Experiences in Transnational Education
Research project Hayo Raaphorst, student trainee
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Final version
Experiences with Transnational Education

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Executive summary per case study

University of Nottingham

In 2004, the University of Nottingham (UoN) established an international branch campus (IBC) in Ningbo, China. UoN already had experience with TNE due to its IBC in Malaysia that was founded in 2000. In China, it partnered up with the local authorities, as well as the Wanli Education Group, a provider of all levels of education in China. The campus in China would be based on the British style of education, as was requested by the Chinese partners. UoN was intrinsically motivated to teach a new generation of Chinese students. Moreover, UoN's executive team was committed to prioritise the internationalisation agenda of the university. The two IBCs were part of that process.

Before the project in China started, UoN assessed the financial and reputational risks with which it had to cope. The financial risks were mitigated by attracting enough Chinese financial resources, as well as ensuring that the relatively high tuition fees could be asked. The risk that UoN's reputation would be harmed was limited by having full academic control and not accepting external demands for the content of the programmes.

Over the course of the project, UoN has been successfully offering an equivalent of its Nottingham courses in China, as well as being able to expand the research possibilities for its academic staff. Through its IBCs, UoN was able to offer researchers the possibility to have a larger impact for their projects.

The main lesson learned of the TNE projects in Malaysia and China, was the ability of UoN to advise other institutions on their TNE plans. UoN also believes newcomers in the field of TNE should be helped by experienced institutions, as the possible failure of the former will also affect the support for the activities of the latter.

Hochschule Wismar

Hochschule Wismar, a German university of applied sciences, got a request in 2002 to establish a marine training centre in Indonesia. As time passed by, the wish emerged to start a collaborative programme in maritime studies. Wismar consequently selected local university Insitut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember and started a double bachelor’s degree programme in 2011. Wismar believed the TNE project could improve marine education both in Indonesia at its home campus in Germany. DAAD granted funding for the project, for which the programme had to show a connection with Germany.

The principle of collaboration is visible in all parts of Wismar’s TNE project. Wismar and its Indonesian partner have distributed courses, and responsibility for internal quality assurance. In order to prepare the staff for a style of education that combines German academic standards to Indonesian customs, workshops were organised to exchange information and thoughts on education. As the programme matured, Wismar learned to cope with the differences of understanding of quality of education and conducting science.
Wismar’s successful establishment of the maritime course in Indonesia has resulted into another TNE project in which the university has become involved.

**Hochschule Osnabrück**

This case study also analyses a German university of applied sciences. Although *Hochschule Osnabrück* did not have a prior TNE strategy, it ceased an opportunity that arose from outside. The Shanghai University of International Business and Economics was looking for a partner to establish a joint venture that would be offering a bachelor’s course in event management. Osnabrück was one of the few HEIs worldwide offering event management as a degree course.

One of Osnabrück’s employees saw the offer as a great opportunity for the university to increase its global awareness. However, he had to convince the university’s board as it was worried about the risk of failure and the potential financial risk. Osnabrück learned to cope with these risks, amongst others by receiving a subsidy by DAAD, the German government agency for education offered abroad. Consequently, the project could start in 2011.

In the first years of the programme, Osnabrück faced the challenge that it had to contribute more to the programme than its Chinese partner. For example, additional staff was required as Osnabrück had to offer more courses than initially agreed. However, after the programme matured, the contribution of the two partners equalised.

One of the main successes of Osnabrück’s TNE project was the achievement that a rather small university that was originally focussed on its own region, created a global awareness. Another success is the spin-off programme that the university has started on logistics elsewhere in China.

The main lesson learned for Osnabrück was the difference in understanding of how to educate and how to do research. Osnabrück did not want to let go the academic standards it used in Germany and therefore took additional measures to train the students in these academic skills.
Introduction

Jet Bussemaker, Dutch minister for Education, Culture and Science, announced she intends to limit restrictions for Dutch higher education institutions (HEIs) with ambitions in the field of transnational education (TNE). Minister Bussemaker made that announcement in the Letter to Parliament on the International Dimension of Higher Education and Vocational Education. In the autumn of 2015, minister Bussemaker is expected to reveal the details of her plans.

With some exceptions, Dutch HEIs are not that experienced in offering TNE. In order to acquaint them with the topic of TNE, this report provides several examples of experienced foreign universities with regard to TNE. Therefore, this report consists of three case studies on a variety of TNE projects.

In February 2015, Neth-ER organised the seminar ‘Transnational Education: Opportunities and Challenges’. During this seminar, the main trends in TNE were discussed, and several good practices were presented. This report serves as a follow-up to that seminar and takes an in-depth look at how ‘it’ is actually done in the field. By ‘it’, the establishment, management and evaluation of TNE projects is meant.

Readers of this report can find useful information of how different types of HEIs established different forms of TNE. The case studies serve as a ‘check’ for policy makers that are involved in establishing new TNE projects. They can see whether their motives for establishing TNE concede with those of the TNE projects described in this report. They can see what lessons others learned before them, so they are able to take these issues into account in advance. Thereby, they do not have to re-invent the wheel. It goes without saying that this report does not provide ‘the’ ultimate guidelines on how to establish TNE projects. However, it likewise goes without saying that by presenting several examples of how others have established TNE projects, newcomers are offered an easily accessible portfolio of examples on which they can base their own TNE strategy.

Readers who are interested in the more generalised conclusions can have a look at reports of both British Council and Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (German Academic Exchange Service, DAAD). These two organisations regularly publish new reports on trends in TNE. The reports of British Council and DAAD use a much larger number of projects on which they base their conclusions and recommendations for the field of TNE as a whole.

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1 The original Dutch name of this document is ‘Kamerbrief over internationale dimensie hoger onderwijs en middelbaar beroepsonderwijs’.
2 For an impression of the seminar, please have a look at the following article on our website: http://www.neth-er.eu/nl/nieuws/Opportunities-and-challenges-transnational-education.
3 See, for example, the British Council website section on TNE: http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/ihe/knowledge-centre/transnational-education.
For example, their most recent report of June 2015 assesses the data collection systems on TNE in multiple countries. In their report, British Council and DAAD recommended to come to a shared TNE framework with regard to terminology, and to improve the data collection systems in order to be able to better use TNE data. The former recommendation is also used in the chapter on terminology used in this report.

