The University of Nottingham
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The University of Nottingham Ningbo China

Strategy 2020

A Roadmap to Success and Sustainability

Contents

Undergraduate students working in
the Student Common Room.

Introduction

"What is a real first class university? I think there are at least two essential benchmarks: if students feel their lives are transformed through the university experience and if academics are given every opportunity to focus on curiosity-oriented research."

President Yang Fujia

Carrying this commitment, the University of Nottingham Ningbo China has grown into a campus of 6700 students from the original 254 when first established 12 years ago. The research competence of the University has increased significantly. Our reputation and impact locally and internationally has started to rise.

Today, with major reforms in China driving further forward, Chinese higher education has become more international, diversified and competitive. We now look to the future with the vision not only to be the first but also the best international university in China. To fulfill this ambition, UNNC Strategy 2020 has been developed to achieve excellence in everything we do.

In developing and articulating our plan for this University, we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with The University of Nottingham UK and our sister campus in Malaysia in echoing our vision, principles and values - but with a particular emphasis on the Chinese context and the potential of our locality.

This five year plan sets out goals and actions targeted at areas of challenge and opportunity, thus ensuring a foundation for continued success. We have articulated two core themes: delivering academic excellence and developing key subject areas, supported by enabling strategies of global engagement and asset management. Each strategic area has a set of goals and actions targeted at building on core strengths, addressing key challenges, enabling competitiveness and delivering distinctiveness.

This plan will deliver our medium term ambitions whilst laying the foundations for success in 2020 and beyond. We will keep these ambitions and goals under constant review and ensure that we remain responsive to future challenges and competition. We will be dynamic and ambitious in our responses, and seek always to act in the best long-term interests of the University of Nottingham Ningbo China.

Side view of the Trent Building

01/

Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles

Students enjoying their leisure time on the playing fields.

01/ Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles

As an international academic institution, The University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC) is an integral and vibrant part of The University of Nottingham family.

Our strategy is developed within the global strategic framework of The University of Nottingham and built on the underpinning themes that support the realisation of our vision and mission for 2020.

Vision

A leading international university that is comparable to the Top 50 Chinese Universities. We transform the lives and livelihoods of our students, staff and the local community through delivery of academic excellence with a global perspective.

Mission

- To provide a delivery model for higher education in China which is built on UNUK's expertise in British-style learning, management systems, networks and reputation but also localised within the Chinese context.

- To develop leaders and entrepreneurs to meet the challenges facing global society now and in the future, as well as educating responsible global citizens who are socially and environmentally aware.

- To develop core expertise in research and produce world-changing outcomes which improves human life and impact the socio-economic transformation and development in both the local and broader communities. We will focus especially on key subject areas such as digital technologies, advanced materials and manufacturing, electrical drives, finance and economics.

- To promote international impact through broad collaboration and enhance significant local commitment through public service and community outreach.

01/ Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles

Student Centred

Put students at the heart of the University and configure our delivery to enhance the student experience.

Coordinative

Coordinate activities and communication across different units on campus as well as across all Nottingham campuses to enable teamwork and resource sharing for maximum effectiveness, efficiency and service standards.

Agile

Maintain a light, transparent and service-oriented administrative system. Empower faculties and staff, and practice accountability to realise untapped potential.

Enterprising

Establish an innovative attitude in teaching, research, collaboration and management that embraces risk, rewards success and learns from errors. We will continue to encourage innovation throughout the University community and be known for our entrepreneurship.

Inclusive

Respect and encourage diversified cultures to forge a harmonious community where everyone feels a sense of belonging. Ensure equal opportunities for students and staffs to thrive and contribute fully.

Sustainable

Operate in an environmentally, socially and financially sustainable manner.

02/

Student Learning and the Campus Experience

Students in the park on campus.

02/ Student Learning and the Campus Experience

An education at UNNC puts students on a fast track to global citizenship. It creates leaders and entrepreneurs who excel in their disciplines via two aspects of our delivery:

Our emphasis on teaching quality and excellence in all we do and a commitment to providing a British-style learning environment which is dynamic, engaging, empowering, research-informed, internationally-oriented but always locally grounded.

