



Association of University Administrators
Connecting and developing
HE professionals

Sino-British TNE

**Report from the AUA's virtual study tour
2020**

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Report from the AUA's Virtual Study Tour

Transnational higher education, the movement across national boundaries of HE providers to offer academic programmes and qualifications in foreign countries, has become a big business internationally. UK HESA data shows China to be the most important country for British universities, both as a location for TNE delivery and for the recruitment of inbound students.¹ For the former, 12% of TNE volume measured by student registrations is delivered in China. For the latter, considering only non-EU students, China is the source of about one-third of all inbound international students.

Including the Nottingham campus in Ningbo and the Liverpool campus in Suzhou, there were, at the time of our project, 30 Sino-British Joint Education Institutes. Our sample of one-third was not designed to be representative, but it has produced a good cross-section of the JEIs including some that were about to recruit their first cohort.

The UK's Association of University Administrators has an International Higher Education thematic network. A keynote activity is our programme of overseas study tours. In 2020 our tour was held in cyberspace – a Virtual Study Tour (VST).

At the start of June 2020, the AUA Office asked all members if they would be interested in joining a 'virtual study tour' to consider transnational education (TNE) in China. The invitation stated:

One thing that we can be sure about is that, in 2020, there will not be a normal pattern of travel. In the current crisis we cannot organise a Study Tour of the usual kind. But the internationalisation of HE will not be halted by the crisis.

With a restricted focus, and with no actual travel involved, we are confident that we can manage this and that it will benefit both the AUA and the members who will do the research and write a report.

¹ A HEPI blog, written by the editor of this report and published by the Higher Education Policy Institute, suggests that 'HE' was, in 2019, the biggest UK export to China. See: [Did UK higher education institutions export more to China in 2019 than any other sector? - HEPI](#)

We have published this report both for our members and also for wider use.

Our report is presented in six sections:

- A: Programme of Work
- B: Background - Sino-British Transnational Education (TNE)
- C: Joint Venture Universities
- D: Profiles of 10 Joint Education Institutes
- E: Participation by Professional Services Staff
- F: Conclusions
- G: Appendix (acknowledgements, the team, our meetings, why we use rankings, the Sino-British College in Shanghai, internal evaluation of the VST, a note on sources)

It became clear to the team during our project that the British leadership of JElS have an implicit sense of collective responsibility for academic standards. Of course, this can only be implicit because of the relative autonomy of the university sector in the UK.

One of the clear contrasts between the British and Chinese sides is that UK universities have had little government guidance on the overarching issues of transnational higher education. This reflects the contrasting positions of the two governments. In the UK there are traditions of academic autonomy that are very different from China. However, in China there is also a collective sense of responsibility for the way in which Chinese universities develop partnerships with universities in other countries. This is much more explicit and directed than in the UK, but it would be a mistake to assume that all Chinese institutions act in the same way.

A. Our Programme

A volunteer team of 12 colleagues, listed in the Appendix, was led by David Law, the Chair of the AUA's International HE Network. Ten partnerships between British and Chinese universities were chosen as case studies.

We decided to focus on initiatives of significant size. As well as visiting the big projects that are well known (the Joint Venture campuses), we initially proposed to look at medium-size projects, both Joint Institutes and dual degree programmes. As it turned out, this was too ambitious, and we dropped any detailed discussion of single programmes leading to Dual Degree awards.

We held semi-structured online meetings. The ten institutions were chosen after the tour group assembled.

We decided to hold meetings in two stages: firstly, we wanted to brief ourselves about the subject and then, with a better informed perspective, we would discuss how particular Institutes operated. Over a period of about ten weeks the two stages overlapped.

We held our first meeting on 10 July. Professor Bashir Makhoul, the Vice-Chancellor of the University for the Creative Arts, briefed the group about Sino-British TNE and his own experiences of setting up Joint Education Institutes (JEIs).

Professor Makhoul, in the course of a stimulating introduction to the subject, advised us:

"Probably the most important thing is to establish what kind of model is to be used in a collaboration. There are Joint Institutes, Dual Degree Programmes, Franchises, Validations ... all sorts of different formats. The choice of model is crucial from the point of view of business continuity. If you choose a model that looks temporary, that is what it will turn out to be. A model like 'flying faculty' is bound to fail because it is essentially just a

recruitment tool. It will not survive. The model must be capable of expansion and development.” [Meeting 1]

In all we held 22 meetings as listed in the Appendix. Most meetings were arranged through personal contacts of group members.

In the first stage we gained much from a meeting with members of the UUK International team and two meetings with colleagues from the British Council (China). We also had meetings with colleagues based at the universities of Durham and Warwick. [Meetings 7 and 11] These were to help us understand why some Russell Group universities, who would surely be welcomed by the Chinese Ministry of Education, have not yet pursued the possibility of a JEI.

With one exception, meetings were recorded after permission had been given by all concerned. We used Microsoft Teams throughout. Maintaining a video resource was important because we decided to take no break during the summer. Colleagues took leave from their employment as scheduled and sometimes were able to participate on leave. Every member of the group received all videos as MP4 files, making it possible to catch up.

Inevitably some members of the VST put more time into this activity than others. All colleagues were advised at the start that it would probably take each individual 40 hours of work. The way we worked allowed for some variation in commitment but, to be sure, everybody played a very active part. Several participants felt that the suggested commitment was an underestimate of the time that was needed to play a full part.

Organising the meetings required significant administrative effort and we were fortunate that a colleague volunteered to be a Co-ordinator for the VST. We also appointed three individuals to be Team Leaders.

This project was an exercise in collective CPD. Some colleagues had experience of TNE, but most did not. Our work generated a set of insights on a range of questions and continues with several dissemination events.

Although there is some loss of group cohesion and collective experience by operating in virtual mode, this exercise (to involve as many as 10 JEIs) would not have been possible if the Study Tour had been undertaken in a conventional way.

Normally, AUA Study Tours visit five or six universities. The time that would have been needed for international and domestic travel, would have meant focussing on half the number of JEIs. Add to this the expense of travel, time away from work, cost of visas, accommodation and other expenses, and it

is difficult to see how a team of 12 could have been involved. The old saying 'necessity is the mother of invention' comes to mind.

We believe that the willingness of experts to participate came partly from their recognition that a professional organisation, AUA, could be relied upon for a professional approach. If an individual, as a consultant or a researcher, had tried to convene a schedule of meetings, the result would surely have been less successful.

Arguably, a deficit in our approach is that we did not do enough to learn from the Chinese leaders of TNE. This was perhaps understandable because we had to focus on the UK side of the relationships. However, we were fortunate to have meetings with two colleagues working in Chinese universities, one with a colleague in the International Office of University of Wuhan and the other with the Rector of the University of Macao who had previously led partnership construction at Zhejiang University. [Meetings 2 and 13]

Towards the end of the project, feedback was sought from members of the group and is reported on in the Appendix. All participants reported that their expectations were met either in full or for the most part.

Among the positive comments made in the free text part of the feedback survey, one stood out: "this has been the most worthwhile experience that I have had through the AUA so far". Further detail on feedback is included in the Appendix.

B: Background - Sino-British TNE

Between 1994 to 2020, universities in many different countries, both English and non-English speaking, have made agreements with Chinese universities for officially-recognised partnerships.

Transnational education in China is a complex subject. Some kinds of partnerships are regulated by the PRC Ministry of Education (MoE). Some TNE is not covered by the legal framework. Typically, these partnerships are institutional progression agreements, generally formal articulation arrangements that involve curriculum alignment between partners and possibly some staff development. Normally, in the unregulated sector, all teaching is provided by the Chinese partner.

The close connection between inbound recruitment and transnational education must be recognised as providing a key contextual dimension for this subject. Chinese families with mid-range incomes sometimes choose a TNE programme because it is much less expensive than studying overseas. They will probably know, from the start, that there is the opportunity to complete the degree at the home country of the foreign partner. Whilst, generally speaking, it is not possible any longer for a British partner to design a programme with a mandatory year at the home campus, joint programmes are designed to allow this possibility.

A recent joint report by authors from British Council and UUK International found that, in the 2018/19 academic year, 38 per cent of all Chinese students entering UK first degree programmes had previously studied in China in a TNE programme.² Some institutions with the largest cohorts of year 2+ entrants noted that the majority of their year 2+ international entrants come through a single source, such as their Joint Institute in China.³

² Transnational routes to on-shore UK higher education, October 2020, page 12.

³ Ibid. page 21.

The global TNE context

It is sometimes observed that, taking all modes of provision, TNE programmes offered worldwide by British universities now enrol more students than travel from overseas to study at a university in the UK. However, the figures are skewed by large numbers registered with the “three major providers”: Oxford Brookes University (OBU), University of London Worldwide (UoLW), and the Open University (OU).⁴

OBU has agreements for credit transfer with ACCA, the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, which produce a very large data return from this institution (39 per cent of all TNE students). The second largest provider, with c.40,000 registrations, is University of London Worldwide. The third is the Open University with c.30,000 registrations. The aggregate number of students, from all countries except UK, at these three providers was c.330,000 in 2018/19.

In addition to the students at these three institutions, there are more than 336,000 students who study for UK awards outside of the UK. This figure includes many students who plan to transfer to a UK university and are taking courses for academic credit.

It is likely that, when the data is published for 2019/20, China will be the most significant host country for TNE students (excluding the three main providers). In 2018/19, the Malaysian figure was c.3,500 higher than China. However, China’s annual growth year-on-year has been above 10% whilst TNE students in Malaysia have been steadily declining. Including the three main providers, China is already host to more TNE students than any other country.

Sino-British TNE data

Approximately half of all UK providers report TNE activity in China to HESA. Excluding the three main providers, 41,370 students were registered in 2018/19 according to HESA data. TNE numbers in China have risen significantly: student numbers have grown by c.60 per cent between 2013/14 and 2018/19. A majority of these students will be registered at one of the two joint venture campuses that involve British institutions: the Nottingham campus in Ningbo and the Liverpool campus in Suzhou.⁵

Whilst the exact number of students at Sino-British JElS and JEPs is not known it seems safe to assume that the number, at the time of our project, was approaching 40,000.⁶

⁴ The International section of the Universities UK website has reports that discuss the importance of clarity about the “three main providers”. [The scale of UK transnational education \(universitiesuk.ac.uk\)](https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk).

⁵ There are some complications with using HESA data that are mainly the result of differences between universities in the ways in which they report TNE students. For example, the Universities of Nottingham and Liverpool use different reporting categories for broadly similar activities.

⁶ This figure was discussed with British Council colleagues in China and confirmed by Kevin Prest in a personal email to the editor.

Joint Education Institutes

Joint Education Institutes (JEIs) in the People's Republic of China (PRC) are particular kinds of transnational education projects: partnerships between a university in the PRC and another outside PRC borders. These can be seen as campus-on-campus models. The creation of a JEI is regulated by the Chinese government and its operations are periodically reviewed.

In recent years there has been significant growth in the approval of JEIs. Whilst usually the annual figure has been below 10, in 2019 it was 16 and in the first half of 2020 it was 21. 2020 is a record year for approvals. This acceleration in the approval of JEIs is a confirmation that policy makers in the PRC see JEIs as an important feature of the internationalisation of higher education in China.⁷

A detailed study by Mike Gow identifies the first JEI, set up in 1994: the Sydney Institute of Language and Commerce in Shanghai.⁸ The first Sino-British JEI was established in 2003, a partnership between De Montfort, in Leicester, and Liaoning University.⁹ During the decade after the Chinese government first encouraged TNE partnerships, the USA and Germany were the most active foreign partners. Since 2003, JEI approvals have been led by universities in UK and France. Writing in 2016, Gow stated that, out of the 57 approved JEIs, 38 involved universities in the four countries mentioned here (page 135).

UK universities came later to JEIs than universities in the USA. In the years 2014 to 2016, 14 Sino-British JEIs recruited their first students. Before 2014, apart from the large-scale joint venture institutions, only three Sino-British JEIs had started student recruitment: the partnership involving De Montfort, the Surrey International Institute (SII), and the Sino-British College (SBC). One of these, SII, was part of our study.

In addition to the large-scale JV projects operated by Nottingham and Liverpool with Chinese partners, at the time of our project there were currently 26 other British universities running Joint Education Institute projects in PRC. In Scotland there are three universities involved with five JEIs between them. The three are Edinburgh, Glasgow, and West of Scotland. In Wales, both the University of Cardiff and Bangor University have a JEI. In Northern Ireland, Queen's University Belfast and University of Ulster each have a JEI. As well as the universities already mentioned, there are five other members of the Russell Group that are partners in Joint Education Institutes: Birmingham, Leeds, Queen Mary, Sheffield, and Southampton. A majority of JEIs, 17

⁷ Data in Chinese is published by the Ministry of Education. There is a full summary in English published by Venture Education [TNE Report_final \(filesusr.com\)](#).

