BRITISH COUNCIL

Education

UK- Malaysia-Jiangsu (China) Strategic Collaborations in Higher Education

Statement of Intent, 19 February 2025

Kuala Lumpur Statement

A Statement of Intent for the 'UK-Malaysia-Jiangsu (China) Strategic Collaboration Initiative' in Higher Education

Purpose

In light of the increasing globalisation of higher education and the pressing need for innovative solutions to shared challenges, representatives from both the UK-Malaysia University Consortium and the UK-Jiangsu University Consortium agree on this Statement of Intent for the 'UK-Malaysia-Jiangsu (China) Higher Education Strategic Collaboration Initiative' that will amplify existing relationships and expand the scope of collaboration between UK, Malaysia, and Jiangsu (China), on the occasion of the UK-Malaysia China Higher Education Forum held in Kuala Lumpur on 19 February 2025.

This document is not legally binding on any of the parties that contributed to the forum. It does mark a commitment to cooperation and collaboration from members of the UK-Malaysia University Consortium and the UK-Jiangsu University Consortium to deepen and strengthen strategic trilateral collaborations in higher education.

Vision

This initiative seeks to leverage the strengths of the three nations to enhance educational opportunities, promote cultural exchange, and address common challenges in the international higher education sector. By fostering collaboration among universities in the three countries, the initiative aims to develop a skilled workforce that meets the demands of the global economy and contribute to social cohesion by promoting understanding and respect among different cultures.

This initiative seeks to create a robust framework that will benefit students, academics and researchers alike. It lays the groundwork for long-term partnerships that can adapt to future challenges, ensuring that all participating nations thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

Objectives

The primary objectives of the UK-Malaysia-Jiangsu (China) Strategic Collaborations in Higher Education Initiative are:

- **Strengthening Educational Ties** - To build robust partnerships among universities in the UK, Malaysia, and Jiangsu (China) by facilitating joint research, academic exchanges, quality assurance, and collaborative programmes.

- **Enhancing Student Mobility** - To increase opportunities for student exchanges, internships, and apprenticeships, allowing students from all three countries to gain international experience and exposure that will enhance employability.

- **Promoting Research Excellence** - To boost research capacity amongst young researchers, encouraging collaborative research projects that address global challenges, such as sustainability, technology, and health, leveraging the diverse expertise of institutions in all three countries.

- **Strengthening Industry Engagement** - To enhance collaboration between higher education institutions and industries in the UK, Malaysia, and Jiangsu (China), facilitating knowledge transfer, innovation, and workforce development through joint training programmes, co-developed curricula, and collaborative research initiatives that meet industry needs.

- **Fostering Cultural Exchange** - To deepen mutual understanding and appreciation of each other's cultures, enhancing the overall educational experience for students.

Commitment

To achieve these objectives, all parties (member institutions of the UK-Malaysia University Consortium and the UK-Jiangsu University Consortium) undertake to approach this 'Strategic Collaboration Initiative in Higher Education' through a series of activities under the following pillars:

1. **Joint Conferences and Workshops**

We commit to contribute to annual forums/conferences/dialogues that bring together educators, researchers, and policymakers from the UK, Malaysia, and Jiangsu (China) to share best practices, research findings, and innovative ideas in higher education.

2. **Establishment of Collaborative Programmes**

We agree to support the development joint degree programmes and research initiatives that allow students and faculty to work together on projects that benefit all three countries.

3. **Student Exchange and Mobility Programmes**

We recognise the need to create a structured student exchange and mobility programme that facilitates short visits, semester-long or year-long placements for students in partner institutions, promoting cross-cultural learning and networking.

4. **Capacity Building Workshops**

We agree to conducting workshops aimed at enhancing the skills of faculty and academic staff and early career researchers in areas such as curriculum development, research methodologies, and international collaboration.

5. **Digital Collaboration Platforms**

We recognise the need to create online platforms to facilitate ongoing communication and collaboration among students and faculty across the three countries, including virtual lectures, seminars, and collaborative projects.

By committing to the above approach, all parties (member institutions of the UK-Malaysia University Consortium and the UK-Jiangsu University Consortium) seek to achieve the following outcomes for the UK-Malaysia-Jiangsu (China) Strategic Collaborations in Higher Education Initiative:

- **Increased Collaboration** - Establishment of at least five formal partnerships between institutions in the UK, Malaysia, and Jiangsu (China) within the first two years of the initiative.

- **Enhanced Student Mobility** - A target of 200 students participating in exchange programs annually, fostering a diverse and enriching educational experience.

- **Collaborative Research Output** – Increased publication of joint research papers and projects addressing key global challenges, leading to increased visibility and impact in the academic community. *(source: Scival)*

- **Cultural Competency** - Improved cultural competency among students and faculty, preparing them for future global careers and enhancing their understanding of international perspectives. *(participant survey)*

- **Sustainable Framework for Future Collaborations** - Creation of a sustainable model for ongoing collaboration in higher education that can adapt and evolve to meet future challenges and opportunities. *(e.g.: funding model)*

Conclusion

By fostering collaboration, enhancing student mobility, and promoting cultural exchange, the UK-Malaysia-Jiangsu (China) Strategic Collaborations in Higher Education Initiative creates a robust framework that not only benefits the members institutions but also contributes to the broader goals of global understanding and innovation. This Statement of Intent outlines mutual aspirations for cooperation, marking a significant step towards fostering a sustainable and impactful partnership amongst partners from the three countries.

The foregoing represents the understanding reached between the member institutions of the UK-Malaysia University Consortium and the UK-Jiangsu University Consortium on the occasion of the UK-MY-China Higher Education Forum held in Kuala Lumpur on 19 February 2025.

19 February 2025
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia