

Notes from 20190402 New Strategy Consultation workshop

1. Disruptive IT seems changing the world we live in. However behind this, it is social and political reasons that drive the potential trend of globalism or nationalism. Our job in the university is to help the students to face and deal with the changes. The New Strategy on the initial environment is too comfortable to address the environment impact.
 - Work was done to address the global megatrends a couple of years ago. We refreshed the process, reflected on major changes and published the document on the university strategy website accordingly. These contexts raised are the start of thinking for the New Strategy. At the same time, we invited colleagues to express the knowledge and strong opinions on the broader context and tells us what people think we should do for our next step.
2. Brexit also impacts UNNC because most of our students take further study overseas. It also puts UNNC in a favourable position on study exchange and joint research opportunities etc. Our competitor in Kunshan Duke teaches international students on Chinese culture and Chinese students on American history, so that we could directly tell what they are here for. In such environments, how to position UNNC? How to build relationship with EU? Will this impact our teaching content?
 - Brexit probably won't make direct impact on teaching in the university. It definitely wouldn't positively impact HE in UK. However UNUK has an advantage in such an environment compares to UK peers for its multi-campuses and international outlook. There are opportunities through UNNC and UNM to develop global relationships where the strong connections are available for the whole university. The global connections through all of our campuses should be encouraged.
3. Whether financial information can be publicly provided in UNNC, so that we (students) can understand if university can run with finance sustainability?
 - Across all campuses, we need to ensure financial sustainability. We generate money to reinvest in the university instead of taking them out. The topic for now is to invest those funds in the things that we really want to.

4. In New Strategy, we say one university with three locations. Do we have any strategy cover the US? The reason to ask is because we are talking about the next ten years, it might be interesting to look at that area again.
 - We can't do everything in globalization. We need to focus on certain countries and areas. Now university is working on something on Canada and US with a new strategy, as they are interesting areas with some top universities and research.
 - This is the area where we appreciate people's input, in terms of the global status. The importance of Global Strategy is how the three campuses engage with the rest of the world, not only about how the campuses engage with each other. So how can the whole university benefit from our partnerships? What should be our priorities? I think those are the questions which we would really like to get their answers to in formulating our strategy.
5. One question about mission of university suggests many stakeholders doesn't know what is distinctive about the university. This is one of the major issues we face at the moment in UNNC. We are about 15 years, but still don't have very clear core values and behaviors that we can inspire each other. We say we are the first British university in China, but what that means to us. In my view, our advantage lies in the number of international students becoming larger and larger, the multicultural background of teachers and students are developing, the many ways of teaching, and the very different ways to cope with universities among our colleagues.
 - There is one thing that distinguishes the university from any other university in the world which is a university campuses in three countries. One word to add to the three campuses is BEAUTIFUL Many people tell us that our campus is the most attractive university campus in the country. I think that's something unique about the university. That's not the same as answering the question about values that you post, but it is something that we want to be able to build upon to define ourselves.
6. Strategy is not vague, sometimes have to be specific. As a university, do we care about our ranking? I presume we do. If ranking is important, we need to understand what happened to our ranking for its decline. Do you think our strategy can really help enable the university to maintain a ranking or improve ranking in the long run? (2nd question) UNUK is endorsing

DORA and then what is the impact on our rankings? If we are no longer a top QS university, what is going to happen to Nottingham as a whole

- There are multiple answers, depending on where you are and what your purposes. Of course ranking is important but it is not something for which we should set targets on. The ranking methodology is dynamic and fluctuating all the time. That's one of the reasons why we drop down, ranking agencies don't want a top twenty list to be the same every year.
- We have no control over the methodology of producing the table, but we can control how we perform in some of the elements leading to it. Like publication paper writing. Although writing is important, we shouldn't only use the impact factor to judge the quality of a single outcome. So my opinion is we should monitor our KPIs that can contribute to our ranking. To see how we can improve our performance on those measures. We need our research strategy to be focused on production of high quality outputs.
- We encourage people to read the declaration of DORA who suggests not using single journal impact to judge the publication and taking broad things into account. Many top 100 universities sign DORA. It is for sure that in all of our campuses will continue to work to publish the best of our work in the highest quality in the world.