The structure of this report is as follows. Chapter one elaborates on the TNE terminology used in this report. As the terms are used in different ways in the literature on TNE, this section is added to avoid unnecessary uncertainties in the interpretation of the terminology used. Chapters two to four respectively consist of the case studies of University of Nottingham, Hochschule Wismar, and Hochschule Osnabrück. The report wraps up with the concluding remarks indicating the similarities and differences between the conducted case studies. These remarks should not be interpreted as generalised conclusions that will hold for all TNE projects. However, they do present other HEIs an overview of what they can learn from past experiences.
Methodology

The case studies in this report are based on interviews with people involved in the TNE projects, and on literature related to the topic. At the start of this research project, ten HEIs were selected to be contacted for a request for participation in the project. These HEIs were selected on the basis of type of TNE, home country, host country and possible other reasons why these institutions are relevant for (Dutch) institutes with TNE aspirations.

At these selected institutions, policy makers that were involved in the establishment or, for those TNE projects that existed for quite a long period, were active in the management of the TNE project were asked to be interviewed for the case studies. The interviewees were all asked questions on the prior strategy of the TNE project, on the experiences the institution had with regard to successes and lessons learned, and on the possible future plans of the institution with regard to its TNE strategy. On the basis of their answers, a draft of the case study was made. These drafts were sent to the interviewees with follow-up questions. The answers to those questions and the possible additional remarks from the interviewees themselves were consequently used to finalise the case studies.

Due to time limits, it was not possible to interview more than three institutions. Nonetheless, the three case studies presented offer a good variety of practices in TNE to those interested in becoming active in the field.

Each case study is structured on the basis on the following four main elements. Firstly, the case studies start with a fact sheet presenting the main facts and figures of the TNE projects, such as the number of students, the type of HEI, and the type of TNE. Secondly, the case studies focus on initiating TNE projects. This part consists of the motives for initiating the project, the partners involved, and the risks assessed in advance. Thirdly, the case studies look at how TNE projects are managed in their build-up phase and consolidation phase. Fourthly, the case studies outline the evaluation of the TNE projects, with a large emphasis on the successes and lessons learned in the course of the project.
1 Terminology

This chapter will present an overview of the terminology in the field of transnational education (TNE), as used in this paper. The first section touches upon a general introduction of the term ‘transnational education’. The subsequent two sections cover the two main forms in which TNE is provided, according to a report of DAAD and British Council. The last section elaborates on the related terms to the forms of TNE provided.

1.1 TNE in general

There is no single set of terms that is consistently used in writings on TNE. Consequently, many forms of education can be seen as a type of TNE. In general,

“the basic principle involves the delivery of higher education programmes in a different country from the one where the awarding/overseeing institution is based.”

This definition could also encompass online education offered to foreign students. This report follows the single framework published recently by British Council and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). However, the projects that are analysed in this report already existed years before the proposed single framework of British Council and DAAD. Therefore, not all of their characteristics may fit into the proposed framework.

British Council and DAAD categorise two main types of TNE. The two organisations differentiate between collaborative TNE provision and independent (foreign) provision. Whereas the former form of TNE is based on collaboration between multiple institutions, the latter form is more a stand-alone activity.

1.2 Collaborative TNE provision

The first main category of forms of TNE encompasses all TNE offered jointly by multiple HEIs. The category has four main sub types of collaborations. These are:

- twinning programmes;
- joint/double/multiple degree programmes;
- co-developed universities, and
- locally supported distance education programmes.\(^5\)


The case studies in this report only cover double degree programmes of these aforementioned collaborative provisions. Joint or double degree programmes consist of “jointly designed, delivered and monitored by all local and foreign partners.” In the case studies of chapters three and four, two German HEIs engaged in a programme with an Asian partner, and consequently offered parts of the double degree. Students who fulfilled the programme are awarded with a degree from the two institutions. Due to the joint nature of these TNE projects, emphasis is put on the equality of partners in the projects. Consequently, the partners share responsibility for the programme, both in terms of staff provision and quality assurance.

1.3 Independent (foreign) provision

The second main type of TNE encompasses those TNE projects that are relatively more stand-alone activities. There are four sub categories:

- International branch campus (IBC);
- franchise universities;
- distance education providers, and
- foreign private institutions.7

As the case studies in this report only investigate an IBC, the other forms of independent provision will not be discussed.

In essence, IBCs are campuses where the institution of the home country establishes full programmes for the students in the host country. The Cross-Border Education Research Team (C-BERT) at the State University of New York maintains the following definition of IBCs:

> “An entity that is owned, at least in part, by a foreign education provider; operated in the name of the foreign education provider; engages in at least some face-to-face teaching; and provides access to an entire academic program that leads to a credential awarded by the foreign education provider.”

The common terminology proposed by British Council and DAAD tries to avoid either too detailed or too broad definitions of forms of TNE provision. Via the proposed framework, the two organisations emphasise the need of a common understanding in the field of TNE.9

However, in this report, the IBC assessed does not fully fit into the proposed framework. For example, the British Council and DAAD report states that international branch campuses do “not co-operate with local HEIs [higher education institutions]”.10 As will be shown in chapter two, the University of Nottingham’s IBC in China is a joint venture with the Wanli

6 Ibid, 48.
7 Ibid, 44.
9 McNara and Knight, Transnational Education Data Collection Systems, 43.
10 Ibid., 44.
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Education Group, a local Chinese educational provider. However, as Nottingham has full academic control on the content taught in the programmes, as will be shown in chapter two, this project can still be regarded as an independent provision of TNE.

1.4 Other terms used

In addition to the forms of TNE described above, this report also uses terms related to the TNE activities of the interviewed institutions. These are explained in this section.

- The terms ‘sending’ and ‘receiving’ countries refer respectively to the country of which the curriculum (and staff) is ‘send’ to a country in which the programme is ‘received’ and thereby offered.
- ‘Home institutions’ are the HEIs of the sending countries and ‘host institutions’ are the HEIs in the receiving countries.
- ‘Flying-faculty’ is a part of TNE projects whereby the (scientific) staff of the home institution regularly flies to the campus in the host country to teach courses.
- ‘Franchising agreements’ are agreements in which a home institution’s programme is being delivered by host institution, without input of the host institution to the content of the programme.\(^\text{11}\)
- ‘Articulation agreements’ are agreements in which students that have fulfilled specific programmes in a host country is guaranteed access to continued programmes in the home country.\(^\text{12}\)
- ‘Distance learning’ covers all programmes where education is not primary facilitated face-to-face, but via online media. Student support is normally part of these programmes.\(^\text{13}\) Distance learning can lead to the reward of a degree, as is the case with the Hochschule Wismar, the German university of applied sciences analysed in chapter three.

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\(^{12}\) Ibid., 134. In the United Kingdom, they are seen as form of TNE as well. They do however fall outside the framework for TNE as presented by British Council an DAAD.