⁸ Gow, 'Chinese Foreign Cooperatively Run Schools', in Gray, Bashir, Keck (eds), *Western Higher Education in Asia and the Middle East*, Lexington Books 2017. See page 134.

⁹ Sources on the origins of the Sunwah Business School at Liaoning University vary about the details. It appears that this Institute was operational before the larger operations developed by the Universities of Nottingham and Liverpool. [Sunwah Foundation – Sunwah Foundation Global Young Leaders Network \(GYLN\) \(sunwah-gyln.com\) is helpful.](#)

at the time of our project, did not involve Russell Group universities.

Typically, a JEI is likely to be at least three times the size of a joint programme. A JEI, using a 'campus-on-campus' model, has clear differences from the standard joint programme model. Apart from the most recent establishments, all of the JEIs we considered during our project are significant operations in terms of their student numbers. All UK JEIs seem to achieve sustainability, and some do this after the first intake of students has graduated.

Joint Education Programmes

Alongside JEIs there are also joint programmes, normally leading to degrees awarded by both partners.¹⁰ The numbers actually enrolled in Sino-foreign programmes in China (including JEIs and Joint Education Programmes) are not officially available although recruitment ceilings for approved JEIs and JEPs are published. Overall, the UK sector has been a leader in this field. Approximately one in five of approved partnerships, JEIs and JEPs, involve British universities.¹¹

Most PRC MoE-recognised transnational education agreements are for Joint Programmes (JEPs) rather than for Joint Education Institutes. There are more than 200 JEP agreements involving British universities. These usually, but not always, lead to dual degrees.

The MoE does not permit a foreign university to run the same programme with many partners. Although a British university may be a partner in several JEPs, they will generally be in different subjects.

Although a significant number of British universities have JEP activities with more than one Chinese university, it is very unusual for a British university to receive MoE approval to have more than one Joint Education Institute. The University of Edinburgh has two JEIs, as does the University of Glasgow.

University of London

Our focus was on a particular type of TNE. However, in a broader perspective we have to recognise that there is a blurring of divisions between the customary categories used by the HE sector in UK. For example, University of London Worldwide (UoLW) provides access to many degree programmes offered by the constituent institutions of the federal University.

UoLW makes extensive use both of distance learning and teaching centres where learning support may be accessed. Therefore, although many observers will not immediately think of the London Worldwide programmes as face-to-face provision, for many learners there will be a close connec-

¹⁰ The Chinese terminology for these activities is 'Chinese foreign cooperation in running schools' or CFCRS.

¹¹ China-UK Transnational Higher Education, Venture Annual Report 2020 (Beijing)

tion with a physical location and tutors. In China, UoLW has five teaching centres at prestigious universities: in Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, Shenzhen and Foshan.

Learners at UoLW centres include full-time and part-time students who have the chance to consider transfer to full-time on-campus study at a member institution of the University of London. For example, learners taking the University of London BSc Computing Science in China are told that “academic direction” is provided by Goldsmiths.¹² The Goldsmiths website states: “If you are a University of London student of Computing you may transfer onto the second or third year of this degree”.¹³ Although the VST did not examine the role of teaching centres in China linked to UK universities, and University of Manchester has some comparable arrangements, it seems likely that some features of this aspect of TNE are analogous to JEIs.¹⁴

Tuition fees

As will be seen in our Descriptive Profiles section, there is substantial variation in the fees paid by students at JEIs. Fee setting is a matter outside the control of the partner universities although they are able to suggest an appropriate figure. The most recently established Institute in our sample, the Sussex Artificial Intelligence Institute, has a fee of 28,800 RMB per annum for the BEng programmes. One of the more substantial Institutes, the partnership between Zhejiang and the University of Edinburgh, charges 120,000 RMB for each year of the two BSc programmes that are offered.¹⁵

University students in China, particularly at public tertiary institutions, pay low fees (generally below £1,000 per annum) and are heavily subsidised by the government. Fees are set by provincial governments, but generally range between 4,000 RMB and 10,000 RMB per year for undergraduates depending on province and subject. Private institutions and TNE programmes may be allowed to charge more, subject to approval by the local pricing bureau. A handful of TNE programmes have been permitted to charge fees over 80,000 RMB, but British Council research shows that annual tuition fees at around two-thirds of undergraduate TNE programmes are under 25,000 RMB.¹⁶

Management and staffing

One important difference between JEIs and JEPs, flowing from their relative size, is that JEIs are given more autonomy by the Chinese partner university. In a sense a JEI operates as a School within the Chinese university. Normally, there are joint management committees representing both

¹² [Computer Science | University of London](#)

¹³ [BSc \(Hons\) Computer Science | Goldsmiths, University of London](#)

¹⁴ Thank you to Philip Taylor, the Vice-Chair of AUA's International HE Network for his suggestion that this issue is important.

¹⁵ All data on tuition fees uses Chinese currency because conversion rates are likely to vary more than the tuition fee during the next years. During 2020 the rate has been above £1 = 9 RMB but it fell to below £1 = 8.5 RMB in the first wave of COVID-19.

¹⁶ Market Intelligence Brief: China, August 2018, page 20.

institutional partners.

An authoritative survey published in 2017 reported some concern by administrators about the autonomy of their joint institute.¹⁷

The survey also reported that, generally speaking, Chinese staff who work in JEIs are either employed exclusively to work in the joint institute or that their main responsibility is in the joint institute.¹⁸ No respondent to this survey stated that staff from other academic departments made up the bulk of staffing in a JEI.

In joint programmes there is often a reliance on using the University's 'international college' as the delivery centre for the JEP.¹⁹ Although the term 'international college' is often used in Chinese institutions, such an entity may not have its own teaching staff and may just be an administrative centre.

Strategic commitment

JEIs and JEPs require long-term strategic commitment from both partners. The policy has been developed over a quarter century, reflecting the opening up of China introduced after the death of Mao Zedong in 1976.

Both JEIs and JEPs have been mainly at undergraduate level. Indeed, calculated by student participation, nearly 90 per cent of all UK transnational education in China operates at first degree level. It now seems that this may be changing. More than before, taught postgraduate provision is being approved.

The UK university sector registers a significant number of the students enrolled in co-operative programmes in China but no more than one quarter of the total. Similar numbers, 20 to 25 per cent, are registered by Australian universities; universities based in the USA account for over 25 per cent of the total. French and German universities also have a significant registration.

The importance of China to UK HE

For the higher education sector in the UK, China has been, for many years, the most important country for education collaboration and student recruitment. Overall international student numbers in the UK have been relatively stable in recent years; growth in Chinese recruitment has compensated for declining numbers from other markets.²⁰

In 2018/19, there were approximately 120,000 Chinese students from the PRC registered 'on campus' in UK higher education (inbound students).

¹⁷ Research on Current UK-China Transnational Education, a report drafted by the British Council and the China Education Association for International Exchange, August 2017. [2017 BC-CEAIE Joint Research Report of UK-China TNE.pdf \(britishcouncil.org\) page 31.](#)

¹⁸ Ibid. page 24.

¹⁹ Ibid. page 14.

²⁰ The Universities UK website has many useful reports.

About 40 per cent of Chinese registrations are at UG level.²¹ Almost all institutional providers in the UK recruit Chinese students. In broad terms, more than one-third of students in UK universities who pay 'international' fees (c.35 per cent) are from the PRC, and with Hong Kong added the figure rises to nearly 40 per cent.

Chinese student recruitment by UK universities is very often undertaken with the assistance of agents. Increasingly it appears to be the case that new institutional partnerships are also facilitated by agencies. Conceptually, the term 'ecosystem' might usefully be applied and understood as inclusive of TNE, student migration and agency relationships.

The number of Chinese students studying abroad is large. The overall figure for students leaving China to study abroad was a little over 700,000 in 2019, covering all levels/types of study and all destination countries.²² This figure includes students who commenced undergraduate programmes in China and then went abroad via articulation and progression arrangements. Although the departing cohort is large, the number who stay to study for a degree in China is much larger by far. In 2020 over 10 million young Chinese, a record number, took the gaokao examination for undergraduate admission to a Chinese university.²³

21 The British Council publishes useful data and analysis in its Market Intelligence Brief: China. We used the 2018 version.

22 http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/gzdt_gzdt/s5987/202012/t20201214_505447.htm

23 [Chinese gaokao pushed back one month amid epidemic: MOE - Global Times](#)

C. Joint Venture Universities

As part of our project, we held meetings with colleagues from the institutions that have been often been referred to, somewhat incorrectly, as the branch campuses of the Universities of Liverpool and Nottingham. In fact, it is more accurate to describe these as Joint Ventures rather than as branch campuses. So far as the Chinese Ministry of Education is concerned, XJTLU and UNNC are particular types of Joint Institutes. They are JEs that have been approved as organisations with a 'legal entity' status.

Liverpool's partnership with Xi'an Jiaotong University is well known because the joint institution is known by the acronym XJTLU, with XJT being the signifier for Liverpool's partner.²⁴

In the case of Nottingham, the partner is much less well known and of a very different status from the University of Nottingham. The institution's title, UNNC (University of Nottingham Ningbo China), refers to place and not partner. The partner is the Zhejiang Wanli Education Group. This group, which included schools at different educational levels, took over a vocational college which three years later was reclassified and approved as university. The parent company was a major investor in UNNC.²⁵

Nottingham reports its UNNC students to HESA as registered at a branch campus although it is, formally, of the same status as XJTLU. The difference between UNNC and XJTLU is recognised by the 'parent' UK institutions using differing HESA reporting categories. De facto, UNNC is much more of a branch campus.

For almost all UK universities, it is now not an option to follow the lead given two decades ago by Nottingham and Liverpool. Since that time there have been some more JV-type institutions created, for example the NYU campus in Shanghai. In all, there are only nine cases of this kind of

²⁴ [Research-led, global outlook | Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University \(XJTLU\)](#)

²⁵ 'University of Nottingham Ningbo China and Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University: globalization of higher education in China', Yi Feng, Higher Education, April 2013, Vol. 65, No. 4.

development: the QAA China Report (2017) includes a summary.²⁶ Any UK university with ambitions to emulate XJTU or UNNC would probably have to consider establishing a campus in Hainan where there is a unique regulatory environment designed to encourage overseas investment.

Hainan was designated as a Province in 1988. Previously the large Hainan island, and the smaller neighbouring islands in the South China Sea, had been part of Guangdong Province. The major island has about the same land area as Belgium. The nearest coast in Guangdong is about 30 km away, across the Qiongzhou Strait.

The Chinese government has plans to develop Hainan into a dynamic economic hub with a major free-trade port. It is encouraging this by offering tax incentives and relaxations of controls over foreign companies.

Fachhochschule Bielefeld University of Applied Sciences (BUAS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Hainan Free Trade Zone (FTZ) in August 2020.²⁷ This will be the first foreign campus in Hainan FTZ. BUAS is the largest applied university in Nordrhein-Westfalen in Germany. The China campus will offer both Bachelor and Masters programs in Economics of Information; Economics of Enterprises; Logistics; and Data Science. The first intakes of students are scheduled for 2021.

²⁶ In January 2021, the British Council circulated an invitation to UK universities to consider expressing interest in becoming a partner in a new Shanghai University of the Arts. This is being planned as a JV university: a Joint Education Institute with independent legal entity. The Shanghai Municipal Education Commission issued the invitation. www.qaa.ac.uk

²⁷ [What's Happening in China ... | China Higher Ed | Key Trends in China's Higher Education Sector | Page 3 \(chinahighereducation.org\)](#)

D: Descriptive Profiles

UK-China Joint Institutes	UK Partner	Date Founded
UNNC – University of Nottingham Ningbo China	University of Nottingham	2004
XJTLU – Xi’an Xiaotong Liverpool University	University of Liverpool	2006
Surrey International Institute, Dongbei University of Finance and Economics	University of Surrey	2007
ZJU- UoE Institute, Zhejiang University	University of Edinburgh	2014
NUIST Reading Academy (Nanjing University of Information Science and Technology)	University of Reading	2015
Faculty of International Media, Communication University of China	Nottingham Trent University	2016
Queen Mary University of London Engineering School, Northwestern Polytechnical University	Queen Mary University of London	2017
Leicester International Institute, Dalian University of Technology	University of Leicester	2017
Chengdu University of Technology Oxford Brookes College	Oxford Brookes University	2019
Sussex Artificial Intelligence Institute, Zhejiang Gongshang University	University of Sussex	2020

University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC)

The University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC) is a Joint Education Institute, with 'legal person' status, established by the University of Nottingham (UoN). Like XJTLU (see below), it has the status of a Joint Venture University. The first cohort of students was admitted in 2004.