Maximising the student campus experience by providing a cutting-edge learning environment, which enhances students' transferable skills and transforms individual perspectives.

Challenges

- Demographic changes in mainland China
- Global and local competition for talent
- Rapid pace of technological change
- Increasing public expectations of higher education
- Intensifying competition from international education providers in China
- Integration among students of increasingly different cultural backgrounds
- Increasing demand for public trust and accountability
- Rising costs

Our Goals

- Growth of our student population while maintaining a steady increase in student intake quality and diversity.
- Programmes which both connect with the market and facilitate high quality teaching and learning outcomes.
- A pool of excellent and inspiring teaching staff who fully engage with students' academic learning and individual growth.
- Local leadership capacity and confidence to drive academic developments led by UNNC.
- A student body that engages fully in research and innovation and is inspired by entrepreneurship.
- A raft of co-curricular activities that provide students with inspirational life experiences, and enhances their transferable skills.
- An international campus community as part of the learning experience with students as active partners of The University in their own education and the operation of the institution.
- Respect for individual student needs and a culture of seeking solutions which build a lifelong affinity with UNNC.
- Increase integrity and ethical awareness among students.

Enablers

- PVC of Teaching and Learning, UoNUK
- Vice-Provost for Teaching and Learning
- Deputy Party Secretary
- Director of Campus Services
- Executive Director, Global Student Experience
- Director of Academic Service Office
- Director of Student Affairs Office
- Director of Admissions and Career Development Office
- Director of International Office

Interventions

Academic teaching and learning

1. Review our academic structure alongside growth plans and our ambition to diversify the academic offering to learners.
2. Establish innovative programmes with more market potential, such as interdisciplinary studies, credit-bearing continued professional development and summer schools.
3. Reshape PG provision and recruitment to continuously enhance student intake quality.
4. Recruit teaching staff from diverse backgrounds, combining world-class researchers with seasoned industrial and business experts. Increase the number of teaching-focused roles within academic schools.
5. Deliver for a wide range of student needs and aspirations.
6. Collaborate with leading Chinese universities to develop new joint-degree and student exchange programmes.
7. Increase integrity and ethics awareness among students through in-class modules and social activities.

Co-curricular programmes, students as partners and employability

8. Create innovative systems to include students in university operations via teaching assistantships, peer-supervision, an on-campus employment scheme and bought-in services by student businesses. Areas can include Marketing and Recruitment, Event Management, Peer-supervision, Alumni Mentorship and Teaching Assistantships via the Nottingham Advantage Award (NAA) and similar frameworks.

9. Closer collaboration between academic and professional staff in student-engagement activities.
10. Increase the availability of student internships and employability opportunities by launching on-and off-campus employment schemes. Introduce regular and online career or further-study advisory talks or modules.
11. Streamline student service delivery via the adoption of best-practice processes and structures from Project Transform.
12. Encourage student participation in high-profile external competitions, events and networks to promote the reputation and profile of UNNC.
13. Launch co-curricular sports with UNNC features, e.g. adventure sports to enhance student persistence, wellness and ability.
14. Introduce a portfolio of external competitions to promote the reputation and profile of UNNC.
15. Update student induction week with more inspirational and academic content, by leveraging Alumni and other academic related networks.

Campus culture and student experiences

16. Increase the on-campus international student population and introduce further measures to enhance the international environment at UNNC.
17. Integrate the domestic and international student experience by removing barriers and differential service provision. Reward student social activities which enable the integration of international students.
18. Upgrade student living areas on campus to an international standard. Creative spaces in the studying and living area should enable richer and deeper social and intellectual engagement among students with different cultures and backgrounds.
19. Provide flexible housing solutions to meet student circumstances and individual needs.

03/

Research and Innovation

Science and engineering mechatronics lesson.

03/ Research and Innovation

Research is in the DNA of our institution and we share the University of Nottingham passion for excellence with impact.

UNNC's research capacity is continually growing and now includes key research initiatives in marine economy, advanced materials, digital economy, and energy storage. Our 2020 plan will ensure research excellence in all of our academic disciplines.

We will also enhance our core competence by prioritising investments in order to grow key subject areas which align with the ambitions of our sponsors, especially in digital technology, advanced materials and manufacturing, electrical drives, finance and economics. We rely on our research leaders to deliver significant community impact, socially, economically and environmentally.

Challenges

- Balancing global challenges with local socio-economic needs
- Fierce competition amongst elite domestic institutions and policy framework
- Language and cultural barriers for international staff in accessing local schemes
- Lack of established framework for local engagement
- Balancing risk control and innovation
- A relatively early-career researcher community and high turnover rate

Our goals

- Nationally and regionally leading research subjects in digital science, electrical drives, advanced materials and manufacturing, finance and economics.
- Under the umbrella of Nottingham's global research priority, build at least one internationally excellent discipline in accordance with international assessment standards.
- A strong portfolio of impact research with tangible economic and social outcomes.
- Fully integrated teams of leading researchers within UNNC's campus community.
- A platform that bridges UNUK/UNMC expertise and local demands in China.
- A sustainable and collaborative research culture through providing a supportive physical, financial, professional services and policy infrastructure in which excellent research will flourish.
- An entrepreneurial student culture through innovative academic and co-curricular programs to encourage innovation and entrepreneurial activities on campus.
- Develop an entrepreneurship hub in UNNC which would allow Ningbo to take advantage of China-UK innovation opportunities.

Enablers

- PVC of Research and Knowledge Exchange, UoNUK
- Vice-Provost for Research and Knowledge Exchange
- Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange
- Dean of Graduate School
- Director of HR
- Director of Finance

Interventions

Recruit and develop outstanding researchers at all career stages

20. Target Talent schemes and other funding schemes proactively in order to support international recruitment of leading researchers and educators in strategic priority areas.
21. Develop and foster an active research culture for both staff and students, facilitated by an enhanced Graduate School through offering broad and dynamic general-research skill programmes.
22. Ensure an enhanced and coordinated mentoring programme for all research and teaching staff (see also Assets).
23. Roll out a coherent structure of interdisciplinary research groups to foster collaboration and grow critical mass.
24. Introduce structured support for international faculty bidding into Chinese National research competitions.
25. Develop more opportunities for undergraduates to engage with UNNC's research and innovation via research credits, internships and summer research projects. Produce and disseminate high quality research outputs.

Produce and disseminate high quality research outputs

26. Based on the new cross-campus RIS system, develop a transparent, efficient and equitable research management system to maximize productivity and efficient use of resources.
27. Introduce a research finance management system to enhance delivery, budgeting and cost control.
28. Monitor research related statistics and output in order to inform resource allocation, performance management, PR outputs and government communications.
29. Build a portfolio of strategic partnerships internationally and locally for university-industry collaborations.
30. Enhance external promotion of UNNC research strengths via online presence, social media, conferences and workshops.
31. Apply international assessment standards, such as SciVal, ESI or REF to give our research output a comparative edge.

Invigorate commercial opportunities

32. Establish UNNC Incubator Park to accommodate research spinouts, entrepreneurship and executive training, graduate startups, professional service companies and an international technology exchange.
33. Build partnerships with venture finance institutions and domestic agencies which support innovation competitions and promotion events.
34. Seek greater engagement with local communities in terms of industrial collaboration, consultancy, corporate sponsorships and philanthropy.
35. Grow a portfolio of corporate training clients across all academic disciplines with a consistent, high quality approach to sales, pricing, promotion, incentives and delivery.

04/

External and Global Engagement

04/ External and Global Engagement

Over the past 12 years UNNC has gained increasing recognition locally and internationally. As the University enters its second decade of development, we will expand our external profile and work with an increasing number of partners to facilitate the delivery of this plan.

We must be focused internationally but also locally, recognising the huge opportunities that remain in mainland China, as well as the need for UNNC to become respected overseas in its own right.

We will enhance our responsiveness, openness, accountability and giving-back through harmonious partnerships with a range of external stakeholders, from government, schools, Universities and businesses to alumni, parents and communities.