\(^{13}\) Ibid.
## Factsheet – University of Nottingham

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<th>Location</th>
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<td>Number of students</td>
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### University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC)

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<td>Undergraduate students (all)</td>
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<td>Postgraduate home, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan</td>
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<table>
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<th>Postgraduate international students</th>
<th>RMB 90 000 (€ 13 730)</th>
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<td>Location</td>
<td>Semenyih, Malaysia</td>
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<td>Type of transnational education</td>
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<td>Foundation year</td>
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<td>Type of programmes</td>
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<td>Number of students</td>
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<td>Number of staff</td>
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2 University of Nottingham

2.1 Introduction

The University of Nottingham (UoN) has multiple TNE projects, ranging from articulation agreements to two international branch campuses (IBCs). This case study will focus on the China campus, though some experiences of UoN in Malaysia are also mentioned. For the case study, Professor Roger Woods was interviewed. He was Provost and CEO of University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC) from 2007-2010. Woods describes UoN’s main strategy for its IBCs as “matching our areas of strength to the host’s priorities and areas of interest.” Thereby, UoN wanted to become one university, in three locations.

2.2 Initiating transnational education

2.2.1 Motives

There were three motives for the University of Nottingham to initiate the IBCs: a commitment to internationalise higher education, the competition for international recruitment, and the academic driver to teach. UoN was intrinsically motivated to initiate its IBCs. One can say that UoN saw TNE as a potential stimulus for its general internationalisation strategy.

- The university had a vice-chancellor that was wholeheartedly committed to the internationalisation of higher education. As Woods puts it: “We had a vice-chancellor who was convinced that an education in one country is not much of an education these days.” This personal leadership was of importance for the launch of the TNE projects.
- UoN noticed that the competition for recruiting international students was increasing over the years. Therefore, the university believed it could not afford to simply wait for those international students to come to Nottingham. UoN had to do something that captured people’s attention, something ahead of all other universities with regard to further internationalisation of its institution.
- With regard to China, UoN was also driven by the possibility to educate a new generation of Chinese students, which UoN had no not done before. This academic motive was also important for Woods himself to make the decision to get involved in the UNNC project.

2.2.2 Partners

UoN was thus motivated to expand its activities overseas. Both in China and Malaysia, UoN found important partners via its home institution.

With regard to Malaysia, Nottingham had a long tradition of educating several cabinet members of the Malaysian government. This contributed to the start of a branch campus in

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15 A Provost is the senior academic head of a part of an higher education institution, in this case, the campus in China.
Malaysia. For UNNC, the appointment of Yang Fujia as Chancellor of UoN from 2001-2013 contributed to the establishment of UNNC. Yang was a former President of Fudan University in Shanghai. In China, Yang introduced Nottingham to the Wanli Education Group (WEG), which already had much experience with education in China. WEG became UoN’s partner in the establishment of UNNC.

The national and local Chinese authorities became partners of UoN as well. On a national level, there was a question on the employability of the graduates from the universities with a traditional Chinese style of higher education. The Chinese system is known for its emphasis on rote learning, i.e. learning facts by heart and reproducing it at the exams. The British way of educating on the other hand is not solely aimed at reproducing knowledge. It is also about acquiring the skills for critical, independent thinking. The ability to present and to analyse is likewise prominently featured in UK universities. They believe that the body of knowledge that one has after graduation needs to be complemented and updated once one works.

The Chinese authorities were looking for this other type of education, as it might enhance the employability of Chinese graduates. UNNC did succeed in providing this. Whereas unemployment rates of Chinese students graduated at local universities is around one third, the employment rate of graduates from UNNC is nearly 100%.

On a local level, the city of Ningbo, where the China campus was established, became UoN’s partner too. The geographical position of Ningbo contributed to the establishment of UNNC. Ningbo is located on the more prosperous east coast of China. Moreover, the city of Ningbo was very welcoming and supported the idea of a branch campus. Ningbo did however not have the same level of quality with regard to facilities such as international schools and hospitals with English-speaking employees. UoN deemed these facilities necessary in order to attract international staff to UNNC. The city of Ningbo was willing to take action on this problem and successfully did so, according to Woods.

One could say that UoN’s prior connections in Malaysia and China, as well as its effort to establish good relations with the local Chinese authorities, positively influenced the establishment of both IBCs.

2.2.3 Risks

Prior to the foundation of UNNC, UoN issued an external risk analysis, which indicated two types of risks that TNE brings along. They were related to finances and reputation.

Financial

- British law prohibits the use of British public money for foreign activities. Therefore, other resources had to be found. Chinese partners offered UoN enough financial resources for the build-up phase. UNNC would in the long run bring the tuition fees as form of revenue to the table. However, in order to be able to establish a branch campus of an equal level of quality as the home campus, it was necessary to ask tuition fees that were up to ten times higher than those of local Chinese universities.
The risk analysis conducted by consultants indicated that these high tuition fees would not form a potential threat to the influx numbers of UNNC.

- UNNC’s legal structure of a joint venture ensures a strict divide between the finances of the IBC and the home campus. Any losses or surpluses made at any of the campuses would not automatically affect the budget of the other campuses.

**Reputational**

- The home campus’ academic reputation is influenced by the degrees it awards. UoN would find it too risky to let external partners deliver parts of the programme, as is for example done in franchising agreements. UoN wanted to stay responsible for its own degrees awarded, as it believed that problems resulting from these situations would possibly backfire at the reputation of the university as a whole. Consequently, it was agreed that UoN would have full academic control and responsibility from the start of the TNE projects onwards. UoN was thus fully responsible for all courses taught at its IBCs.

- The facilities available in the area of the branch campus can also affect the home institution’s reputation. They should be of sufficient quality, especially for staff flying in from abroad. Woods states on that: “The city of Ningbo has been very quick to identify certain needs, for example with introducing additional services in the local hospitals for the international staff.”

- Things that might not seem connected to the reputation of the home institution at first instance can have a larger impact than expected. The UNNC buildings were initially build according to Chinese safety regulations. However, they were quickly upgraded to meet British standards, as these latter are tighter and limit possible reputational risks due to accidents that would affect UNNC staff or students.

UoN learned that addressing these risks upfront, or as soon as possible once noticed during the course of the project, limits the potential damage.

**2.3 Managing the TNE project**

**2.3.1 Build-up phase**

UoN initially wanted plans to establish a hybrid IBC that combined both UK and local styles of education. However, as China already had an enormous amount of Chinese-style universities, the decision was made to build up a British university in China. As soon as UoN noticed that the Chinese were looking for a non-Chinese style of education (see 2.2.2 Partners), UoN dropped the ambition to establish an IBC that would be hybrid institution of both British and Chinese styles of education.