7. To explain the context in the green paper about "Students are increasingly seeing a personalized experience more importantly today." Is that anything to do with personalised learning or the courses? In the green paper, there is not anything about data availability to support the student success and personalised experience to be fulfilled.

- Personalised experience reflects how people, not only just students, but also staffs are responding to something with different background of where they come from. In commercial or consuming industry, Amazon recommend things according to your historical transaction records, while in universities we don't do well accordingly. Thus personalised experience refers to engage with students in the way they prefer to be engaged and support them in the way that they would like to be supported.

8. The vision is well supported by senior level, how to ensure it is well cascaded into middle and operation levels especially in a global context with varied social and cultural background. We suggest enhancing mobility scheme not only at the academic level but also at the administration level.

- After the 21st Century University Workshop, many questions raised on the tri-campus and it is up to the university executive board to make two statements. One is that we are holding international campuses; and another is what the nature of a university with international campuses. We are international university with three campuses. At this moment, It's really clear that there are something we do that don't reflect that positioning statement. Encouragement are made to people to call out the behaviors that do not reflect those position statement. As a start, people across the university need talking to each other.

9. The lack of communication across campuses caused much duplication and waste of resources in many areas. For instance, marketing and recruitment can be centralized by one global recruitment team that will also improve the consistence of the global Nottingham branding.
10. Green Paper informs the level of research investment in UNUK will not be expanded, which is against the trend of most other universities for their growing ambition in research. Where is the reluctance of further research investment and whether there is a possibility in the near future to revisit this plan for more research outputs

- It is not a wish to reduce the amount of research. With financial situation of the university, we don't see the opportunity to significantly increase the amount of internal money budget in research. The objective is to secure more funding from outside. In UNUK, the Brexit and tuition cap would not enable us extra income for further expenditure. Unless we can generate more money from outside, we won't be able to continue investment in research. However, there is no intention to reduce the level of research activities, but no promises of more internal money to support research. In UNNC, in case there is more income, it might be decided by the Provost for more investment in research.

11. One thing to characterize a young organization is its need to innovate, to be different and to push the boundaries. Sometimes, colleagues in UNNC come up some innovative ideas that will make a distinctive difference but rejected by UK due to the willingness to engage in the level of thinking and talking culturally. This has seriously affected UNNC's processes especially in the teaching areas, such as global programmes, funding students for mobility. If innovation is a culture in UNUK, then what is the system and mechanism to support the innovation, such as funding.

- In UK, a review on the finance is under progress on partners and collaboration. We are one university campuses in three countries. However, it should not mean that we have to do everything need to be identical in the three campus. we need to determine what should be the same and then allow people flexibility to get on with things beyond that.
- There are some needs to streamline the things we need more agility in the way we are able to response. Some of the processes doesn't address the vision of a global university, that definitely need to change for the future. We still largely stuck with a small number of traditional models. The majority of students on mobility is still on 2+2 model, which might not be the thing they want. A greater variety of ways need to be sought for all students on international experiences which is something distinctive to receive from the University of Nottingham.

12. As a student, we want to understand the strategic positioning for UNNC especially for Business School to help student achieve a higher comparative advantage against other universities.

- As a university, we haven't really been able to exploit the business school in the global context. We see business school with locations in three countries as a big advantage and I think this will be a valued feature. The whole university is discussing how to better act as a global business school without necessarily becoming one entity. How the business schools from different locations could interact with each other to give students a truly global experience in the uk.

13. It is necessary to install a system or mechanism of change. To understand what is the inertia that people don't want to change? For instance, Project Transform as a major project to impact with ICT on students.

