

UQ, Fudan pair up for MBA deal

Tim Dodd

The University of Queensland (UQ) Business School has partnered with one of China's leading MBA schools to offer students hands-on business experience in China.

UQ is working with the Fudan University School of Management in Shanghai, and pairing teams of its MBA students with Chinese students to jointly complete real-life consulting projects to advise firms on market entry or expansion in China.

The head of the UQ Business School, Andrew Griffiths, said a joint team of students had already advised one Australian firm, planning and design consultancy Place Design.

Students are selected for the projects, with five UQ MBA students paired with five MBA students from Fudan.

The two groups are each briefed by the client company about their planned entry into the Chinese market or their plans for expansion there.

The process, which lasts several months, ends when all 10 students meet in China for the final phase to incorpo-

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Andrew Griffiths, UQ Business School

rate feedback from the client, complete the consulting document and prepare the final pitch.

Professor Griffiths said he expected many more companies to take part in the scheme because of the interest among Australian firms of developing business in China. He said the scheme was also of huge benefit to MBA students at both UQ and Fudan.

"It will create a synergistic relationship between MBA students of very different backgrounds," Professor Griffiths said.

He said he believed the partnership would also lead to other opportunities for UQ Business School in China,

including introducing Australian business people to the country and offering executive education courses for business people who wanted to understand the Chinese market.

He said there could also be room to offer programs to Chinese business people interested in learning about Australia.

UQ Business School's partnership with Fudan University School of Management is similar to a successful program UQ already runs with the prestigious Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

The Wharton partnership also involves teams of MBA students from both institutions collaborating to offer consulting to Australian companies looking to enter the US market.

UQ says it has led to an extra \$400 million in annual sales in the US for companies involved, including sportswear label Lorna Jane and steel manufacturer **OneSteel**. Professor Griffiths said UQ Business School would look for similar partnerships with business schools in other countries.