In the first couple of years, UNNC had to get permission from each Chinese province to recruit students originating from those provinces. This was however foreseen in the initial plans. On a programme level, UNNC started some of the courses as 2+2 programmes. The first two years were taught at the IBC and in the last two years, students would fly to the UK campus to finish their degrees. As the years passed by, the China campus evolved into an institution that taught more and more programmes fully in Ningbo.
There was initially much demand for business and computer science courses. These programmes formed a safe start after which UoN could expand the diversity of programmes over the years. The programmes complemented each other as well. Moreover, UoN as a traditional, broad university wanted to have broad branch campuses as well.

One can state that UoN chose to first set a firm base for its IBCs, from which the rest of the campus could evolve. This applies both to the geographical and the academic scope of the campuses.

2.3.2 Consolidation phase

By now, the IBCs in China and Malaysia have finished their build-up phase and moved on to the consolidation phase. In this phase, UoN set the goal to become ‘one university in three locations’. This mission is being achieved by stimulating much interaction and communication between the UK, China and Malaysia campus of the University of Nottingham.

In order to convince the rest of the institution to this idea of one university in three locations, UoN started with seconding senior staff members to the overseas campuses. Additionally, resources were made available for collaborations on lower staff level between the three campuses. UoN furthermore believed that a highly important part of the strategy was to make the project intellectually appealing. The prospect of the possible major impact of research projects consequently contributed to motivate colleagues to start collaborations with their colleagues overseas or go to the campuses themselves.

UoN thus needed to convince the staff of its home campus to participate in the TNE project. Therefore, it chose to create the right incentives. Moreover, UoN also had to stimulate interaction between the campuses’ students. One can state that these efforts were essential to realize the goal of ‘one university in three locations’.

Interaction between students of the three campuses is stimulated via for example the Tricampus Games, which are organised to let students from each of the three campuses compete against each other. Moreover, the presidents of the three Student Unions also meet up several times a year to stimulate the interaction between the students of the different campuses.

2.4 Evaluating the TNE project

2.4.1 Quality assurance

The IBCs are reviewed by two external and one internal reviewer. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), which is the independent accreditor of the United Kingdom, has increased its interest in the TNE projects over the years. The accreditors in
China and Malaysia also needed to give their approval to the IBCs. In its review of November 2012, QAA recognises the first success that is listed under the subsequent heading.\textsuperscript{16}

Moreover, the two IBCs are involved in UoN’s internal audits in the same way as any other part of the university is. Examiners travel to each campus for internal reviews and exams are second marked at another campus to keep the quality at the appropriate level.

2.4.2 Successes

There are two major successes of UoN’s IBCs:

- UoN successfully achieved its goal to develop the ‘Nottingham experience’ at its overseas campuses; and
- it became possible to develop a research agenda overseas, as the IBCs matured.

UoN set itself the goal to deliver its so-called ‘Nottingham experience’ at the IBCs in China and Malaysia. UoN wants to deliver an equivalent programme of its UK programmes. There is one limitation to that, according to Woods: “We need to use cultural references that will mean something to Chinese students. For example, when explaining a typical form of governance, we can refer to ‘Thatcherism’ as a concept in the UK.\textsuperscript{17} In China, no student would understand what we would mean by that. Therefore, we cannot fully duplicate the courses as taught in Nottingham. Instead, our aim is to offer an equivalent version of the programme overseas.”

Additionally, newly recruited staff at the IBCs is introduced to the home campus’ way of teaching. As they haven’t taught at the UK campus, UNNC established programmes to introduce them to the Nottingham experience as well, in order for them to be able to teach at the branch campuses as it is done at the UK campus.

The second main success was the development of a research agenda at the two IBCs. Getting all education right was central in the strategy in the first years of UoN’s IBCs. After goal was achieved, the research agenda was explored. At UNNC, the income via research grants was an opportunity that arose.

In the UK, the impact of research became an important factor for research councils’ decision to approve a grant or not. The two branch campuses appeared to be excellent laboratories for research projects with large impact, both in number and quality. For example, UoN’s researchers are good at projects on water purification. However, the quality of tap water in the UK is already quite high. The quality of tap water in China on the other hand is not.


\textsuperscript{17} As this report is also read by people outside the UK, the term refers to the type of politics introduced by former prime minister of the UK Margaret Thatcher. She advocated a new style of governing with a small state and a belief in the proper functioning of the free market. A more extensive explanation of the term can be found on \texttt{http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-22079683}. 
Experiences with Transnational Education

Therefore, new findings of these water purification projects can have an enormous impact on the Chinese market. Moreover, the number of people being affected by the change in quality is much higher in China than in the UK.

The same holds for other research areas, such as healthcare (with MRI scanners, invented by a UoN researcher) and food quality. For the latter, UoN has projects on ‘crops of the future’. The simple fact that the climate and environment of Malaysia differs from the UK, offers UoN researchers the opportunity to simply use the Malaysian campus for additional tests for their projects. Exploiting the unique features of each campus thus stimulates the interaction between the campuses.

2.4.3 Lessons learned

UoN has learned the following three lessons, of which the last is the most important. That one is elaborated upon more extensively.

- The first ‘foundational’ year of the programmes offered has appeared to be very important for Chinese students to successfully become acquainted with the British style of higher education.\(^{18}\) Without this additional support, students would not have succeeded to graduate. Moreover, the student support that is given was expanded to the other years of the programmes as well.
- IBCs should not be offering programmes that do not correspond to a profession on the local market. For example, UoN has a leading pharmacy school. However, this discipline would never attract students in China, as the pharmacy profession is not fully developed in China.
- It is essential to know whether one has a good chance to successfully initiate IBCs or not. UoN thinks it now has the experience to be able to advise newcomers in the field of TNE. UoN believes that it is essential that these newcomers are being advised by the institutions that have already been engaged in TNE for several years. Therefore, it thinks it is necessary to establish an expert panel that can advise institutions with interest in establishing IBCs.

The rest of this section elaborates on this last point. A minimum understanding of a good TNE plan would be the following:

- The home campus does not make high investments in the IBC in the build-up phase.
- It is recommendable to have a city that supports the projects, as Ningbo has done for UNNC.
- You need a local entrepreneur that can build the building for you.
- It is necessary to have a long-term plan and corresponding financial model that works. In that, agreement should be reached with the local partners in advance on the details of the legal structure of the IBC, e.g. a not-for-profit joint venture as UNNC is.

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\(^{18}\) The foundational year is an additional year of the programmes UoN delivers overseas, compared to the equivalent programmes it offers at the home campus in the UK.
Experiences with Transnational Education

In the case that an expert panel for newcomers would be established, UoN would advise the following:

- **IBCs need a champion internally in order to make a success of the TNE project.** Woods: “You cannot underestimate the importance of individuals in the process of building up such projects. You need to have a champion to persuade your staff to join the project in order to succeed.” Woods believes that the vice-chancellor was that champion.