UNNC was the first Sino-foreign university in the People's Republic of China. UNNC is run by the University of Nottingham in partnership with Zhejiang Wanli Education Group, a private organisation with a portfolio spanning all levels of education in China from pre-school through to tertiary-level provision.

In the 2019/20 academic year there were around 8000 students enrolled at UNNC; approximately 10% of which are either from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan or recruited beyond China.

Location

The University is situated in a 144-acre campus in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, approximately 10 miles from the city centre. Located on China's eastern coast 140 miles south of Shanghai, Ningbo is a rapidly growing city with about four million people in the urban area. It is one of China's oldest cities and for centuries was a major trading port.

Background

The origins of UNNC can be traced back to 2000, when Professor Yang Fujia, a former President of Fudan University, was appointed to the position of Chancellor at the University of Nottingham. The then Chancellor must be recognised as a key proponent of establishing a presence in China, opening up subsequent dialogue with Chinese authorities. This exploration culminated in Ningbo, Yang's hometown, becoming the chosen location with strong support from the local government.

UNNC is often, and somewhat erroneously, referred to as a branch campus of the UK-based institution. In some respects it does operate as a satellite of the home institution, because the British university partner oversees the delivery of a UK-style education in terms of curriculum, pedagogy, and quality assurance. However, Chinese law requires the cooperation of a legitimate Chinese partner in the venture. The involvement of Zhejiang Wanli Education Group is mainly concerned with infrastructure developments and the provision of on-campus facilities and services.

In 1998, Wanli acquired a small college, and by 2002 this had been transformed into Zhejiang Wanli University. The first UNNC students were admitted at this institution in 2004, and the first phase of construction for the UNNC campus was completed in 2005.

In the early years of the institution there were some secondments from Nottingham to Ningbo of UK-based professional services staff. UNNC now has a level of operational maturity that does not require this involvement.

Ranking and Status

From 2004 to 2013, the Shanghai rankings (ARWU) included the University of Nottingham, a Russell Group member, in its list of the 'top 100' world-wide. Since then it has been marginally outside that group but retains a place within the top 15 UK universities in ARWU. UNNC features in the ARWU 2019 ranking of Chinese universities: coming second within Zhejiang province and number 55 within the whole of China.

Programmes

UNNC comprises three faculties (Business, Science and Engineering, and Humanities and Social Sciences) with a combined offering of 29 undergraduate courses and 16 postgraduate taught courses. Courses at UNNC are almost identical to programmes taught in the UK in terms of the curriculum, learning outcomes and degree award. There are some changes to take into account the local and regional context.

UNNC undergraduate courses are offered with a three or four-year duration. The four-year version includes a preliminary preparatory year focusing on a programme of English for academic purposes.

In 2008 the Chinese Ministry of Education (MoE) awarded UNNC a licence to grant PhDs and as of the 2019/20 academic year there were over 500 PhD students. This is an area of potential growth following MoE approval in 2019 to increase UNNC's postgraduate research recruitment quota from 75 to 225 students per year.

Fees

As of the 2020/21 academic year, both undergraduate and postgraduate taught tuition fees for students from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan are set at 100,000 RMB per year and for international students at 110,000 RMB per year.

Student mobility

Many of UNNC's undergraduate degrees are offered both as a 4+0 model (with study entirely in China) and a 2+2 model (where students spend two years in China, followed by two in Nottingham). The availability of model differs by subject area. Those opting for the 4+0 pathway have a range of study abroad locations available to them, should they wish to participate. All of UNNC's programmes lead to a University of Nottingham degree.

Teaching and administration model

UNNC has a full complement of around 900 members of staff, split across both academic and professional services occupations. Staff are either seconded from the UK institution or appointed locally using criteria specified by the University of Nottingham.

During the early years of UNNC, there was some secondment of administrative colleagues to assist the development of the campus. This was at a very modest level, one or two in each year. Now the institution, as a maturing university, is able to sustain its own development. Details of the senior leadership at UNNC is available at:

<https://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/about/university-leadership/university-leadership.aspx>

Research

Research is seen as key focus for the future development of UNNC, following initial years focusing on education and student experience. UNNC is now a fast-growing hub of research excellence with strengths spanning diverse fields such as Health, Transport and Environment.

Of particular note is The Nottingham Ningbo China Beacons of Excellence Research and Innovation Institute, initiated following the signing of a framework agreement between the University of Nottingham and the Ningbo municipal government in 2019. This Institute will primarily address three key research areas of Intelligent Manufacturing, Green Chemicals and Energy, and Life Science & Health Care.

Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU)

Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU) is a Joint Education Institute, with 'legal person' status, collaboratively developed by the University of Liverpool (UoL) and Xi'an Jiaotong University (XJTU). Like Nottingham Ningbo, it has the status of a Joint Venture University. The first cohort of students was admitted in 2006.

The UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education published a report on XJTLU in May 2013 based on a review it conducted in November 2012. Paragraph 16 states:

Since the foundation of XJTLU a Liverpool senior manager has been seconded to the post of Vice-President (Academic Affairs). An XJTLU-Liverpool Joint Liaison Group, with senior representatives from each institution, meets by videoconference and acts as a channel of communication on all aspects of the relationship.

The incoming Vice-President Academic Affairs is currently the Dean of the School of Languages at XJTLU. Before joining XJTLU, the Dean was the Head of Department for Modern Languages and Cultures at the University of Liverpool from 2012 to 2016.

In March 2018, a framework agreement was signed between XJTLU and the Municipal Government of Taicang for cooperation on a new Entrepreneur College campus. Taicang is a county level city in Greater Suzhou and the campus is located in the Taicang High-Tech Development Zone, north-east of the city. The Taicang campus will host a new educational model which plans to bring together academic and professional environments and will include programmes such as AI and robotics. The new XJTLU campus is proposed to open in 2022.

Information about the Joint Education Institute is published in English on both UoL's website and XJTLU's website.

There is a corporate brochure at <https://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/assets/files/publications/XJTLU-CorporateBrochure-EN-CN-201901.pdf>.

Location

XJTLU is located in the Dushu Lake Science and Education Innovation District in Suzhou, a city situated along the south eastern edge of Jiangsu Province in eastern China. The city is the second largest in the Province.

Suzhou is in the Yangtze River Delta Economic Region. The region is one of China's most economically active, open, and innovative zones. The city has a population of approximately 11 million people. Xi'an is more than 500 miles away.

Background

Collaboration between UoL and XJTU dates back to the 1980s. XJTLU was the product of a top-down approach taken by the leadership of both universities. In 2004 the universities agreed to establish a new autonomous institution and in May 2006 the initiative was officially approved by the Ministry of Education.

XJTLU was created as a 'new university', with its own regulatory framework and management representation from the British and Chinese partners, creating its own identity based on the strengths of the parent institutions. This JEI received significant investment from the provincial government of Jiangsu, Suzhou local government and Suzhou Industrial Park.

UoL's capital investment for the partnership was provided by their online commercial partner, Laureate Education. Laureate is a major international provider of higher education and learning opportunities.

From the second year of study, all degree programmes are delivered in English. Successful students receive a dual qualification.

XJTLU does not have awarding power for PGT or PhD programmes at the moment so all Postgraduate students are awarded single award UoL degrees.

By May 2020 XJTLU's global student community reached more than 17,000 with 3,500 studying at UoL as the second stage of a 2+2 programme. 80% of those who study on the 2+2 programme go on to postgraduate study progress onto a Masters at a top-100 world-class university.

Ranking and Status

In the 2020 Shanghai Rankings (ARWU) both UoL and XJTU are in the 101-150 bracket. UoL is a member of the Russell Group. XJTU is a National University in China under the direct jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. It is a member of the C9 universities in China, an official alliance of nine universities initiated by Project 985, and is listed as a Class A institution in the Double First Class initiative.

In the latest QS World Rankings, as an autonomous university, XJTLU is ranked in the 801-1000 bracket. In the 2019 QS rankings for mainland China, XJTLU was ranked 79 (equal). In the 2019 Best Chinese Universities list published by ARWU, XJTLU is ranked at 101.

Programmes

XJTLU offers a wide range of over 100 degrees in Computing, Maths, Engineering, English, Communication and Media, Architecture, Biological and Chemical Sciences, Business, Civic Design, Social Sciences, Language and Culture. The largest numbers at the point of programme choice are in the Business School, the School of Advanced Technology (including computer science) and Mathematics-related programmes.

Fees

The tuition fee for all undergraduate programmes is RMB 88,000 per academic year. Tuition fees for Masters programmes differ depending on the subject being studied.

Student Mobility

Most undergraduate degrees on offer at XJTLU use an optional 2+2 model with successful students being granted a degree from both institutions. Students can choose to stay at XJTLU throughout and still graduate with a dual award. A 4+1 structure is also possible with 4 years at XJTLU followed by progression to a Masters programme at UoL. Student mobility for 2020/21 has been highly restricted due to Covid-19, with less than half the normal numbers opting to travel to the UK.

Summer school and study abroad opportunities are offered to students studying at UoL. A 'Year in China' programme is offered to UK students (the opportunity to spend an additional year at XJTLU) with classes from the BA China Studies degree and appropriate-level language training 160 Liverpool students studied at XJTLU in 2019/20 as part of this programme.

Teaching and Administration Model

XJTLU is an independent university with a level of autonomy that exceeds all other partnerships reviewed in this report. Nevertheless, the ties to UoL remain strong. The Vice-Chancellor of UoL is the Deputy Chair of the Board of Directors and both the PVC for Education and the Director of Finance are members. The Board is currently chaired by a nominee of XJTU. An Assistant President of XJTU is also a member of the Board who, at XJTU, has responsibility for Party and Government work.

XJTLU currently has more than 920 academic staff, the majority of whom hold foreign nationality. Academic staff exchange visits are frequent and encouraged. During COVID-19 XJTLU had 240 international staff members stranded outside China at the time of the outbreak. UoL includes their UK professional services staff in international secondment opportunities by advertising roles available at both campuses. This strengthens links and

understanding between both institutions.

The administrative structure is described on the XJTLU website and has strong resemblance to a UK organisational structure. There are four administrative centres: Academic Affairs, Administrative Affairs, Knowledge and Information, and Student Affairs.

Research Activity

XJTLU aims “to bring together the best practice from its parent universities, Xi’an Jiaotong University and the University of Liverpool, and aspires to be a leading research-led university that combines a strong international profile with an unswerving commitment to the economic and social development of Suzhou, Jiangsu Province and China.” (<https://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/research/priorities-and-strategy/strategy>)

The XJTLU website identifies significant research areas and the organisational structures that provide support. In the year 2017 to 2019, more than 70 research projects were funded to a level of c34 million RMB.

Surrey International Institute at Dongbei University of Finance and Economics (SII-DUFE)

The University of Surrey (UoS) has partnered with Dongbei University of Finance and Economics (DUFE) to establish a Joint Education Institute (JEI). The first students were admitted in 2008 and it currently has 3771 alumni members and 11 alumni associations.

Governance of SII-DUFE is through a joint management committee (JMC) with equal representation from both partners plus the Dean as an ex officio member. The Vice-Chancellor and President of University of Surrey leads Surrey's JMC team. Operational processes are overseen by an Executive Group (EG) and a Staff Recruitment and Development Committee (SRDC), both of which are chaired by JMC appointees: namely, the Surrey appointee chairs the EG meetings and the DUFE appointee the SRDC. The UoS Vice-President (External Engagement) currently holds the EG Chair post.

The SII-DUFE building on the DUFE campus was completely refurbished for the 2019/20 academic year, though a full return to the building was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Location

DUFE is based in Dalian, a major port city in Liaoning Province. The urban centre of Dalian has a population of about four million people. Dalian is the second city in Liaoning Province. As an ice-free port in winter, the city was the site of conflict and political turbulence from the mid 19th century, which the Chinese call the 'century of humiliation'. For fifty years, from 1895, it was occupied firstly by Japanese forces, then the Russian Empire, and again by the Japanese army.

Background

SII-DUFE is one of the longest established TNE ventures between Chinese and British institutions. The partnership may be traced back to 2003/04 when, following discussion between a visiting Professor from DUFE and a Surrey Dean, a plan for a partnership was set out by the Faculty of Business, Economics and Law. As this plan evolved it gained support from both the School of Management and the Computing Department at UoS. The Chinese Ministry of Education (MoE) approved the JEI in August 2007.

