

UNIVERSITY GLOBAL COMMITTEE
29 January 2026
Teams

Present: Li Li (Chair), Helen Challis, Yvonne Chase, Tim Cheek, Stuart Edwards, Neil Gardner, Ruth McAreavey, Jarlath McKenna, Elisa Miles, Matthew Prina, Graeme Redshaw-Boxwell, Müge Satar, Lucy Stock, Paul Tyack, Dennis Wong

Apologies: Nick Collins, Lee Fawcett, Jonathan Galloway, Mark Ireland, Philip Lord, Vishna Nadarajah, Premila Nair, Duncan Rayner, Ruth Valentine, Laney Wang, Alison Williams

In attendance: Lesley Murray (acting secretary)

1. Minutes

Received:

The minutes for May 2025 were not reviewed.

2. Welcome to new PVC Global Li Li and Updates from PVC Global

Noted:

- i. Li Li spoke about her remit, specifically to lead on global strategy. Her focus is on international student recruitment, enhancing NU's student recruitment position, transnational education, global partnerships (including recruitment, research, and T&E links), and global reputation and positioning. Li Li also oversees ASEAN campuses (Malaysia/Singapore) and manages INTO relationships.
- ii. Li Li identified supporting priority areas for the next 3 years: 1) Strengthening international recruitment including improving ISR positions through clearer data-led strategy focus on priority markets, pathways and partnership for sustainable delivery; 2) Develop a focused, clear, feasible and sustainable T&E Portfolio; 3) Consolidate and develop ASEAN campuses; 4) Develop a strategic global partnership portfolio; 5) Improve global reputation and QS performance
- iii. In terms of governance, UGC is the highest-level committee for global matters with responsibility to UEB and Senate to make endorsements and recommendations
- iv. Global agreements, including pathway partners, sit within the PVC Global portfolio to manage risks including international brand exposure, recruitment, country dependency and reputation. Therefore, UGC is the committee which approves the agreement and we need to have a clear process.
- v. Priorities for the next 6 months include 1) stabilising and strengthening ISR focusing on conversion (Dennis to speak more about China); 2) Assess strategic priorities in India; 3) Align global activities with reputation drivers through understanding more about QS and other ranking drivers; 3) Understanding more about maximising Erasmus and Turing opportunities
- vi. Li Li welcomed colleagues' input at this early stage to make her aware of other projects and reinforced that priorities need to be reviewed on an annual basis
- vii. UEB and Council were updated on the rationale and benefits of developing JEIs and further work is being done to ensure the business case go through the internal process.
- viii. Li Li attended the President's Roundtable on Education on 20 January with the Indonesian President, four Indonesian ministers were present and 19 out of 24 Russell Group Universities represented. The President plans on TNE and international collaboration focuses on STEM disciplines and medicine, particularly pharmacy, physician and nurse training, which are more likely to be backed by government scholarships. NU will learn more insights into the international

partnerships and recruitment trend in the country given it is the fourth largest country in the world in terms of population.

- ix. NU reinstated on LPDP allowing visibility of students sponsored by LPDP scholarships emphasizing a STEM and medicine focus. PVC Global thanked those doing the work of engaging with Indonesia to return NU to the list.

3. Items for Information/ Discussion/ Endorsement

3.1 UGC Terms of Reference and Membership

The group discussed the need to review and update the Terms of Reference (ToR) to ensure they accurately reflect the purpose, scope and membership of the committee.

Noted:

- i. Current membership list is very large, raising questions about whether the group is intended for governance, information sharing, or action.
- ii. UGC should receive updates from the TNE Oversight Group and other working groups/committees to ensure alignment with the global strategy.
- iii. Preference expressed for the group to be action focused, with members having direct responsibility for one of the five strategic areas.
- iv. Question raised whether direct PGR representation is needed at all, or whether faculty global/education deans can feed in PGR related issues instead.
- v. Agreement that the group should work collaboratively on a shared document to refine the ToR.

Actions:

- **Define relevant KPIs for global activity and partnerships and agree how often KPIs will be reviewed by the committee**
- **Create and circulate a shared document for collaborative editing of the ToR.**
- **After ToR approval, review membership to ensure the right people are included.**

3.2 Faculty Updates by Global Deans

SAGE Update

Noted:

- i. **Joint Education Institute (JEI) Progress:** Faculty colleagues visited CCNU and SEU in early January. Around six high-level programme structures have now been developed. Governance and regulatory discussions have begun. A follow up visit is planned for late March to finalise principles, with a meeting scheduled with Ruth Valentine and Laura Johnstone to agree high level decisions.
- ii. **NU–SIT (Singapore):** It is likely the faculty will lose another programme, leaving only Electrical Engineering and Marine in Singapore, which is a concern.

- iii. **Southeast Asia Developments:** Early-stage discussions in Vietnam on potential MSc 4+1 pathways in Engineering and Data Science. Exploration of a possible 3+1 model leading to an MSc—an award structure Newcastle does not currently offer, but other universities (e.g., Bristol) are beginning to adopt. Bangkok: early contact with a private provider offering BTEC-type provision. Indonesia: ongoing discussions noted.
- iv. **CPD Activity:** Increasing requests via a third party provider for 5–10 day CPD programmes delivered through the Learning Hub. The faculty sees growing demand but lacks a clear strategy for CPD development and delivery.