- **Money cannot and should not be the sole motivation for universities to initiate branch campuses.** IBCs require high investments in the build-up phase, and even in the steady state, with possible surpluses, it is recommendable to let the money flow back into the IBC, rather than using it to get the books in balance at the home campus.

- **The possibilities for access to research funding in the host country need to be analysed upfront, as part of the long-term vision for TNE projects.** At UNNC, the access to such funds was expanded from city level to province level, leading in the end to an approval at national level. As the Chinese campus matured, the possibility arose to initiate projects on the marine economy as well, in which UoN did not have much expertise, but the city of Ningbo had much interest and provided much opportunities to develop research projects on its large harbour. The Malaysian campus even has a ‘My EU’ portal, in order to stimulate researchers to apply for European grants as well.

- **It is recommended to first gain experience with other forms of TNE before starting the full branch campus.** UoN was already involved in other forms of TNE, such as flying faculty and articulation, before it initiated the IBCs.

### 2.4.4 Future

During his time as Provost of UNNC, Woods often got requests to establish more IBCs from foreign universities. UoN currently has however no explicit ambitions to start new branch campuses in the near future. Although the current IBCs are a success, UoN does not want to overstretch its management to more than three campuses. Thus, there seems to be a potential risk that too much expansion of TNE activities can harm the existing TNE projects of institutions.

Instead of engaging in new TNE projects, UoN decided to use investment in human capital for its TNE projects for UoN’s general internationalisation strategy. After Woods returned to the UK from his time as Provost of UNNC, UoN appointed him as Assistant-Pro-Vice-Chancellor (APVC) for Europe. With the experiences he had from China, he got the task to review the internationalisation activities of UoN in Europe. Consequently, as this new appointment for Woods became a success, UoN appointed an APVC for each continent.

### 2.5 Conclusion

This case study described the process of initiating, managing, and evaluating for the University of Nottingham’s IBCs in China and Malaysia. In that process, UoN succeeded in many of its initial plans, and learned several lessons as well. In sum, UoN believes that it was
able to offer what was needed. Moreover, UoN stresses the importance of having full academic control and responsibility for the content of the degrees awarded, and likewise emphasises that future branch campuses should be advised by experienced TNE providers. In that way, the newcomers can see whether they have a proper plan to establish a TNE project, or received a good offer from another institution to establish a TNE programme. The university in chapter three received such an offer.
## Fact sheet – Hochschule Wismar

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<td>Foundation year</td>
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<td>Type of programmes</td>
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<td>Tuition fees (semester)</td>
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3 Hochschule Wismar

3.1 Introduction

_Hochschule Wismar_ (university of applied sciences) has initiated a TNE collaboration with _Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember_ (ITS) in Surabaya, Indonesia. The collaboration was aimed at offering a double bachelor’s degree course in Indonesia. Both institutes contributed parts of their respective expertise to the programme. The information for this case study mainly derives from an interview with Karsten Wehner, head of the maritime studies department and project leader from HS Wismar, Eva Cammin, project administrator, and Steffen Loest, project coordinator. Additionally, reports on German TNE are used as well.

3.2 Initiating transnational education

3.2.1 Motives

Wismar had four motives to establish the double bachelor’s programme:

- The primary reason was to contribute to a higher quality of education in maritime studies. As Wehner puts it: “We discovered that the interest from both partners was the same; to bring young people a high level of maritime education.”

- Wismar wanted to select the best students from the programme overseas for the corresponding master’s course in Wismar. The rector of Wismar also wanted this in order to achieve more internationalised study courses in Germany, i.e. a mix between European students and students with a different nationality. This has to contribute to the intercultural skills Wismar wants its students to obtain. Therefore, undergraduates of the joint bachelor’s course can also apply for other master courses at Wismar. One can therefore say that Wismar wanted to use the TNE project for an improvement of the quality of education in Indonesia, but likewise of the quality of education at its home campus.

- Broadening the research agenda of Wismar was likewise a motive to initiate a TNE project. Dorothea Rüland, secretary-general of DAAD\(^\text{20}\), recently indicated this as an important motive for many German institutions.\(^\text{21}\)

- Lastly, Wismar wanted to internationalise its institution by deepening the relations with Indonesia. The TNE project could make the university a more competitive institute worldwide, especially in the field of maritime studies.

3.2.2 Partners

For its TNE project Wismar had the following three partners:

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\(^{20}\) DAAD is the German Academic Exchange Service and funds and supports amongst others German TNE projects. DAAD moreover analyses the trends in German TNE.

Experiences with Transnational Education

- a local Indonesian education institution to establish the joint programme;
- the German, and
- the Indonesian authorities.

In 2002, Wismar received a request from the federal German government to establish a maritime training centre in Southeast Asia. Together with another German university, Wismar provided the training of teachers in maritime studies. Later on, the idea evolved to not only educate teachers, but educate students as well. Consequently, Wismar initiated a fact-finding mission to Indonesia to select a proper local university for a joint bachelor programme in marine engineering. The mission indicated ITS as the “most important higher education institution for maritime education in Indonesia.”

As a result, ITS became the partner of Wismar in Indonesia. With regard to the German government, the German agency for academic exchange, DAAD, could provide financial support to German HEIs establishing TNE projects. Wismar applied for this support in 2010 and received it in 2011 for the subsequent four years. Furthermore, the German Ministry for Education also had to approve the project, which it did.

On the Indonesian side, both the local government and industrial partners were willing to support the project as it was looking for an improvement of the maritime education in Indonesia. For example, the Indonesian Maritime Partnership Collaboration (IMPC), an association of the local maritime industry, supported the project by assisting Wismar in setting up the curricula and learning outcomes. Wismar appeared to be the institution that could provide that improvement.

In sum, one can say that the existing presence of Wismar in Indonesia enhanced the possibility to initiate the TNE project.

3.2.3 Risks

Wismar indicated three risks for the collaboration in advance, and also found three solutions to cope with these risks.

- The most important risk was being unable to find adequate students, both with regard to their academic capacities and with regard to their financial situation.
- The content taught by the partner institution also could be seen as a possible risk.
- Being able to maintain the quality of education was a risk as well.

In order to cope with the risk of finding adequate students, a selection procedure was initiated to test the level of the students that applied. Moreover, students were taught academic maritime English in order to stimulate their language skills in the discipline.

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Concerning the financial situation of students, Wismar issued a market analysis in order to come to cost-effective tuition fees that simultaneously remained competitive with other programmes. In addition, the industrial partners performed an analysis to indicate the demand for future graduates. Due to all the aforementioned, Wismar was able to mitigate this risk.