The Institute started operations in 2008 with an initial recruitment quota of 450 students. The JEI started with five degree programmes, three at undergraduate level and two Masters. The two Masters programmes were discontinued in 2009; they did not recruit well because they were operating outside the quota system and not taking students from the National Post-graduate Entrance Examination. Graduates looking to apply for government

posts found that the qualification did not have sufficient status. The other major change was that the UoS Computing Department withdrew its BSc programme in 2010 leaving only the Management School (SoM) as a participant. Due to a later restructure of SoM, currently the Surrey Business School (SBS) and School of Hospitality and Tourism Management (SH&TM) are the active contributors.

SII-DUFE is monitored and approved by the Ministry of Education and is audited by the UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). It has been accredited by the China Education Association for International exchange (CEAIE). In 2011 SII achieved the top level in a MoE audit review of China-Foreign Cooperation Running Schools. It was awarded the Best Joint Venture in Liaoning Province award by the Liaoning Education Board.

Ranking and Status

In the Shanghai Rankings (ARWU) UoS has been in the bracket 301-400 for several years. DUFE is unranked by ARWU but in the 2019 ranking of Chinese universities published by ARWU, DUFE appears at 73. This is an example of 'partnering up' from the Chinese point of view. However, it should be noted that Surrey is a comprehensive university whilst DUFE is focussed.

Programmes

Currently SII-DUFE runs a number of BSc (Hons) programmes:

- International Tourism Management (ITM)
- Business Management (BM)
- International Business Management (IBM)
- Accounting and Finance (A&F)

The programmes are offered in two formats of delivery: (1) a 2+2 format, which will be phased out by the end of 2021/22, or (2) a 1+3 format, which is currently being phased in and will be run across all four years of study by 2022/23.

Under the 2+2 format, BM and ITM students undertook English language studies with DUFE modules in the first two years and, on successful completion to specified standards, could choose to complete the last two years of a dual degree programme taught by UoS or continue with a single DUFE degree. The newer 1+3 format, offered from 2019 onwards, involves IBM, ITM or A&F students taking a one-year intensive English language course together with DUFE modules before continuing with UoS's FHEQ Levels 4-6 (the full degree programme) at SII under the dual degree arrangement.

In order to be issued two degrees, one from each partner institution, students must successfully complete DUFE and UoS requirements. Those not meeting the UoS requirements may be issued a DUFE degree only.

The total student numbers on all programmes across the four years of study at the start of the 2020/21 year was 1397.

The universities are currently discussing the introduction of new MSc management programmes.

Fees

The current undergraduate tuition fee is 60,000 RMB per annum

The expected postgraduate tuition fee is 80,000 RMB per programme

Student mobility

Qualified students can transfer to the UoS home campus in Guildford for the last two years of study. In order to provide more choice under the newer format, students can now transfer to the UK for only the final year, helping them keep costs down but still getting the UK campus experience. Students may also transfer for the penultimate year of study (FHEQ Level 5) only and return to SII-DUFE for their final year, which may be important for those seeking local employment opportunities.

In 2019, UoS provided a competitive scholarship scheme for SII students based on a quota system and realised in the form of a substantial reduction in UoS international student fees for the relevant year/s of study. These scholarships can apply to either or both of the last two years of study in the UK, depending when the student applies. While it was anticipated that 20 students would be beneficiaries in 2020, the COVID-19 situation impacted applications and only two scholarships were awarded.

SII-DUFE runs a short non-accredited summer programme to the UK as a study tour, enabling students to see the UoS home campus and to visit London.

Teaching and administration model

SII-DUFE currently has 48 teaching staff and 42 administrative staff. Nine members of staff are UoS employees, comprising three business programme directors, four teachers, a director for the Centre for Academic English Studies and the Dean (Operations). The remaining 39 teaching staff in SII-DUFE are employed by DUFE and include both Chinese and foreign members. All those who teach UoS modules are approved through UoS procedures and inducted and trained by UoS staff.

The Institute has its own library, registry, academic affairs, academic support, alumni and career development, student international exchange and support, IT, HR, finance and student support, all run from one dedicated building on the DUFE campus. SII-DUFE uses UoS online learning and teaching systems and library services. Similarly, SII-DUFE students have full access to DUFE campus facilities, including library services.

Research activity

There is collaborative research leading to joint authorship of papers. In addition, the DUFU Cross-Border Education Research Centre undertakes research into Sino-Foreign Co-operative Schools. Within this research framework, several projects on internationalisation, governance, and the 'knowledge economy' have been undertaken.

SII-DUFU hosts workshops, webinars and conferences and staff participate in applications for national and international research grants. It regularly invites external scholars to present papers at SII or online.

ZJU-UoE Institute, Zhejiang University

The University of Edinburgh (UoE) has created a JEI with Zhejiang University (ZU): known as the Zhejiang University-University of Edinburgh Institute (ZJE). The submission was approved by the Ministry of Education in 2014 and the first students were enrolled in 2016.

Location

Zhejiang's main campus is located in Hangzhou, the capital of the Province. Zhejiang's population is 57.4m. The Hangzhou urban area has a population of about 9 million and Haining, which is 80km away from Hangzhou, has a population of 807,000.

ZJE is located on the International Campus at Haining, along with the 'Zhejiang University/ University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Institute'. Imperial College London also has a significant research partnership with ZU.

Background

Collaboration between the two institutions began in 2011 with a Joint Symposium on Biomedical Sciences in Edinburgh. The first formal discussions exploring the establishment of a Joint Institute took place in 2013 when the Assistant Principal (Researcher Development) of UoE visited ZU to exchange ideas. This was followed, in 2014, by the visit of the Executive Vice-President of Zhejiang University to Edinburgh to continue discussions. By July 2015, the first Joint Management Committee meeting was held successfully.²⁸

ZJE is UoE's largest overseas educational and research partnership, in China and globally.²⁹

The partnership won the 2018 [Education Institutional Partnership of the Year award](#) at the British Business Awards supported by the British Council.

Ranking and Status

In the 2020 Shanghai Rankings (ARWU) University of Edinburgh is positioned at 42, sixth in the UK, and Zhejiang at 58, third in China. Zhejiang is one of China's most international universities, and is part of the elite C9 group. ZU received the 2019 Times Higher Education (THE) Awards Asia for International Strategy of the Year.

²⁸ For a more detailed timeline see <https://www.ed.ac.uk/biomedical-sciences/connections-outreach/international-activities/zje-institute/about-the-partnership>. Information about the JEI is published in English and Mandarin on the China hosted website <http://zje.intl.zju.edu.cn/zje/home/index> and here <https://www.ed.ac.uk/biomedical-sciences/connections-outreach/international-activities/zje-institute>

²⁹ <https://www.ed.ac.uk/biomedical-sciences/news/archives/2017/1bn-chinese-biomedical-campus-opens>

Programmes

The programmes currently offered are two 4-year Dual BSc Hons programmes in Integrated Biomedical Sciences (China's first joint undergraduate degree in Biomedical Sciences), which began recruiting students in 2016, and Biomedical Informatics, which began in 2018. All programme content is jointly developed and delivered by the two partners. Since 2018, the JEI has also offered a dual award PhD programme in Integrated Biomedical Science. The JEI also offers a Masters programme which is run solely by Zhejiang. UoE is planning to offer an Edinburgh-only Masters and PhD degrees at ZJE in the near future.

Students are mostly recruited from Zhejiang province, with around 5% of the student body being international students. Students are taught entirely through the medium of English and international students are required to study Mandarin.

Fees

The per annum tuition fee for the BSc degrees in 2020 is 200,000 RMB for international students and 120,000 RMB for Chinese mainland students. Fees for international PhD students are 47,800 RMB.

Student Mobility

The institutions encourage bilateral student exchange with students from Edinburgh able to spend time at Haining as part of their study abroad programmes; there are also mobility scholarships available for summer research studentships at ZJE and UoE.

Teaching and administration model

Teaching is mostly provided by 16 new-hire (flying) lecturers attending for a quarter of the year and ten vocational PhD-teaching fellows from the UoE Deanery of Biomedical Sciences. There are 45 new international researchers based at ZJE. The ZJU School of Basic Medical Science (SBMS) is also fully involved in teaching and research collaboration. UoE has created and recruited to four administrative posts in the JEI.

Research Activity

The partnership facilitates an ambitious global research agenda between two world-leading universities. Through the JEI, and the joint research centre, more than 80 research-active staff are working collaboratively on biomedical themes. In 2018 a 10,000 m² research facility was opened. A full list of papers published as a result of research collaboration is available on the UoE website cited above.

The partners are committed to bridging the gap between academic research and commercialisation. Co-development of a Biomedical and Health Translational Research Centre, adjacent to the joint research centre, within Haining Juanhu Lake International Science Park, will offer a pipeline of novel human capacity, new technologies and solutions feeding into healthcare innovation and drug discovery.

More information is available at <http://zje.zju.edu.cn/en/about-us/news/zju-uoel-institute-announce-new-healthcare-research-centre-collaboration>; <https://www.ed.ac.uk/news/2015/edinburghstrengthenschinalinks>.
See also: <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-05265-z>.

NUIST Reading Academy

The NUIST Reading Academy is a Joint Educational Institute (JEI) created by the University of Reading (UoR) and Nanjing University of Information Science and Technology (NUIST). The Academy first admitted students in 2015. From September 2018, the Academy was permitted to recruit up to 300 students annually across a portfolio of six subject areas.

This institutional partnership took some years to develop; indeed, ten years passed between UoR's first agreement with NUIST and the graduation of students from the Academy's first intake cohort. The first submission of the JEI proposal, in 2014, was unsuccessful. A revised proposal was accepted in 2015 and the first transfer of students to the UK took place in 2018. The initial student recruitment was to two programmes (Chemistry and Economics).

Over the last five years the JEI has achieved a significant and sustainable recruitment of students, with 172 final year entrants in 2019. New students are being recruited with high gaokao scores. In 2018, the partnership reached a milestone when students enrolling in the Academy became UoR students from their first day.

The Academy has achieved impressive degree outcomes, with a higher proportion of students achieving a first-class UoR degree in Chemistry or Economics, having transferred from Nanjing to Reading, than UK students in the same subjects.

In 2019 the partnership successfully passed a Ministry of Education (MoE) evaluation with a high rating and is now exempt from another MoE evaluation until 2026.

Location

Nanjing University of Information Science and Technology, colloquially known as Nan Xin Da, is located in Pukou district, in northern Nanjing. It is well known for research and education in meteorology. Pukou is one of 11 districts of Nanjing, the capital of Jiangsu province. The University lies north-west from the city centre, across the Yangtze River. The district was formerly the southern terminus of the Tianjin-Pukou Railway; railcars had to be ferried across the river until it was bridged in 1968. The population of the area consists of approximately 900,000 people.

A Nanjing Economic and Technological Development Zone was established by the national government and located North-East of the central city districts in suburban Qixia district. This area has companies working in information technology, biomedical engineering, and the manufacture of light-industrial machinery and precision chemicals.

Background

NUIST was developed in conjunction with the Jiangsu Provincial People's Government, the Ministry of Education (MoE), the China Meteorological Administration (CMA), the State Oceanic Administration and the Chinese Academy of Sciences. The Institute of Meteorology, having achieved independent status in 1963, became NUIST in 2004. The University now has over 35,000 students including about 4,000 graduate students. It offers PhD supervision in six disciplines.

The University of Reading's formal relationship with NUIST started in 2009 and led initially to the creation of a teaching partnership with the Department of Chemistry. UoR curriculum materials, assessment and quality assurance procedures are followed at the Academy.

Ranking and Status

NUIST is a double-first class discipline university but is not included in Class A or Class B, placing it outside the 'top 50' in China. In ARWU (Shanghai Rankings) it is currently in 64th place in China and in the world rankings the university is in the 401-500 bracket. Reading can be considered to be a 'top 30' university in the UK (QS World Rankings 2020) and is 201-300 in ARWU's world rankings. In Atmospheric Science, the University of Reading is in ARWU's top five globally and outranks University of Oxford. This is an example of 'partnering up' from the Chinese perspective, between two universities that both bring strengths to the relationship. The Chinese partner, NUIST, has risen in league table rankings since the Academy started its operations. Programmes

The Academy offers a range of undergraduate dual degrees in science and social science subjects. All students have the opportunity to transfer to UoR for their final year, and in one programme, Law, this is a requirement. From September 2020, student recruitment to the partnership will expand with the addition of two new programmes, bringing the total annual intake of students to 380. It now offers the following programmes:

- BSc Atmospheric Sciences
- BSc Applied Chemistry
- BSc Business Economics and Trade
- BSc Environmental Engineering
- BSc Mathematics and Applied Mathematics
- BA Law (not recruiting in 2020)
- BSc Data Science (from September 2020)
- BSc Human and Physical Geography (from September 2020)

The Academy is planning to introduce postgraduate programmes in 2021.