- In UNNC, in the 21st century workshop, it has greater enthusiasm and confidence of ICT compares to the other two campuses. In regard to Project Transform, after the full installment, there will be a reflection on the lesson the university could learn and reference for the future operation. This is all what we could do to help the people trust university .

14. In terms of teaching model, can we try the model 2+1+1 where we can find an alternative for 2+2, which is a big competitive area but facing practical challenges? At the same time, we can think about teacher's mobility where UK is facing a challenging resources, can we

send UNNC teachers to UK about 3 or 6 months for teaching, at the same time do research?

- A general view is that we do many things well in local but no shared resource. The big issue in UK and across campuses is communication and let people understand each other. UK is trying to improve, one way is through newsletter.

15. I think administration staffs should also be considered into the mobility, which allows manager among three campus to communicate and make personal development, so that teachers can focus on the students in academics.

- It is also our desire to break down barriers between academics and professional services.

16. We don't do well enough as a university in supporting our students in their postgraduate pathways for postgraduate applications. There are agencies around campus help manager students' postgraduate applications. However, in China, UNNC is probably the best in terms of preparing students for overseas postgraduate study especially in UK. Can we change that situation and to take charge of our students postgraduate pathways?

- In UNUK, there is a spinout doing similar pathway programmes set up by students. We need to make sure that we are providing the supports to the students.

17. Students are complaining that UNNC teaches less in contents compare to Chinese universities. I think we should pay more attention on students' concerns and complaints and support the excellence performance of students.

- we attempt to set the same standards across all three campuses, so this is a problem we need to address globally. As a mature global institution, one of the things we need to do better is learning through the expectations and experiences from all our locations. On some key issues, we need to make global decisions, instead of just focus on UK interests.

18. Last year, a programme called Lady Susan fellowship was launched to support administrative staffs for personal development. Such opportunities are rare, but will contribute to individuals and the university development in the long run. Is that possible to allocate more and sustainable funding like this to support administrative staffs?

- In UK, we didn't offer programmes like such. Maybe UK should also look out to overseas campuses to learn and to do more such interesting activities to enhance staff's development.

19. In other universities, such as University of Warwick, are developing interdisciplinary opportunities, not only in research but also in teaching. Are we interested in such at the moment or need to wait for a longer term?

- In my opinion, we should certainly be interested in interdisciplinary activities. We need to be concerned about what are the areas students would like to study. How can we enhance our existing subjects and how can other subjects be developed and offered to potential students. We know we need to do that but now need to think about the barriers that stop us from doing so.

20. The world and Higher Education sector has rapidly changed over the recent years. It is our essential task to think what is the biggest challenge and then the biggest risk. What are our competitive advantages compared other universities in China, both transnational and domestic?

- Most of us will be aware of the developments in artificial intelligence, and some of this will be applied in higher education. Then the next question is what we should do to realise and strengthen our global position as an international university with three campuses.

21. There is a trend that leading UK universities began to accept China Gaokao score for UG entrance criteria on Chinese students. What is UNUK's plan to address that trend.

- In UK, we are considering how we should assess the potential of students, but nothing has been decided yet.

22. We are developing commercial products in Language Centre in UNNC, but the finance rules are slow and charges 30% management fee. Can we make these processes more flexible especially in small projects?

- In general, we are interested in developing CPD activities not only for profit, but also to build relationships. In terms of finance arrangement, this should fit into the whole university planning as a whole

23. In green documents, it says that now university has debt valued a hundred million pounds. What's the benefit of not paying it down?

– first of all, we compare ourselves to most other UK universities where our financial situation is better. With the financial pressures, we don't see an opportunity to pay out yet. Because if we paid out, we will have less money to spend on core business of university. But we don't want to grow up debt for financial sustainability purpose. Nobody gets profit from the university; the money is generated to spend in the university.

24. For our students in UNNC, we cannot apply for home PG programme. Is it possible for UNNC to set up more connections and collaborations with Chinese University?

– International office is considering working with domestic universities for broader collaboration. We need to think how to support students for their domestic engagement and future education aspiration.