Although Wismar saw the content taught by ITS as a risk, both institutions agreed to use their particular expertise to each provide the relevant parts of the programme. However, although this meant that ITS would provide the courses on ship building and Wismar on ship operation, Wismar could not provide all the staff for the courses on ship operation. Therefore, ITS teachers had to be selected to provide these courses. Consequently, Wismar invited the potential teachers to Germany for a range of workshops on knowledge interchanging and how teachers could adapt their courses to the module content. By this, Wismar wanted to stimulate the similarity of the programme in Indonesia to the programme in Germany.

The risk of maintaining the quality of education was fuelled by the fact that Wismar noticed that ITS did not have a better or worse, but “another kind of understanding of quality of education.” For example, Indonesian students are more used to memorizing knowledge instead of logically analysing information. Nevertheless, the learning outcomes from Wismar had to be obtained by the students overseas as well. Therefore, a solution was found to both respect the learning outcomes of Wismar, and the Indonesian style of educating.

3.3 Managing the TNE project

3.3.1 Build-up phase

The TNE project in Indonesia could not start before an administrative issue was tackled. Furthermore, DAAD had to be convinced to fund the project. Before the double bachelor’s programme started, Wismar faced an issue with the future enrolment of the double bachelor’s students. Wismar succeeded to tackle these issue, and was also able to receive DAAD funding. Consequently, the project could start in 2011.

The administrative issue had to do with the enrolment of students. In order to save complicated red tape for the new programme offered abroad, Wismar decided to place the Marine Engineering programme with Wismar International Graduation Service Ltd (WINGS). This company already existed for other distance learning courses of the university and managed all enrolments for those courses.

Wismar established a task force to successfully establish the project. Part of their task was to apply for DAAD funding for the project. This was successfully done in 2010. The funding was given for four years, starting in 2011. However, in order to receive DAAD funding, several conditions had to be fulfilled.
Experiences with Transnational Education

- One of them is that the project should be provided on a collaborative basis. Wismar values this condition, as it requires them to really cooperate with the Indonesian partner.
- Another condition of DAAD was that there should be a clear link with Germany in the TNE programmes. Wismar has achieved this both for its teachers and for its students. For the teachers, seminars were organised in which academic staff of the home campus and from the TNE programme exchange views on teaching. Staff from the home campus moreover regularly flies to Indonesia. Wismar thus uses flying faculty as part of its TNE project. For the students, classes were organised on the socio-economic and cultural aspects of Germany.

In addition to funding, DAAD moreover arranged working groups for German institutions active in the field of TNE. In those working groups, problems and solutions are exchanged in order to learn from each other and they do not have to re-invent the wheel.

3.3.2 Consolidation phase

As the project is already running for several years, it has moved into a steady state. The numbers of enrolling students have increased and reached the envisioned level. Moreover, the first students are graduating and a part of them is continuing their studies at Wismar’s home campus. Wismar thus accomplished this goal (see 3.2.1 Motives). Although some administrational matters were improved in the first years of the project, Wismar sees that the bulk of the original ideas still exist. This idea was to establish a cooperation of two equal partners, contributing their own expertise to the project, and trusting each other on executing those parts of the project. The principle of collaboration that is part of DAAD’s conditions for funding thus became part of Wismar’s own TNE policy.

3.4 Evaluating the TNE project

3.4.1 Quality assurance

Wismar’s TNE project with ITS is subject to an external and internal quality assurance system. Moreover, it also complies with international guidelines for maritime studies, which is necessary for graduates before they can apply for a job in the maritime sector.24

The external quality assurance of the programme is arranged via accreditation of the German and Indonesian accreditors. Both accreditors have full competence on the programme and both have to give their approval to the programme, as it would otherwise not be possible to award a double degree. From the German side, the Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency (ZEvA) and from the Indonesian side, the National Accreditation Board for Higher Education (BAN-PT), gave their approval to the programme.

24 These guidelines can be found in the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers drafted by the members of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).
Experiences with Transnational Education

The internal quality assurance system of the project is arranged according to the principle of cooperation. The parts of the curriculum in which Wismar has the most expertise, are internalised in the system of Wismar. However, the parts in which ITS has expertise, are part of ITS’ quality assurance. In the case of overlapping courses, teachers of Wismar and ITS exchange information and examiners jointly assess the quality. Exams of overlapping courses are likewise jointly drawn up.

The fact that both Wismar and ITS used the same international quality assurance system for management, ISO 9001, contributed to an easy cooperation in quality assurance between the two institutes.

3.4.2 Successes

The main success of the project was to contribute to an improvement of maritime education in Indonesia. Furthermore, Wismar set up two new research projects with Indonesian HEIs as a result of the TNE project. Wehner sees this certainly as an accomplishment, as the programme was only running three years before the two additional research projects started. Moreover, the cooperation has also enabled the possibility for cooperation between PhD students of the two institutes.

3.4.3 Lessons learned

Wismar indicated four main lessons learned in the course of the projects:

- Without an employee permanently present at the partner’s institute, “the project would not run,” as Wehner states. Wismar decided to open an own office at ITS with this permanent employee from the start of the programme in 2011. This employee eases the communication between the two institutions, which enhances the capability to tackle problems quickly.
- In advance, it is necessary to gain the full support of the home campus. In order to achieve this, Wismar selected teachers that would be committed for the whole project.
- The importance of familiarising yourself with the intercultural differences. Examples of that are the differences in the understanding of quality of education (see 3.2.3 Risks) and conducting science. With regard to the latter, Indonesian students are used to a high level of guidance during their research projects. In Germany, students have to do their research independently. The same holds for the difference in attitude towards the use of data. Indonesian students appeared to be less critical towards information found online. The students thus had to be taught to independently conduct research, with a critical attitude towards data.
- Wismar stresses the importance of writing down all agreements, instead of merely using verbal agreements. In the beginning, Wismar discovered that some of the local authorities and industrial partners sometimes did not comply with what was verbally agreed. Therefore, it switched to writing down every agreement. Wismar did this for precautionary reasons, and was not affected by any non-compliance of partners.
3.4.4 Future

The TNE project on Marine Engineering has reached its goal with regard to the number of students and it has contributed to Wismar’s aim to internationalise its institution. The process of internationalisation does not stop however, as another educational collaboration with the Indonesian partners is being established. Thereby, Wismar wants to strengthen its global position in maritime studies even further.

With regard to the future of the maritime programme, Wismar wants to stay at the current level of students and wants to focus on keeping students and alumni enthusiastic about the programme. Consequently, they can become ambassadors for the project, which will attract other students to apply for the programme. Furthermore, these ambassadors could contribute to the international reputation of Wismar.