Fees

Current student fees are now RMB 48,000 per year. This is significantly above the level paid by students in the first three intakes. The fee was raised following representations made by the JEI.

Student Mobility

A phased approach to the introduction of new programmes and modes of operation has been followed since the inception of the partnership with NUIST. Since the opening of the Academy in 2015 there has been increasing convergence. Students now follow the same programme and undertake the same assessments as their counterparts in the UK, making the transfer of students from China to their final year in the UK from 2021 more straightforward, as well as creating opportunities for UK students to study in China. More recently, summer schools for NUIST students have been established at UoR, allowing Academy students to gain experience of life and study in the UK.

The partnership has opened up outward mobility opportunities for students at UoR, with a number of students each year taking advantage of funding to visit NUIST, meet their future classmates and experience Chinese culture first-hand. Recent student visits to NUIST included cohorts from Mathematics in November 2018 and Environmental Science in April 2019. The NUIST Summer School in July 2019 saw approximately 20 UoR students travel to Nanjing to study a cultural and academic programme focusing on Chinese philosophy, modern history, and local culture.

Student mobility opportunities for Academy learners include the opportunity to spend short periods of time at University of Reading Malaysia in Johor.

Teaching and Administration Model

Teaching by UoR staff in Nanjing is, to a large extent, undertaken by lecturers recruited internationally and then trained at UoR. Administration is largely undertaken by Chinese staff, with training provided by colleagues from UoR who travel to Nanjing for short stays.

Research Activity

A NUIST-UoR International Research Institute has been proposed, and a joint Pump Prime Fund was launched in 2018 with a 'seed fund' of £100,000 for the following two academic years. The objective is to establish research relationships which will produce joint funding applications and, ultimately, jointly supervised postgraduate research.

Faculty of International Media: Communication University of China

Nottingham Trent University (NTU) and Communication University of China (CUC) launched their strategic partnership in 2014. The Joint Education Institute (JEI) offers three joint Masters programmes, and the first intake of students was in 2016/17.

Unusually, the name of the British partner is not incorporated into the title of the Institute. At the time of formation a US university was also involved in the project and this is why the JEI is known as a Faculty.

Location

CUC is a public university in Beijing, the national capital of China. The size and nature of the capital city inhibits the development of cultural links with the city of Nottingham. Other Sino-British collaborations in smaller cities have been able to forge links between the city locations of the two partners.

Background

CUC was founded in 1954, initially as a training centre for technicians. There are now approximately 14,000 students, 9,500 undergraduates and 4,500 postgraduates, and around 2,000 academic staff. Due to its curriculum orientation, CUC has an unusually high proportion of postgraduate students for a Chinese university.

Discussions between the two universities were initiated at Faculty level by the Dean and members of the senior management team of the NTU School of Arts and Humanities to explore the opportunities for collaboration through research, staff and student exchange, and the development of joint programmes. This was then advanced by the NTU Vice-Chancellor and the CUC President with senior delegations visiting each university during 2011/12. This led to a proposal to establish a Joint Institute, with both parties exploring the potential for collaboration in a number of disciplinary areas including Journalism and Media, Museum and Heritage Management, Business and Art & Design.

All the Masters programmes offered by the JEI are studied over two years. The first year is in Beijing and the second year can be at NTU in the UK or in Beijing. Students may enrol on either a dual degree or just for the NTU award.

Information about the JEI is published in English on the NTU website and in Chinese on the CUC website.

Ranking and Status

Neither of the partners is listed in the 'top 1000' worldwide, as published by Shanghai Rankings (ARWU). CUC is part of the MoE's Double First Class initiative. It is one of the 95 universities listed under DFC 'disciplines'. It was also one of the 100+ universities included in 'Project 211', administered by the MoE. In ARWU's list of Best Chinese Universities 2019 (BCUR), CUC is 96.

In the QS World Rankings 2021, NTU is in the bracket 751-800.

Programmes

The programmes offered by the JEI are: MA Broadcast Journalism; MA Media and Globalisation; and MA Museum and Heritage Development. The third programme started a year later than the other two and is currently offered only as an NTU award, unlike the other two programmes.

The Ministry of Education has also awarded a licence to the Joint Institute for a professional doctorate programme in Journalism, Media, and Communications for both joint delivery and an NTU award.

The Faculty of International Media is unusual in the sense that it has operated exclusively at a postgraduate level although there are now plans for a joint undergraduate programme in Media Communications.

In 2019/20, 117 students were enrolled across the three programmes. In 2020/21 the student recruitment quota has been met on two of the three programmes.

Students on all of the programmes are supported by NTU's English for Academic Purposes courses which are embedded in the first year of study, with ongoing support available to students during their second year of study.

Students are recruited from all over China because of CUC's excellent reputation for these disciplines.

Fees

The tuition fee per student for the Masters programmes is 80,000 RMB per year.

Student mobility

The majority of students study for their second year at NTU, taking taught modules, working on their dissertation, and gaining work experience through placement modules, industry projects and other engagement with relevant professional practitioners and organisations.

There are opportunities for NTU's students to visit Beijing and CUC. In 2019 NTU's chamber choir visited CUC to perform a concert and to hear a performance by CUC's Choir.

Teaching and administration model

From the start of the partnership, NTU academic staff have taught over one-third of the modules on the programmes, staying in Beijing for extended periods up to one semester. Students are given English language support by NTU Language Centre tutors.

Over the last two years an NTU working group including professional services (legal, IT, finance, quality assurance) and academic staff has been set up to advise the University on all its Chinese TNE.

Research activity

In December 2018, the senior leaders of the partner universities agreed to broaden and deepen the partnership with joint research, conferences and staff exchange. NTU's Global Heritage Research Theme, for example, has already developed academic and industry links through research workshops in China and the UK in 2019, culminating in an international forum held in Beijing in November 2019.

Queen Mary University of London Engineering School, Northwestern Polytechnical University

In 2017 a Joint Education Institute was created by Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) and Northwestern Polytechnical University (NPU). The JEI undertakes three types of activities: education, research, and training. These each have distinct organisational entities: the Queen Mary Engineering School (QMES); a Joint Research Institute (JRI); an International Centre for Teaching and Learning (ICTL).

The ICTL is designed to promote excellence in TNE in STEM subjects through the development and sharing of best practice, showcase activities through the organisation of symposia and contributes to teaching pedagogy papers. Staff from China are invited to London for short teacher training courses and can gain qualifications through the UK Professional Standards Network.

Useful video introductions of the JEI can be found at <http://qm.nwpu.edu.cn/english/home.htm>

Location

NPU is based in the historic city of Xi'an, capital city of Shaanxi Province. The city has a population of seven million in the urban area. Historically, Chang'an, the city which re-emerged as Xi'an after the Tang dynasty (618-907 c.e.), was the eastern end of the Silk Road to the Middle East and Europe. The purpose of the JRI is to serve the 'Belt and Road' initiative pursued by China, with mutual benefits to both institutional partners and their stakeholders.

Background

The partnership between the two universities began with conversations about expanding research collaboration that had originated in the 1980s. In 2016, an initial Memorandum of Agreement was signed between QMUL and NPU followed by the application to the Ministry of Education for the establishment of a JEI. Following approval, the first cohort of students enrolled in September 2017. Unusually, a MoE audit was requested after the first year, because NPU was establishing another partnership with a French university. The outcome was successful.

Ranking and Status

NPU, a National university, is located in the 2020 Shanghai Rankings (ARWU) in the 201-300 bracket for top universities in the world, and in the Double First Class initiative it is listed as a class A university. Therefore, NPU should be considered a leading institution in China but not one of the

elite institutions. The ranking of NPU by ARWU has climbed sharply over the last three years.

For many years, QMUL, a Russell Group university, has consistently achieved an ARWU ranking between 151 and 220. Using ARWU, it may be said that QMUL is clearly in the 'top 30' in the UK.

Programmes

QMES currently delivers two undergraduate degree programmes taught in English, each with an intake of 120 students:

- BSc(Eng) Materials Engineering
- BSc(Eng) Polymer Science Engineering

The total student population is nominally 960. The BSc degrees are four-year programmes with the first year being an integrated foundation year with a strong focus on English for STEM. In their final year, the top 10% of students are invited to articulate to QMUL to complete their degree. It is normally a requirement to attend a summer school in London before starting the final year of the degree.

In January 2020, approval was granted for double MSc degrees in the following four areas:

- Materials Science and Engineering
- Polymer Chemistry and Physics
- Organic Chemistry (Organic Electronics)
- Biomedical Engineering

The annual enrolment will initially be 60 students for each MSc programme. This figure is included in the national postgraduate enrolment plan and the NPU postgraduate enrolment plan. The duration of the programmes will be three years, which includes 9-12 months at QMUL as part of a 1+1+1 arrangement. These programmes are due to start in 2021/22.

Fees

The undergraduate tuition fee is 70,000 RMB per year.

Student mobility

Student mobility is encouraged through the JEI. A two-week summer school in London allows undergraduates to receive taster sessions in engineering labs and learn more about life at QMUL. In 2018, 60 students participated and in 2021 400 students are expected to participate as part of a double cohort due to cancelled mobility in 2020.

Mobility is also possible in the other direction, with UK-based students able to interact with their counterparts in China, initially through virtual modes, and then with a visit to Xi'an in April. Students who have visited Xi'an are then invited to act as guides for the Chinese students who come to London for the summer school.

Teaching and administration model

Each partner delivers half of the modules with QMUL using a flying faculty model. On successful completion, students are awarded degrees from both universities.

The JEI is supported by an administrative team based both in Xi'an and at QMUL. In London, the JEI has an Operations Manager who is responsible for various administrative functions and the efficiency and effectiveness of the support systems as a whole. The JEI's website (link above) has descriptions of the duties undertaken by various members of the team in China and the UK.

Research activity

The Joint Research Institute (JRI) has been established to promote high-level academic research and international cooperation in research programmes, and includes five collaborative research centres, each jointly led by a professor from each institution. The JRI allows for bilateral exchange of students and academic staff through the organisation and funding of two research conferences that take place annually in London and Xi'an.

Leicester International Institute, Dalian University of Technology

The Leicester International Institute is a Joint Education Institute (JEI) established in March 2017 following approval by the Ministry of Education, by Dalian University of Technology (DUT) and the University of Leicester (UoL). On the DUT website (<http://dli.dlut.edu.cn/indexEn.htm>), the Leicester International Institute is referred to as the Dalian Leicester Institute and the acronym used is DLI. However, to reflect the MoE approval and the official record, this profile refers to LII/DLI.

The LII/DLI originated in both a 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' way: UoL leadership had a clear interest in seeking further international partnership as a consequence of successful past international collaboration, and individual staff had existing study and research contacts in DUT.

A UoL team supported the team from DUT who presented the proposal to the MoE in 2017. A panel nominated by the MoE interviewed members of the presenting team.

The LII/DLI website states the purpose of the JEI is "to advance the exchange of culture, science, engineering and technology between China and the United Kingdom, promoting the development of education in both countries and facilitating academic collaboration between Dalian University of Technology and the University of Leicester".

Location

DUT is based in Dalian, a port in north-east China, and the University now has a second campus that is close to the Provincial capital of Shenyang. The area has a special economic status. Consequently, DUT benefits from international investments as well as Chinese and overseas industry connections.

LII/DLI is located inside the DUT Panjin Campus which is situated in Panjin's New District of Liaodong Bay, a new coastal city in the centre of Liaoning Coastal Economic Zone at the north end of Bohai Economic Rim. The two campuses of DUT are about 180 miles apart.

Background

DUT was founded in 1949 as Dalian University and became DUT in 1960. The University has 14 colleges offering around 30 undergraduate programmes. In aggregate, the University hosts around 40,000 students with a ratio of 35:65 female to male students. DUT has a significantly high number of graduate students, almost 40% of the total student population. The University has achieved many awards for research in science and technology.

International students account for around 3% of the student population in DUT, from over 20 countries. The School of International Cultural Exchange is responsible for attracting and supporting overseas students.

Ranking and Status

DUT, a national university under the MoE, is one of China's leading science and technology institutes. The institution is a double-first class university in Class A. This places DUT inside the 'top 40' in China. In ARWU (Shanghai Rankings), DUT is currently in 25th place in China which puts the university in the 201-300 bracket in the world rankings.

Leicester can be considered to be a 'top 40' university in the UK. The University is in the 301-400 bracket in ARWU's world rankings.

Programmes

Academic programmes were jointly developed by UoL and DUT. Two undergraduate programmes recruited in 2017: Mechanical Engineering and Chemistry with a total of 168 students across the two courses. Students are recruited in accordance with the Chinese General Higher Educational Institute Recruitment Plan and are ranked among the first level under the Cooperation Agreement and associated Recruitment Plan.