Challenges

- Increasing international competition within China.
- Increasing scale and complexity of UNNC operations.
- Historic policy inconsistencies relating to external work.
- Language and culture barriers for international staff when engaging with local communities.
- Relatively youthful teaching staff and alumni communities with developmental needs.

Our goals

- Enhanced UNNC visibility, brand image and reputation domestically and internationally through investment, overseas collaboration and in-depth local engagement.
- A fully networked group of partnerships to support our teaching and learning, research, innovation, infrastructure, staff and student experience.
- International engagement that enhances student experience, research and local impact.
- A strong affinity to a Nottingham Global identity to enable the leverage of resources across campuses.
- Integration with the local context - socially, culturally and economically sustaining and improving the places and shaping the communities in which we are located.
- A fully integrated alumni service network to ensure a life-long relationship between UNNC and its alumni and encourage the willingness to engage in the university's development.
- A giving-back culture within UNNC and its network of supporters.
- Promote education equity and practice widening participation activities to support students from disadvantage families.

Enablers

- PVC Global Engagement UoNUK
- Vice-Provost for External Relations
- Associate Provost (Global Engagement)
- Executive Director, Global Student Experience
- Vice-Provost for Research and Knowledge Exchange
- Director of International Office
- Director of Student Affairs Office
- Deputy Director of Marketing

Interventions

Global reach of UNNC

36. Enhance capability and capacity for English-language external communications.

37. Develop innovative and dynamic academic and co-curricular programmes to attract international degree programmes and exchange students.

38. Bring leadership, focus and co-ordination to international student recruitment through closer collaboration across internal units and Nottingham campuses with better leverage from existing international resources and networks.

39. Grow strategic engagements and partnerships with global universities, including the U21 Universities, in teaching & learning, research and innovation, and student and staff circulation.

40. Strengthen strategic collaboration opportunities with UNUK and UNMC for joint research and knowledge exchange projects, continuing professional development and executive education in China and the Asian region.

41. Develop strategic partnerships with multi-national companies to create opportunities ranging from research and talent training to student employability.

Local impact of UNNC

42. Identify links and establish effective communication channels between UNNC internal units and external partners to ensure shared vision and increased recognition of the University among external stakeholders

43. Enhance communications with the government at different levels, leverage existing policies and resourcing schemes and develop initiatives which combine the advantages of the University with the local development needs.

44. Prioritise tangible partnerships with local organisations and industries to drive forward both the strategic agenda of the University and local growth.

45. Clarify policy and support for staff to undertake external engagement activities such as consultancy and executive training.

46. Increase exchange and collaborations with schools, domestic Universities in terms of student recruitment, teaching, research and student and staff mobility.

47. Cultivate a giving-back culture on campus among both students and staff, through sharing resources, volunteering activities, exchanging skills and knowledge, supporting local education and developing business, sports and cultural engagement opportunities.

48. Formalise widening participation programmes and create a framework and practical support for outreach activities with local schools and communities. Issue annual social responsibility report to public to enhance university images.

Alumni services

49. Continue to develop the alumni data management system to keep a close relationship with the alumni community by providing timely updates on the University's development and events, organizing more alumni activities, and further engaging alumni in mentor schemes, employability support and student recruitment campaigns.

50. Foster 'lifelong relationship' with the alumni community and offer continuing career support, professional development and learning opportunities.

51. Strengthen connections with UNMC and UNUK alumni services to provide better service and support and maintain an active relationship with UNNC alumni overseas and UNUK and UNMC alumni in China.

52. Foster a positive relationship with students' parents using both online platforms and offline activities such as regional recruitment and promotion campaigns.

Philanthropic activities

53. Work more closely with UNUK and UNMC to explore joint fundraising and philanthropic events and activities to enhance the whole Nottingham branding impact.

54. Build a warm working relationship with UNNC Education foundation and develop ambitious plans to increase scholarship support.

55. Build a capacity in charity policy, culture and know-how; form partnerships with charity organisations; actively explore local industry prospects; better manage the major donor relationships and combine research priority areas and philanthropic activities resonating with local needs.

56. Build governance and management procedures for prospective fundraising and philanthropic schemes. Provide more financial support opportunities to students from disadvantage background.