HASS Update:

- v. Muge Satar reported stepping back from the interim global role due to significant TESOL staffing reductions. Future arrangements will be confirmed by Jo Fox and the Faculty.
- vi. Faculty global priorities need review, as they were last considered in 2023/24. This will be a key item at next week's Global Committee. Li Li will share university-level updates.
- vii. Communications work is underway to update outdated global webpages and increase storytelling on programmes, research, and new MOUs.
- viii. Feedback is being gathered from School Global Leads on digital infrastructure needs, including large file transfer and virtual exchange tools.
- ix. Key partnerships requiring attention include Coimbra Group, UK–Palestine Network, North Sea University Partnership, and UK–Taiwan Network. OP Jindal and several SML pathway proposals are progressing.
- x. International recruitment remains a priority; Law programmes are now accredited in Malaysia, India, and Canada. Market diversification will be discussed at the next Global Committee.
- xi. TNE developments continue, including NUSSOPS and the University of the Arts Singapore partnership, which is moving toward an MOU.
- xii. The International Student Experience Forum has launched. The faculty will support 2–3 Fulbright Virtual Exchange Award applications.
- xiii. The MRes TESOL joint degree with TED University is on hold due to staffing and will be reviewed in spring

FMS Update:

Noted:

- xiv. The Faculty Global Committee is not operating effectively as it functions mainly as an information sharing forum. An away day is planned for March to redesign it as a more operational committee.
- xv. There is no central register of existing collaborations, pathways, or activities. Work will begin to map and collect this information, potentially via a survey.

- xvi. In education, support continues for Psychology's GAI development with CCNU. CPD was highlighted as a major untapped opportunity, with significant external demand but no clear faculty wide list of offerings. Work will be taken forward with the new Deputy Dean of Education.
- xvii. In research, the UK–China Health Research Alliance is progressing, with a successful healthy ageing workshop held in late 2024 and a formal consortium launch planned in Wuhan in March. Future research calls are expected in areas such as healthy ageing and antimicrobial resistance.
- xviii. Work is underway to understand baseline data for subject level rankings, including compiling FMS staff lists by unit to support monitoring and improvement

3.3 Amendments to International Office operating Model

Noted:

A refreshed team structure was outlined, comprising four sub-teams:

- i. International Future Students Team – market facing colleagues based in the UK and overseas, responsible for direct engagement with students and partners.
- ii. Global Partnership and Market Development Team – a newly named team led by Laura Mitford, responsible for global, cross territory partnership development, agent management, pathway provider relationships, and overseas office insights and data.
- iii. Global Strategic Operations Team – an expanded operations function providing underpinning support across global activity, including aspects of TNE and recruitment operations.
- iv. Global Education Development Team – a significant new development, led by Stephanie Sobek, responsible for new educational products, diversification, TNE, fee-paying study abroad, summer schools and other emerging models. This includes the new Head of TNE East Asia role.

Actions:

- **HC to circulate the finalised International Office structure, including a brief narrative description**

3.4 TNE: China – JEI projects

Paper provided to Council on progress in the establishment of Joint Education Institutes (JEIs) with two partner universities in China. Council feedback has been noted on the paper and work now shifts to developing detailed business cases and negotiating partnership arrangements.

Noted:

- i. Southeast University (Top 85 globally in Engineering) and CCNU (Top 4 globally in Education) remain strong, strategically aligned partners; rankings to be highlighted in the next draft.

- ii. Separate business cases likely required for each JEI, plus an overarching case for the UK–China Higher Education Hub.
- iii. CCNU aligns strongly with HaSS, Computing, and Psychology; Southeast University primarily with Engineering but offers additional sub projects.
- iv. Detailed negotiations to continue during planned visits in March (Li Li, Dennis Xenia) and March/April (Stuart and Education team).
- v. Target submission: August–September; potential approval expected late November–early December.

3.5. TNE: India – Campus and Collaborations

The committee received an update on progress with TNE India Campus. India remains a rapidly evolving and competitive TNE environment, in contrast to China’s more established landscape.

Noted:

- i. EB has approved continuation of Phase Two, which focuses on refining the geographical, disciplinary and delivery model ahead of a potential tender. Issuing a tender would not commit the University to a specific direction but would provide the evidence required for a future business case decision. Li Li asked whether, subject to EB agreeing to proceed to tender, the tender evaluation could be brought to the group at the May global meeting.
- ii. EM clarified that the proposed model is business-led with an entrepreneurial and employability emphasis, potentially incorporating digital elements and that discussions with academic leads are ongoing.
- iii. The need to involve Murray Pollock, who leads digital/data for the faculty, was highlighted.
- iv. NG highlighted that Business Analytics is currently the strongest recruiter of Indian students to the UK campus and that digital/AI components are increasingly expected by Indian students and should be factored into programme design.

Actions:

- **EM to confirm if this will go out to tender if EB agrees. EM to provide update at next meeting.**

3.6. Reputation and Ranking

NG provided an update on preparations for the forthcoming QS World Rankings submission.

Noted:

- i. Newcastle ranked 137 last year (down from 129), with the next results expected in June. Academic contacts fully submitted (400 high-quality contacts selected), but employer contacts only just met the minimum threshold, highlighting a key area for improvement. Significant progress has been made on citations, with ORCID IDs for all staff.

- ii. A potential change under consideration is reclassifying staff based on “significant contribution to research,” which is expected to improve citations per staff member. Modelling is underway to confirm the benefit before final submission. Citations are weighted at 20%, faculty-student ratio at 10%. We think it's a net benefit to doing this.
- iii. NG emphasised the importance of strengthening employer reputation, including through JEs and global engagement, and highlighted the need to align global activities with the University's reputation strategy and improve global storytelling to enhance visibility. NG will circulate the slide deck to the group.

Actions:

- **Circulate the slide deck referenced in the update to the group.**

4. Items for report

None