Mathematics programmes commenced in 2019; the first year of the programme is a foundation year (level 4) within the UK system and the first year in the Chinese system.

In 2020, LII/DLI recruited to three undergraduate degree programmes: Applied Chemistry (aligned with Chemistry at UoL), Mathematics (aligned with Mathematics at UoL) and Process Equipment and Control Engineering (aligned with Mechanical Engineering at UoL). Each Programme initially enrolls up to 100 students each year for full-time undergraduate degrees.

All three LII/DLI programmes are 'dual degree', and students must meet the awarding requirements of both universities. Graduates are awarded a UoL Bachelor's degree and a DUT Undergraduate Graduation Diploma.

LII/DLI students are registered at both DUT and UoL and have access to online library, learning and other academic resources. All teaching of the Core Curriculum is carried out by lecturers from both universities with UoL's academic materials and with English as the medium of instruction.. Assessment is jointly conducted. All DUT staff who teach on these programmes go to UoL for four to five weeks of training before starting their teaching.

LII/DLI attracts strong students; applicants for the dual award must come from within DUT's existing government quota which is linked to the national gaokao examinations and outcomes. For example, c. 80% of the 2019 entry

are 60 marks above the recruitment lines of the 'first batch to recruit Universities' in China. Both DUT and UoL are considered prestigious organisations and thus attract high achievers from the gaokao. LII/DLI is committed to high quality courses and excellent student achievement.

Information about LII/DLI is given on the UoL website, <https://le.ac.uk/dalian>, in both English and Chinese. Information is provided about the partnership, teaching staff, courses and degree programmes, transfer opportunities, staff exchange and key contacts. Students can transfer from DUT to UoL for full academic years only; transfer within an academic year is not possible due to timetable and schedule differences. The core curricula of programmes at LII/DLI mirror the UoL curriculum to allow for student transfer and flexibility in programme structure, i.e. 4+0, 2+1+1, 2+2 and 3+1.

Fees

Current student fees are RMB 68,000 per year.

Student Mobility

The normal length of study for each Bachelor programme at the Institute is 4 years. Students can complete the whole study at DUT under the 4+0 model, or may spend time in the UK as part of their undergraduate studies (e.g. 2+2, 2+1+1 or 3+1 route). Students may also undertake Masters level study at the UoL.

UoL runs a Summer School Programme in Leicester and an Inter-Semester Visit Programme. The Summer School Programme is a three-week course combining English language classes, practical laboratory-based sessions, a practical project and presentations. Day trips and evening social activities are organised with students from other international programmes.

In the Inter-Semester Visit Programme, LII/DLI students visit UoL for 3 weeks in January/February, housed in UoL student accommodation and encouraged to mix with campus-based students. They can attend a variety of classes in their own discipline and undertake a range of campus-wide activities.

Teaching and administration model

UoL deliver the programmes using a flying-faculty model. UoL has been keen to ensure that established academics with experience of UK programmes deliver educational programmes in LII/DLI.

Professional Services staff from the UoL home programme teams provide support for the delivery of partnership programmes in LII/DLI. There is also a small UoL support team based at LII/DLI locally in China.

Research Activity

UoL and DUT plan to expand the partnership to include joint research activities.

Chengdu University of Technology Oxford Brookes College

Oxford Brookes University (OBU) has partnered with Chengdu University of Technology (CDUT) to establish a Joint Education Institute (JEI). The 'College' was formally approved as a JEI by the Chinese Ministry of Education in 2019, recruiting students in the same year.

From 2019 to 2023 the JEI will host 1000 students studying undergraduate degrees in Software Engineering and Computer Science, in addition to 500 students studying on the existing OBU-CDUT programme level agreement for BSc (Hons) Accountancy.

Location

Chengdu is the capital of Sichuan province and is one of the most populous cities in western China. In 2019, the urban centre had a population of over 11 million. Traditionally, the Chengdu economy was based on the agriculture of its hinterland, but in recent years the city has sought to establish itself as a high-tech investment zone and gateway to western China.

Background

The partnership developed from a MoE-recognised Joint Programme in Accountancy which recruited its first students in 2016 and saw the first graduating cohort in 2020. The partnership successfully passed a Ministry of Education evaluation in 2019. Following the initial success of the Accountancy programme, the Computer Science and Software Engineering programmes were launched in 2019 in a separate application to establish a JEI. It is reported that the two new programmes are each recruiting 120 students per year, the maximum number of students permitted.

Information about the JEI is published in English but only on the OBU website: <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/asa/apqo/programme-specifications/col-laborative-provision-register/chengdu/>

Ranking and Status

In the 2020 Shanghai Rankings (ARWU), neither OBU nor CDUT have a place in the 'top 1000' in the world listings. In the 2019 ranking of Chinese universities published by ARWU CDUT appears at 216. In the latest QS table, OBU is ranked at joint 383 and CDUT is not listed.

Programmes

Two programmes are currently offered at the JEI: BSc Computer Science and BSc Software Engineering, which run in parallel to the BSc (Hons) Accountancy programme.

The BSc (Hons) Accountancy programme was launched in 2016. This programme is a four-year degree and includes a foundation diploma in English and Study Skills, providing students with the necessary skills to progress to the three-year Accountancy degree. The Accountancy programme was developed to address the needs of students wanting to train for a career in accounting and finance within an international and Chinese context. It was designed to provide the core accountancy knowledge and skills needed to gain the ACCA Fundamental Paper exemptions as part of the process for qualifying as a chartered accountant. The BSc is intended to provide a clear route to Masters' level study in a related subject and a significant proportion of students graduating in 2020 undertook this opportunity. Alongside this degree, students will also study Chinese modules for the PRC Ordinary Institute of Higher Education Graduation Certificate in Accountancy. The programme is recruiting to its maximum capacity of 120 students per year.

All students complete four years at CDUT on a 4+0 model and all three degrees are dual awards: students receiving both a BSc (Hons) from OBU and the equivalent degree from CDUT.

Fees

Current student fees are RMB 60,000 for all three programmes.

Student mobility

At present there are no student exchange opportunities available but there are plans to establish this in the future.

Teaching and administration model

Dedicated teaching staff were recruited to work full-time at CDUT as part of the programme level agreement to run the BSc (Hons) Accountancy programme in 2016. The teaching, quality assurance and administrative framework implemented in 2016 has evolved as the programme became embedded. As part of the JEI, OBU has looked to streamline its support and governance structures and this has involved both internal structures and resources and those deployed in-country.

Both universities participate in joint staff training and development. OBU has arranged for staff from CDUT to visit its campus at appropriate times in the academic year to learn more about OBU administrative systems and to observe teaching.

Due to the success of the partnership and the increased number of students registering for programmes, OBU is looking to recruit an in-country manager with the aim of reducing the burden on Oxford-based staff.

Research activity

A future ambition of OBU is to leverage the research capability in both institutions as there is definite potential to explore interdisciplinary research in the areas of business and computing.

Sussex Artificial Intelligence Institute, Zhejiang Gongshang University

The University of Sussex (UoS) has established a Joint Education Institute (JEI) with Zhejiang Gongshang University (ZJSU), with a specific focus on Artificial Intelligence. The first admission of students to programmes was in September 2020. The JEI is based on the Xiasha campus of ZJSU.

Location

Zhejiang Gongshang University is located in the Jianggan district of Hangzhou, capital of Zhejiang province. In 2019, Hangzhou's urban centre had a population of about 7.6 million people. Hangzhou was historically a centre of culture. In addition, it is now the economic centre for east-central China and an emerging technology hub. Xiasha University Town, where the JEI is located, has 14 universities and a student population of 200,000.

Background

The Sussex Artificial Intelligence Institute project began in 2018 following a significant period of research at UoS focussing on the implementation of TNE. A group visited ZJSU in September 2018 and a preliminary agreement was reached. Historically there have been academic links between ZJSU and UoS. International Relations staff at UoS had had senior contacts with ZJSU.

During a ZJSU delegation visit to Sussex in June 2019, an MoU was signed to deepen collaboration in research and education between the two institutions. An initial application for MSc provision was submitted to the Chinese Ministry of Education in autumn 2019 and, with the addition of undergraduate programmes, the Sussex AI Institute received formal approval from the Chinese Ministry of Education in April 2020. The inauguration ceremony of the Sussex AI Institute was held on 5 June at ZJSU with virtual attendance from University of Sussex.

Ranking and Status

In the Shanghai Rankings (ARWU) 2020, UoS is positioned in the 151-200 bracket, a 'top 20' university in UK, whereas Zhejiang Gongshang University is yet to be ranked within the top 1,000 institutions in ARWU. Zhejiang Gongshang University is currently ranked joint 133rd in China according to the Best Chinese Universities Rankings (ARWU). This is a clear example of 'partnering up' by the Chinese university.

Programmes

The Sussex AI Institute is the first Joint Institute focussed on AI degrees in China, offering a total of four degree programmes: two BEng and two

MSc degrees. The undergraduate programmes are Robotics and Electrical Engineering; Communications Engineering. The postgraduate programmes are: Robotics and Autonomous Systems; Artificial Intelligence and Adaptive Systems.

Students at the Sussex AI Institute will have placement opportunities in the region. The two MSc programmes are closely aligned with industry in the local area.

The programmes have been allocated an annual quota of 300 students: 200 for the two BEng programmes and 100 for the two MSc programmes. Recruitment to these programmes has been very good in the first year, including the MSc courses that used direct recruitment channels.

Undergraduate students will complete four years at ZJSU on a 4+0 model and, on successful completion, will receive dual degrees from both university partners. MSc programmes are 18 months; students are not required to spend any time at UoS during the course. Postgraduate students will receive only a UoS degree because recruitment is not through the National Postgraduate Entrance Examination.

Fees

The fees for the BSc programmes are 28,800 RMB per annum. Fees for the MSc are 150,000 RMB.

Student mobility

Over the long term the UoS wishes to develop Hangzhou as one of the University's global hubs, including bilateral mobility and summer schools.
Teaching and administration model

Teaching on the programmes is delivered by a 50:50 split of UoS flying faculty and ZJSU professors. The Covid-19 pandemic has meant that flying faculty will be unable to commence teaching until January 2021 at the earliest on the MSc programmes, but, to date, this has not impacted UG programmes as the Sussex teaching is not due to start until May 2021.

The main contributions from professional services staff in setting up the JEI were from Global Engagement, Finance and Legal. A steering group was set up within UoS to help with the delivery of the Institute. There was also involvement from third-party providers to resolve issues with the Virtual Learning Environment ahead of the launch. An Institute Dean and Vice Dean (Teaching & Learning) have recently been recruited to lead on student experience. The aim is for the students at the Sussex AI Institute to have a unique student experience with a bespoke student handbook and merchandise.

Research activity

The immediate tasks revolve around consolidation of the partnership, but there is potential for the Institute to become a research hub.

E: Participation by Professional Services Staff

Successful operation of a JEI requires the establishment of professional support services with some detachment from the parent Chinese university. Furthermore, Institutes benefit from promoting contact between their administrators and the UK parent institution. This may be developed through face-to-face visiting, but during the conditions of the pandemic contacts have been exclusively through internet collaboration.

The MoE regulates degree subject, curriculum structure, teaching arrangements and monitors inputs and outputs. The supporting structures, operated by Professional Services Staff, are not a matter of significant concern to the MoE provided integrity and satisfactory outcomes are achieved.

Overall, and unsurprisingly, there is more research available on policy and pedagogy of teaching collaborations than on the support provided by administrators. The Transnational Education Toolkit compiled by Dr Karen Smith, University of Hertfordshire, and published by the Higher Education Academy in 2017, will be found helpful by those developing international partnerships.³⁰

Dr Smith clearly draws on her own teaching experience and does not examine how TNE partnerships are managed and supported. Nevertheless, her support for a 'Community of Practice' will be welcomed by AUA members. Our AUA group heard that such bodies are being used in some universities.

There is other work published in English on how partnerships have been developed. Within this, the important role of professional services is apparent. However, as noted earlier in this report, the collective size of JEIs has grown very significantly in recent years and some earlier reports may

³⁰ [HEA launches a new transnational education toolkit | Higher Education Academy \(heacademy.ac.uk\)](#) The same author's book has further valuable material including an excellent list of reference material: Engaging in Transnational Education, Critical Publishing 2020.

now be outdated. Several investigations refer to the period 2010 to 2016. Only five of the current thirty JEIs produced graduates during that period. Two of these were the JV 'big scale' partnerships involving the Universities of Nottingham (UNNC) and Liverpool (XJTLU).

