, it comes to almost nothing in US dollars, but you'll live like a king there. Airfare and tuition are negotiable, depending on individual needs.

Learning: Culture, cool folks and pure language immersion aside, institutional learning opportunities are pretty good in Qingdao. At present Mark is designing a language schedule that would combine classes at Ocean University with tutorials at Lee-wen for studying Chinese. Seriously, though, nothing teaches you how to speak Chinese like being hungry.

	
<p>Direct Contact and Information: Mark Xie, Headmaster School Office: 086 532 5739202 / 5756016 Email: engsalon@public.qd.sd.cn www.leewen.org (needs Chinese language installed) www.leewen.org/htdocs/teacher.htm Current Teachers</p>	<p>Indirect Contact (me): Ben Edwards Cell: 828 289 9631 Email: beedwards@davidson.alumlink.com</p>