Concerning the further internationalisation of Wismar, it is starting a new TNE project in Indonesia, as well as expanding its other activities in Indonesia. The new TNE project is aimed at maritime education as well. The idea is to enhance the Indonesian education for sailors with the Marine Engineering programme’s partner ITS and PoliMarin, which is the research centre Wismar was asked to establish by the German federal government (see 3.2.2 Partners).

Due to the good experience Wismar had with ITS and PoliMarin, it decided to initiate a new double degree bachelor’s programme for future sailors. This new TNE project has so far been very complex for Wismar, as there are German, Indonesian and international rules to be respected in the establishment of education for sailors. Nevertheless, Wismar trusts that it will succeed. In the meantime DAAD has already granted funding for the project, which contributes to Wismar’s believe that the new TNE project will become a success.

3.5 Conclusion

In sum, Wismar has established a successful bachelor’s course with its Indonesian partner. In the preparation phase, Wismar selected the best partner for the project it wanted to initiate. The initial idea of cooperating is still visible in the project, both in the distribution of teaching courses and assessing them. Moreover, differences in ways of teaching and researching were overcome via a solution to which both partners could agree.
# Experiences with Transnational Education

## Factsheet – Hochschule Osnabrück

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| Shanghai University of International Business and Economics (SUIBE) | Location           | Shanghai, China |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| **Type of transnational education**                                | Collaborative provision (double degree programme) |
| **Foundation year**                                                 | 2004               |
| **Type of programme**                                               | International Event Management |
| **Number of students**                                              | 275-300            |
| **Tuition fees (semester)**                                         | € 880              |
| **Position in relation to the home campus**                         | The programme is a joint venture between Hochschule Osnabrück and Shanghai University of Business and Economics |

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4 Hochschule Osnabrück

4.1 Introduction

This case study looks at a relatively small university in Germany that received a good offer to initiate a TNE project in Shanghai. It shows how the project was successfully implemented for Chinese students, and in addition contributed to the internationalisation of Hochschule Osnabrück. For the case study, Helmut Schwägermann, initiator of the project and coordinator of the project until 2015, and Kim Werner, who succeeded Schwägermann as director of the IEMS programme in 2015, were interviewed.

4.2 Initiating transnational education

4.2.1 Motives

Osnabrück did not have any plans or motives to proactively become involved in the field of TNE. However, in 2003 it received an offer to initiate an international bachelor’s course in event management. More information on the content of that offer can be found under the subsequent heading.

The university itself was initially not very enthusiastic to start the TNE project (see 4.2.3 Risks). However, Helmut Schwägermann believed that the offer could be very interesting opportunity for the university to internationalise and to become aware that it could also be globally active. He already had experience with joint ventures, which became the later legal structure of the TNE project, and likewise with working in China. Therefore, he decided to try to convince Hochschule Osnabrück to accept the offer and start the International Event Management Shanghai (IEMS) programme. He succeeded and consequently, the programme received its first students in 2004.

One can argue that Osnabrück ceased an opportunity that arose, instead of having a prior strategy to establish a TNE project.

4.2.2 Partners

In the establishment phase, Osnabrück had two main partners: the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Shanghai University of International Business and Economics (SUIBE).

In 2003, SUIBE approached the Chinesische Zentrum Hannover, a German NGO based in Lower Saxony, as it was looking for a partner that could offer an international course in event management. Hochschule Osnabrück is located in Lower Saxony, and was consequently approached with an offer to initiate a joint venture with SUIBE to offer this course. Osnabrück was at that time one of the few institutions being specialised in event management.
DAAD was at that time funding projects that exported German higher education. Osnabrück applied for funding and believes it received funding because of the following three elements of the proposal:

- The programme was unique. It was the first German programme in China and the first event management course offered abroad.
- The geographic and economic position of Shanghai might offer other opportunities for Germany as a country in the long run. As a government agency, DAAD was willing to support such an initiative.
- The proposal put a large emphasis on the envisioned quality assurance system of the programme.

Osnabrück thus needed these two partners, as the TNE project would not have been possible without them. Without SUIBE, there would not have been an offer to establish the programme. Without DAAD, adequate funding would not have been acquired.

4.2.3 Risks

When Osnabrück received the offer, there was much opposition from within the university.

- Primarily, Osnabrück saw the risk of a possible failure of the project, if an insufficient amount of students would apply for the programme. This risk of failure was coped with by initially relying on SUIBE’s reputation in China to attract enough students.
- A financial risk was also foreseen and was coped with via DAAD funding.

Osnabrück really worried about a possible risk of failure. The university was afraid that Chinese students would not embrace the programme. This risk was fuelled by the lack of experience with cooperating with Chinese partners, by lack of the knowledge of the functioning of the Chinese educational system in general and by the lack of experience with educating Chinese students. Additionally, some of Osnabrück’s teaching staff had a limited capacity of English. Moreover, the limited level of English of the future Chinese students worried the university as well.

In order to cope with this risk, Osnabrück would rely on the reputation of SUIBE in China to attract enough students. Moreover, the programme would be internationally orientated, and combine both event and business management. These were the main elements of Osnabrück’s plan to offer an attractive programme for Chinese students. Additionally, the selected teaching staff formed an enthusiastic team that was willing to take up the challenge.

Osnabrück was initially unaware of the fact that the risk of failure was likewise coped with because of the fix Chinese hierarchical system for university admissions. In China, students have to pass the so-called gao kao, which is a test that serves as the main input for the student’s admission to a university. Students are in this system solely allowed to apply for

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26 As can be read in chapter 3, the current funding schemes of DAAD are focussed on collaborative provision, instead of solely exporting German higher education.
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one top-class university. SUIBE, and therefore the IEMS programme, was not such a university and it consequently received many applications from very good students who were not admitted to the top universities of China.

As the former risk was coped with, the university also saw a financial risk. The project should generate a turnover that would consequently allow the project to be self-sustaining. Therefore, Osnabrück firstly evaluated the option of franchising the programme, instead of signing a contract for a joint venture. However, Osnabrück was not prepared for the alternative of a franchising agreement.

Franchising the programme would mean that Osnabrück had to export the entire programme in English. Although some courses were already taught in English at Osnabrück’s home campus, all other courses of the programme were not. As the programme was intended to start already a year after Osnabrück received the offer of SUIBE, Osnabrück deemed it impossible to offer the entire programme itself in English.

Moreover, SUIBE preferred a joint venture. As SUIBE made the offer, Osnabrück did not think it was in a position to demand a change in the legal structure. In the end, the university convinced itself that the collaborative provision, via a joint venture, was the best solution possible. Finally, the aforementioned DAAD funding secured sufficient income to cover the relatively high initial costs.