When the AUA group held meetings with UNNC and XJTLU it became clear that the role of professional services in these two large operations is substantial. In many ways there are similarities with how professional services operate in a UK university. In both cases, because of the operational scale, the JV universities have developed their own dynamic. The administrative needs of a JEI are more modest but are still significant.

A JEI requires more than joint programme development and subsequent joint delivery. Students must be registered, provided with learning resources, assessed, and sometimes offered support. When they complete their degrees successfully there are certificates to be issued and records kept. The UK's Quality Assurance Agency has published various reports about specific TNE partnerships in China and about the subject in general. These make useful references to the part played by administrators.

Research published by British Council and CEAIIE in 2017

One of the more enlightening reports, produced jointly by the British Council and the China Education Association for International Exchange, was published in August 2017. Research on Current UK-China Transnational Education investigated TNE management methods and student satisfaction, gathering data through surveys and interviews with administrators from joint programmes and institutes. The research is distinctive because it included respondents employed both by Chinese universities and UK partners.

The review considered undergraduate-level joint programmes and institutes that had been operating for at least two years. 95 responses were received from Chinese joint programme administrators, and four Chinese responses from joint institutes. Responses were also received from 12 UK institutions operating joint programmes and five that ran joint institutes. Unfortunately, it is not entirely clear how far there was overlap in coverage between the Chinese and the British samples.

The BC/CEAIIE report has some useful case studies. But, as recognised by the authors, it was not able to assemble a sufficiently robust response by joint institutes to provide more than an indicative view of administrators' attitudes. Nevertheless, as might be expected and as is confirmed by the AUA's discussions, it is becoming common in JEIs for there to be a UK head of administration appointed or seconded:

All surveyed UK joint institute administrators said that they had a China-based staff member who was responsible for their institute, while three of the four

*Chinese joint institute administrators said the same thing.*³¹

The BC/CEAIE report found clear differences between China-based UK managers reported at joint institutes and at joint programmes. Two of the three Chinese administrators whose joint institutes had permanent UK management staff, and two of the five UK respondents, said that this manager was at the head-of-department level. The remaining respondents said that the person in charge of their joint institute from the UK side was a member of their academic teaching staff.

In joint programmes, the senior member of staff from the British partner, where there was one, had more junior status. According to Chinese administrators, a substantial proportion of managers in joint programmes are from the UK institution's China liaison office rather than the home campus. In some cases, a JEP has been the product of a relationship facilitated by an agency and this may result in a continuing presence of the 'liaison office' at the Chinese university.

One area of discussion in the BC/CEAIE report that was not part of the AUA remit was comparison between JEIs and JEPs. In the former there are dedicated administrative staff. The latter often employ:

*... liaison officers [who] tend to be more responsible for marketing and lack experience in areas such as educational resource management and discipline development. They are therefore less able to provide assistance in education quality, student experience and development of teachers; furthermore, in some cases these administrators come from third-party Chinese organisations rather than the UK University itself.*³²

The AUA group confirms the finding of the BC/CEAIE researchers that JEIs, because they are larger and more complex than JEPs, are likely to have an in situ British-appointed manager to work with the senior manager from their Chinese partner.

Alongside the senior academic nominee from the Chinese partner, there will also be a Party Secretary in the JEI who takes responsibility for student welfare and is often the individual who will respond to the frequent questions raised by the parents of students.³³ In the AUA meetings the British spokespersons for JEIs confirmed the need for a good working relationship with the Party Secretary.

The BC/CEAIE research has an extra dimension that we could not investigate: comparison between British respondents and Chinese respondents. This is an interesting topic but one on which this report cannot comment. The AUA group was not a research team and it was not aiming to report

³¹ Op.cit. page 21. During our meetings we heard about different ways of managing administrative issues; some JEIs do this with a UK-based leader and some do this with the senior officer located at the JEI.

³² Ibid. page 23.

³³ The Party Secretary is the senior representative of the ruling Chinese Communist Party. In all organisations of any significant size there will be a branch of the CCP.

on professional services in a way that would be appropriate for a research paper. Nevertheless, we suggest that responses made during our work indicate that the establishment of effective professional services in JEIs is an important factor in their success.

Professional culture

The project team concluded that establishing a culture of professionalism, and associated support mechanisms, is critical to the sustainability of British degree programmes delivered through TNE, especially in assessment practice and quality assurance.

Given the growth since 2016 in the scale and number of Sino-British JEIs, and given the limits of scholarly work on the professional service function in JEIs, it seems reasonable to suggest that it would benefit the UK sector if more research on the role of professional services in JEIs could be undertaken and disseminated.

F. Conclusion

Sino-Foreign HE collaborations serve a variety of purposes for a variety of stakeholders and partners. Clearly there will be different priorities for different interest groups. Within these networks and relationships, the Chinese Ministry of Education has a primary role because all collaborations must respect the legislative and policy framework that establish boundary conditions and quality assurance arrangements.

Over a quarter of a century a new sub-sector of Chinese HE has become established. It teaches almost entirely in English and at least one third of the inputs must come from foreign partners. In time this is likely to achieve several benefits for China:

- introduction of novel and heterodox approaches;
- possible, but limited, reduction of emigration by Chinese students;
- facilitation of research collaboration between Chinese and non-Chinese colleagues;
- provision of a potentially attractive option for students, particularly from less developed countries, to come to China to study.

In general, dual degree programmes within JElS seem to be able to admit students successfully and achieve intakes close to the maximum of their recruitment quota.

A somewhat obvious observation that comes from our project that is necessary to make: there is significant variety in the forms that collaboration take, even when the instances are nominally of the same type.

The descriptive profiles published here show a general pattern: Institutes that have been in operation for some time have made adaptations to the context in which they operate. There is no single pathway to the establishment and consolidation of an Institute: some take longer than others, some are not approved at first submission, some grow significantly but others do not.

Our descriptive profiles demonstrate that it often takes several years before JEIs achieve a stable form. There may be changes in the programmes offered and whether the Institute operates at ‘only undergraduate’ or ‘only postgraduate’.

How large is the TNE sector in China?

From what we learnt during our project it seems reasonable to conclude that no more than one quarter of TNE students in China are in Sino-British partnerships. For UK TNE we have good data from HESA but our data is published to our conventions. Other countries collect and publish data in different ways.

The exact size of the TNE sector in China, in terms of student registrations, is not known. A report published online in 2020 on a Chinese website estimated the annual intake to all JEIs and JEPs to be 150,000 students.³⁴ This is surely an approximation. The Chinese Ministry of Education publishes a record of approved recruitment ceilings for each partnership and the report on the Chinese website clearly used this source.³⁵

Estimating actual recruitment from the published ceilings involves an assumption that all partnerships recruit to the maximum level. Given the demand for collaborative programmes, such an assumption might be 90 per cent correct but it cannot be 100 per cent accurate. Furthermore, there should be deduction for programmes that remain listed although they no longer recruit. If steps are not taken to withdraw a partnership from the official record, there is no way that the MoE will amend the record until it undertakes a periodic ‘spring clean’. No researcher can know the number of programmes that are defunct.

The same online article works from an intake figure to a total student population of c.600,000 (four cohorts each of 150,000 in the four-year degree system). This disregards discontinuations, including the number transferring from China to a foreign partner. It also fails to modify the calculation by reference to postgraduate programmes which are shorter. Overall, it seems likely that there are now at least 200,000 Chinese students on Sino-Foreign HE programmes.³⁶

Registrations at Sino-British TNE

As indicated above, an estimate of about 40,000 students on Sino-British

³⁴ https://www.eol.cn/e_coop/gol/html/report2020/content.shtml Thank you to Kevin Prest for this source.

³⁵ The recruitment ceiling applies to enrolment from China. JEIs are encouraged to recruit outside China but, as yet, this is only significant at the JV institutions.

³⁶ This figure was suggested by Kevin Prest in a personal email.

programmes might be made. HESA data in recent years has shown rapid growth as Institutes approved a few years ago have matured and new partnerships have been set up.

There are about 22,000 students studying, in China, at either UNNC or XJT-LU (in a ratio of c. 4:7).

The most longstanding of the Institutes described in the Profiles section, the Surrey International Institute, has c. 1400 students. The other Institutes described have annual recruitment quotas in the 300-500 range.

As the whole system matures, with growth built in as cohorts progress across four-year undergraduate programmes, it is readily apparent that this is, collectively, a major undertaking for UK universities.

The impact of COVID-19 has been to substantially reduce the outflow of Chinese students to foreign destinations. Although it may be expected that the 2018/19 record number of on-campus Chinese students in the UK will have been exceeded in 2019/20, for 2020/21 and following years the number will be below 120,000. How long will it take for TNE in China to register more students than study on-campus in the UK?

Is Chinese government policy stable?

British universities considering this kind of development may be asking themselves whether a 'tap' that was turned on by the MoE might be turned off. To consider this, it is necessary to put the question in the broader political context of China.

China is in the final stages of discussing a five-year economic plan for 2021 to 2025. The need for higher levels of "opening up" is stressed. In this context, it looks certain that policies for higher education will include strong support for Sino-Foreign joint projects within a regulated framework. China's inclination to support large projects may also become more closely related to whether the putative partner's home country has been co-operative or antagonistic.

The most recently established JV institution is the Shenzhen MSU-BIT University which began admitting students in 2017.³⁷ The institution brings together universities from Moscow and Beijing, although the new establishment is located in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area. Its foundation was undoubtedly supported by politicians in the two capitals acting, perhaps, on an old saying: 'my enemy's enemy is my friend'.

Language of instruction

With some exceptions, Sino-Foreign collaborations are conducted in En-

glish. But even in the exceptional cases English is often used as an additional teaching language e.g. MSU-BIT uses English alongside Russian for its Masters programmes and SJTU-Paris Tech teaches some modules in English and others in French.

In the UK we should ask ourselves whether Brexit will make a difference to the willingness of Chinese universities to partner with British institutions. Arguably, the UK has become less attractive to China now it is not a member of the single market.

We should also consider whether English being the lingua franca of international higher education can any longer provide the UK with a competitive advantage over the EU. Most European universities increasingly teach, at least at advanced levels, using English. Shakespeare's country has largely lost an important competitive edge.

The end of the Golden Era

Five years ago there was much talk, in the UK, about the "Golden Era" of Sino-British relations. In 2016 there was a visit by a large delegation of Russell Group universities to engage the leaders of the 'China 9' universities in dialogue about future collaboration. The British delegation was led by the Vice-Chancellor of University of Nottingham and 14 Russell Group institutions were represented either by VCs or Deputies.

The statement released by the two sides welcomes:

... increasing engagement between the UK and Chinese Governments ... The state visit of President Xi Jinping in October 2015 ushered in a new "golden era" in bilateral relations between China and the UK, and this provides new opportunities to further strengthen relations between world-class universities in the UK and China.³⁸

A lot can happen in five years. No longer is there any talk of "golden era" in the Anglophone countries. In its place, from many politicians, there is criticism of Chinese policies in Xinjiang and Hong Kong.

The controversies about the Hong Kong National Security Law and Beijing's detention policies in Xinjiang raise political issues, and the Association of University Administrators is a non-political body. It would be inappropriate to comment on the validity of various political points of view.

Even so, we should observe the need for advocates of Sino-British partnerships to take account, both within their own institutions and in stakeholder dialogues, of a range of views. Those who support stronger links with Chinese universities will sometimes be criticised for political reasons and they need to consider how to respond.

COVID-19

We should also note some of the probable consequences of the pandemic. The world health crisis, with its profound impacts on society and economic performance, is bound both to exacerbate international tensions as well as also prompting calls for greater co-operation.

In the UK we have to accept that our performance in dealing with COVID-19 is in stark contrast with the efficiency of China. Critics of China may suggest that this results from a one-party state. But this ignores the experience of other East Asian states and the social co-operation of large numbers of urban Chinese both in the PRC and other Asian countries.

In the first year of a new decade the USA, and much of Europe, has been seriously weakened by the pandemic but China has been able to contain the virus. Whilst the G7 nations go into recession, China is still able to record significant economic growth.

China's economic prospects

A 'big picture' account of Sino-British TNE would make much more of the policy issues and the economic foundations of TNE. The narrative here has been more about details and less about analysis. However, it seems necessary to conclude by stressing again that there are some powerful economic reasons why China has taken a course that no other country has taken, with the possible exception of Singapore on a much smaller scale.

The growth of the Chinese economy, and its creation of relative prosperity for millions of people, is certainly not the result of interconnection between universities in many different countries. However, current orthodoxy in Chinese policy making, as expressed by the 'dual circulation' strategy, requires attention both to international and domestic markets.

In both arenas the competitiveness of Chinese products will increasingly demand sophistication of technology and design. In turn, increasing the participation rate in tertiary education and upgrading the effectiveness of university education are vital issues. TNE plays an important part.