57. Establish chair professor framework to incentivise donor. Maintain more effective donor relationships through continuous visits, correspondences, and communication.

58. Launch a university board framework to include extensive social resources for the sake of broader-scale fundraising, university image enhancement and other network resources.

05/

Asset management and sustainability

The entrance to the Centre of
Sustainable Energy Technologies (CSET)

05/ Asset management and Sustainability

Assets cover a broad spectrum of elements to sustain The University's operation and development. They may include but are not limited to brand, people, finance and the physical and information infrastructures.

Proper management will secure our future success and will generate resources critical for re-investment in UNNC's key growth areas. Our greatest asset, our people, need to be respected and empowered within a campus environment that enables individuals to grow and realize their maximum potential.

Challenges

- High tuition fee dependence
- Spiraling maintenance costs due to our ageing physical infrastructure
- Increasing infrastructure and service level expectations from students and staff
- Dynamic policy environment
- Balancing risk control and efficiency with an innovative culture
- Limited physical expansion space
- Technology trends

Our goals

- An agile and administratively-light organisational and management structure, which reflects and serves the needs of the university vision and mission.
- The cultivation of a risk-bearing attitude with a risk-management framework.
- Inclusive information sharing and decision-making which supports a cohesive campus community.
- An effective human resource framework to recruit and retain the most suitable staff and enable their full contribution.
- Quality leadership at all levels to serve our growing and dynamic environment.
- A healthy and sustainable financial system with diversified revenue streams, responsible expenditure and capital for re-investment.
- Refined university infrastructure, facilities and services which delivers a world class student experience.
- Best-in-class digital infrastructure across the entire campus.

05/ Asset management and Sustainability

Enablers:

- Director of Campus Services
- Director of Academic Services Office
- Director of Finance
- Director of Human Resources
- Associate Provost (Planning)
- Director of International Office

Interventions

Organisational culture and structure

59. Apply an equal, respectful, empowering and responsible culture through a "top-down" approach to ensure that all leaders and staff on campus are inspired and motivated to deliver.

60. Launch risk-register activities on campus.

61. Review academic and professional service organizational structure to deliver our new vision in teaching, research and global aspiration.

62. Facilitate early-career staff progression pathways via improved local mentoring, performance management and professional development. Cultivate leaders from all levels, especially targeting mid-level management to ensure high quality service delivery.

63. Promote working partnerships between academic and professional service sectors through common understanding and shared goals.

64. Integrate student opinion into key decision making processes.

65. Unlock the potential of administrative and professional staff to play a wider role in UNNC's bright future.

66. Each department shall produce and publish an annual report.

Financial sustainability

67. Reform financial management, planning, resource allocation systems to ensure proper budgetary and cost control.

68. Manage procurement and third-party service contracts to deliver international quality levels and best value.

69. Build financial rationale and governance policies in decision-making process in all key investments.

70. Introduce high quality professional administration, including financial management, within large budgetary units.

71. Provide budget holders at all levels with regular, high quality financial management data and build a culture of financial responsibility.

72. Create a framework and practical support for outreach with local schools and communities.

73. Increase budget contribution from CPD programmes, knowledge transfer activities, philanthropic events and commercial services.

74. Streamline low value transactions (e.g. in Procurement) to free up resources and deliver greater value. Implement an expenses and costs breakdown to determine the input value and refocus the supply of financial resources.

Build and maintain international standard campus services

75. Construct a master plan for total UNNC infrastructure development.

76. Introduce greater flexibility in IT systems, such as "bring-your-own-device", virtualisation of services, ubiquitous access and peer-to-peer social media communications.

77. Upgrade student living areas to an international standard of service especially in the dining and accommodation areas.

78. Continuously upgrade the facilities and information technology to world-class standards, and create more information transparency via online system such as Project Transform modules.

79. Develop data infrastructure and corporate business systems to support evidence-based decision making and contribute to efficiencies in our operations.

Our publications are available in alternative formats for people with print impairments. If you require this publication in an alternative format please contact the UNNC Strategic Planning Team.

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Undergraduate students studying in the British Garden on campus.