Economic growth produces long-term increases in disposable income despite the low share of consumption in Chinese GDP. Many more families in China can afford the higher fees charged in TNE operations. Add this to the Confucian cultural context with its emphasis both on the family and on education. There is every reason to believe that Chinese demand for HE programmes involving foreign universities, in China and beyond, will continue to grow.

China 'ruling' the world seemed improbable to many when Martin Jacques'

book first appeared in 2009.³⁹ Indeed, Will Hutton's review of *When China Rules the World* asserted, in contrast to Jacques: "the real story of the next generation will be of the West drawing ahead of a China facing political turmoil and increasing economic difficulties".⁴⁰

A decade has passed since Hutton published his views on the predictions made by Jacques, a decade when the CCP was able both to contain political pressures and to lead substantial economic growth. One of the sources of economic growth of China is the economic contribution of graduates from a greatly expanded and modernised higher education sector.

39 The second edition, published by Penguin Books in 2012, updated many sections and included a new 20,000 'Afterword' on the shift in power between China and the West, in particular the USA, since the Western financial crisis of 2008.

40 Hutton's review, first published in June 2010, can be found at: [China is in crisis, not in the ascendant | Business and finance books | The Guardian](#). For further exchanges between Jacques and Hutton see: [Is western supremacy but a blip as China rises to the global summit? - Martin Jacques](#)

Appendix

Acknowledgements

My first debt is to the colleagues who joined me on our virtual study tour. They did so with little information about what that would involve. We found a way of working together productively. Each member of the team contributed significantly to the production of this report and several team colleagues have been engaged in dissemination of our findings at various events. The tour leader took responsibility for the report text and edited the profiles initially drafted by team members. Thank you to all colleagues.

On behalf of the team, I wish to thank everyone from 'the sector', including agencies such as UUK and British Council, who generously gave time to meetings. Without exception, and including the colleagues from Chinese universities, we were able to discuss frankly all the issues covered in this report. The project, in my view, demonstrates a collective sense of responsibility to ensure that TNE is well managed and delivers a range of benefits to all concerned, first of all to students.

I am very grateful to the Vice-Chair of the AUA's International HE Network, Dr Phil Taylor, for proofreading the text and making many helpful suggestions.

There may well still be errors, both of fact and interpretation, in this report. I take full responsibility and welcome readers' comments.

David Law
December 2020

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List of meetings (2020)

Meeting 1	10 July	Professor Makhoul University for Creative Arts	Vice-Chancellor
Meeting 2	17 July	Hu Sijia Wuhan University	European Desk, International Office
Meeting 3	24 July	Professor Blackford University of Liverpool	Dean, XJTLU
Meeting 4	28 July	Eduardo Ramos and Alan Gregory Universities UK	UUK - International
Meeting 5	29 July	Dr Alison Felce UK Quality Assurance Agency	Head of Accreditation and International Services
Meeting 6	30 July	Fraser Deas British Council	Head of Education Services (China)
Meeting 7	4 August	Sharne Procter University of Durham	International Director
Meeting 8	6 August	Yinghui Gilbert InterGreat Education Group	Director of International Partnerships
Meeting 9	10 August	Matt Durnin British Council	Global Head of Insights and Consultancy
Meeting 10	11 August	Ryan Parker and Sue Clayton University of Nottingham	(RP) Head of Agent Relations & Senior International Relations Manager (SC) Midlands Innovation Deputy Director
Meeting 11	14 August	Professor Gu University of Warwick	Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor
Meeting 12	17 August	Professor Welburn University of Edinburgh	Executive Dean, ZJU-UoE Institute
Meeting 13	19 August	Professor Song University of Macau	Rector

Meeting 14	19 August	Tracy Li, University of Leicester; Ben Chen, University of Bolton; Joanna Qiu, University of Dundee	Executive members of BUCA, British Universities China Association
Meeting 15	24 August	David Mullins and Nick Phillips University of Warwick	DM) Interim Head; (NP) Head of China Programmes: Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG)
Meeting 16	25 August	Enzo Raimo	PVC (Global Engagement) 2014-2019: University of Reading
Meeting 17	1 September	Professor Jingzhe Pan, University of Leicester	Dean, Leicester International Institute
Meeting 18	3 September	Stephen Williams, Nottingham Trent University	Director, NTU Global
Meeting 19	4 September	Dr Gary Rivers, University of Surrey	Dean (Operations), Surrey International Institute, DUFE
Meeting 20	9 September	Marcus Williams and Leina Shi, University of Sussex	(MW) Director of Student Recruitment, Admissions and International Development (SRAID) (LS) Head of Global Engagement, SRAID
Meeting 21	11 September	Tom Hewitt, Queen Mary UoL (QMUL)	China Operations Manager
Meeting 22	21 September	Andrew Halford, Oxford Brookes University	Associate Dean, Business School (Strategy and Development)

Why we use rankings?

China is not unusual in being a society that is concerned to understand how individuals and partner organisations might be rated and networked in relationships that depend on status. This applies widely, underpinning national and international connections of many kinds. In the UK there is also comfort to be gained, and sometimes distress caused, from league tables, star systems and other kinds of public commendation. Universities, and those who work there, may claim that 'best in class' matters more than 'rough and ready' measurement that ignores specific missions. However, the publishers of league tables find an avid readership on the campuses that they rate.

A 'health warning' is needed: there is much that is excellent at British universities, and Chinese as well, that is not measured by QS, THE, Complete University Guide, or the various tables published by newspapers.

In the profiles we have given an indication of the standing of each of the partners and, if appropriate, memberships of particular groups. This is not exhaustive. For league tables, there are other rankings that could have been included but this would have been excessive.

Reference has been made, first of all, to Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) published by Shanghai Ranking Consultancy, "a fully independent organization dedicated to research on higher education". This organisation also publishes a useful comparative table that is entirely focussed on Chinese universities and compiled with a methodology that is appropriate to that country.

Reference is sometimes made in the Profiles to the QS rankings. These are widely used in China. For better or worse, 50% of this ranking is derived from Academic Reputation and Employer Reputation – in a 4:1 weighting. This is survey data and not objective. Nevertheless, compilers of the QS table argue that esteem is important and, in some ways, it surely must be.

There is some reference in the Profiles to 'partnering up'. By this we mean that a Chinese university is hoping to improve its performance by associating with a British university that has a significantly higher position, using ARWU or QS. Caution is needed. League tables are approximations. Not all institutions aim to achieve excellence in the same way. In football leagues, wins recorded, and goals for and against, are objective measures; teams are trying to do the same things. Fundamentally, for international comparisons, research matters (a lot) and educational achievement (teaching quality) is difficult to assess and barely figures if at all.

Anyone who has any experience of building international partnerships will know that colleagues ask for guidance on the status of potential partner institutions. We believe that this kind of guidance is needed in a report of this nature. We leave it to individual readers to decide whether to pay attention to this dimension of our profiles.

Sino-British College

The Sino-British College (SBC), a JEI in Shanghai, is a partnership between NCUK and the University of Shanghai for Science and Technology.⁴¹ NCUK started as the Northern Consortium in 1987 and is now known by its acronym. SBC is the only British instance of a 'one to many' relationship. Almost all the original partner universities in NCUK are involved. Partly because it is very different in many ways from the usual 'one to one' partnerships, there was no meeting sought by the AUA project.

Feedback survey

How would you rate the VST?

Excellent: 20%

Very good: 80%

What did you like about the VST?

Having the opportunity to have in-depth conversations with colleagues from across the UK and China about their TNE provision.

The opportunity and space to develop knowledge in an unfamiliar area. To gain a comparative study in various JIs. To be able to attend meetings that I could but still catch up on recordings later if I wanted.

Able to engage with wide variety of stakeholders whilst carrying out normal duties for my normal work.

I enjoyed joining calls with other AUA members from across the sector, and gaining insight from figures at different institutions and related professional organisations such as the British Council.

The ease of the virtual meetings and finding out how different partnerships operate in China.

Being able to network with others interested in TNE and working outside of my university. Learning about specific university partnerships first-hand from those involved on the ground. I liked the split nature of the VST with more general meetings at the start leading to more focused meetings in the second stage. Meeting and speaking to key players in TNE who we wouldn't otherwise have met if this wasn't virtual.

Getting to hear about so many different people's first-hand experiences. Having the opportunity to have in-depth conversations with colleagues from across the UK and China about their TNE provision.

Getting to know the other members, and more about their organisations. Meeting with individuals from a wide range of organisations to discover more about their international activity. Learning a great deal about TNE.

Content, interesting subject area, flexible (can dip in and out as own work schedule allows), variety of speakers all very knowledgeable and engaging.

What did you dislike about the VST?

Too many meetings

Not able to enter into the culture of the study country Not able to immerse fully into the work over a condensed period - ie had to balance with normal workload.

I think it could have considered how it would've run if in person with the aim to try and reflect this a bit more in a virtual environment, eg deciding all partners or interviews in advance and having more individuals from one institution across a range of roles and levels in a call with opps for breakouts and group discussion.

It wasn't entirely clear how the VST would operate at the start. It became clearer the further we proceeded with the meetings though.

Not being able to meet colleagues in person (nature of the current situation meant this couldn't be helped). Not so much a dislike but I would have liked to hear briefly from Chinese counterparts in the partnerships too. I did feel the pressure sometimes regarding the number of meetings to attend but this might be because my role has been very demanding of my time this summer due to current events.

It was a little too long and stretched into term time.

On occasions the number of meetings in one week was a little much. Length of meetings occasionally too long, most speakers UK based.

Was the VST too long, too short, or about right?

About right: 62.5% Too long: 37.5%

What were you hoping to achieve/learn?

I was hoping to learn about TNE in China from a different perspective to the one I deal with in my role as link tutor for TNE in SE Asia; and to network. Better understanding about the country, HE and UK HE in that country.

More about interculturalism, strategy in partnership development and dif-

ferences in varying educational contexts.

To understand more about partnerships in China and meet others working in this area.

Continue learning about TNE, building on the foundation of knowledge I already had. As I'm not currently working directly in TNE I wanted an opportunity to keep my knowledge current. Network with colleagues in the sector. I wanted to learn about the experiences and practice of setting up partnership working and joint institutes.

I wanted to broaden my knowledge of TNE generally and learn more about HE in China.

To develop knowledge in TNE, learn what other UK institutions are doing, specifically in China. To learn more about the AUA study tour. Participate in an activity to broaden my network. To use it as a professional development opportunity ahead of appraisal.

More about a range of International activities, and what happens in other organisations.

Knowledge around subject area, general extra interesting project embedded into working day.

Were your expectations met?

Almost entirely: 20%

For the most part: 80%

Any other comments?

Overall an excellent experience. The invited guests were a very high calibre. They were very knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Meetings were measured and thoughtful.

Not wholly clear what my role and responsibilities are or what the intended output is. I have asked but not had clarity on this.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the VST and expanded my knowledge on the sector significantly so thank you!

I feel much more confident in talking about Joint Institutes and understanding what they involve. I have also learnt more about doing business / collaborating with China. Thank you!

This has been the most worthwhile experience that I have had through the AUA so far.

Great opportunity, really good alternative to physical study tour.
(91% response rate)

A note on sources

The narrative style of this report was enabled by the frankness of responses in our meetings. All the profiles have been checked by British partner institutions. Often, information which was initially provided in meetings was later updated. Where new information was conveyed it was checked, so far as possible, against publicly available sources. We have tried both to avoid qualitative comment and not to give any sense that there is a single spectrum of achievement. Each JEI should be viewed in the context of what it aims to achieve.

Detailed referencing has not been considered as essential. Some data, for example from HESA, has not been footnoted but all points of fact have been carefully checked.

In the report, some comments are made about sustainability. There was some discussion in some meetings about whether income fully covered costs. This is not referred to in the report. Partly this is because the subject is too complex but also it would not be appropriate for an AUA to comment on potentially sensitive matters. Generally speaking, it should be assumed that the British universities involved would not wish to expand a loss-making activity. However, one difficult issue for institutions is to achieve clarity on how to capture all the costs of their TNE activities.



Connecting and developing HE professionals

The AUA is the professional association for higher education administrators and managers. As well as being a representative voice for HE professionals within our sector, we're here to support and guide you, our members, as you define and develop your career ambitions.

Think of us as an extension to your professional network. By connecting with like-minded individuals you can look beyond your current role and institution and become part of the wider sector. Through these connections you can share learning, encourage best practice and, importantly, help give our sector, your profession and you as an individual added credibility.

Our approach is simple, yet powerful. We're committed to uniting and developing every professional within our network. That's what makes us unique. In fact, we can sum up the AUA in one simple sentence:

Connecting and developing higher education professionals.