Apart from the fact that Osnabrück did not think it was in a position to ask for an alternative legal structure, it can also be argued that it did not want to take a risk in preparing a programme fully in English in a very short amount of time. Partnering up with SUIBE was easier and perhaps less risky than exporting the programme on a solitary basis.

4.3 Managing the TNE project

4.3.1 Build-up phase

The TNE project was formally started by signing a contract for the joint venture of the IEMS programme. This contract was based on an equal distribution of tasks and an equal contribution of costs. However, in the first couple of years of the programme, Osnabrück contributed more to the programme than its Chinese partner SUIBE.

- The costs for mobility of staff were rather high. With low revenue from tuition fees, due to low initial numbers of students, the DAAD funds were necessary to cover the first years.
- SUIBE could initially not offer all courses that were agreed to be taught by SUIBE. Therefore, Osnabrück had to take care of these courses.
- SUIBE demanded that all courses were taught in Shanghai. Osnabrück however did prefer to add a semester abroad. On that point the Germans had to give in, as it would be too costly for Chinese students to move abroad for a semester.

Although the first and last points were envisioned before the programme started, Osnabrück had to tackle the issue of offering more courses than initially agreed. It can be argued that
the university was probably surprised by this need to teach more courses, though it was able to address the issue quickly.

4.3.2 Consolidation phase

As the programme matured, the division of tasks between Osnabrück and SUIBE balanced again. Moreover, Osnabrück did not need DAAD as a financial partner anymore. Because revenues increased, Osnabrück decided to not reapply for DAAD funding. Osnabrück had an opportunity to apply for a second grant, but wanted the project to become self-sustaining. Moreover, the paper work for a new application was rather demanding for the programme’s personnel resources. DAAD, one of the partners Osnabrück needed to establish the project (see 4.2.2 Partners), was thus not needed anymore.

4.4 Evaluating the TNE project

4.4.1 Quality assurance

With regard to the internal quality assurance system, Osnabrück implemented a strict system from the start of the programme onwards, as the university indicated in the application for DAAD funding (see 4.2.2 Partners). In addition to the regular evaluations of students’ performances, Osnabrück’s management team evaluated the management team of IEMS programme as well. Moreover, it provided a benchmark for teachers’ performance according to students.

Osnabrück was keen on this internal quality assurance system, as it did not want to lower its German standards for rewarding the degree certificates. The learning outcomes had to be fulfilled in a similar way in Shanghai as in Osnabrück.

Two external actors arranged the programme’s external quality assurance system. Similarly to Wismar’s TNE project in Indonesia (see 3.4.1 Quality assurance), Osnabrück had to receive approval of the German accreditor ZEvA. ZEvA initially accredited the IEMS programme in 2005 and reaccredited the programme in 2010. Additionally, equal to UoN’s campus in China (see 2.4.1 Quality assurance), Osnabrück had to receive approval of the Chinese Ministry of Education, which it did before the start of the programme.27

4.4.2 Successes

The TNE project of Hochschule Osnabrück has had four main successes:

- The university sees the establishment of the programme itself is a success. In 2008, the first students graduated. They were highly satisfied with the programme, had high success rates in applications for continued education, and had high employment rates compared to students graduating from Chinese universities.

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- With the tenth anniversary of the TNE project in 2014, Osnabrück saw that it has built up a good reputation in the field of event management in China.
- The university has also internationalised itself through the TNE project. Osnabrück used to be a university focussed on its own region. With the IEMS programme, it has become aware of its global impact and presence. Teachers of Osnabrück regularly fly to Shanghai to teach courses. These are teachers who might not have educated students abroad before. The experiences these teachers had with teaching in Shanghai also contributed to their courses taught in Osnabrück.
- Osnabrück initiated a spring-off of the IEMS programme in 2011 with the University of Hefei, China. This TNE project was initiated by a former teaching staff member of the IEMS programme. Inspired by the IEMS programme, he started a cooperation with the University of Hefei in logistics. The project is called LOGinChina.28

4.4.3 Lessons learned

Osnabrück has learned the following four lessons during the course of its TNE project in Shanghai:

- As the TNE project only consisted of one programme, the enthusiasm and commitment of the team is crucial for the success of the programme.
- Offering education abroad leads to a clash of different educational systems. Nevertheless, Osnabrück insisted on maintaining the academic standards that it uses at the home campus. For example, Chinese students and lecturers were used to copying texts for their theses. Moreover, their writings lacked any dissemination or any inclusion of academic writing skills. As this was noticed, Osnabrück convinced SUIBE that the students should comply with the German standards on academic integrity and should be able to independently write their theses. The first cohort of students had to follow additional courses on academic writing. Moreover, teachers received additional training according to these academic standards as well. For the subsequent years, an integrated plan for the training of writing skills was developed and implemented. Osnabrück considered itself responsible for not notifying this matter earlier in the process.
- The establishment became a success because the university treated the students as clients of a service. Osnabrück wanted to know what their preferences were, in order to be able to satisfy them, by offering them good opportunities for a good career.
- The university was initially not looking for new research opportunities with its TNE project. Nevertheless, as the first years passed by, a desire emerged to establish a research centre linked to the IEMS programme. Helmut Schwägermann believed that there was much information still unknown about international event management. It took however until the tenth anniversary of the programme, in November 2014, before a research centre was founded.

4.4.4 Future

Originally, the programme was only offered to Chinese students and exchange students from Osnabrück. However, as the programme gained its international reputation, and as SUIBE has some problems with offering a sufficient amount of English-taught courses, SUIBE recently asked if foreign students of SUIBE’s other programmes could apply to the IEMS programme as well. Osnabrück wholeheartedly welcomed this opportunity, as it wanted to be as international with the programme as possible from the start of the programme onwards.

4.5 Conclusion

In the eleven years that Hochschule Osnabrück and SUIBE have been cooperating, the IEMS programme has grown from a good offer of a Chinese university to a German university, to a programme with an international reputation in its field of expertise. The initial risks were coped with, and several successes have been accomplished. Most importantly, the project has created a global awareness of Hochschule Osnabrück, a university that used to be aimed at its own region instead of achieving an international impact.
5 Concluding remarks

5.1 Introduction

This chapter sums up the main differences and similarities observed between the case studies in this report. Chapter two assessed the international branch campus (IBC) of the University of Nottingham (UoN) in China and Malaysia. Chapter three looked at the double degree programme in marine engineering of Hochschule Wismar and Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember (ITS) in Indonesia. Chapter four analysed the double degree programme in event management of Hochschule Osnabrück and Shanghai University of International Business and Economics (SUIBE) in China. The following sections are structured similar to the sub topics addressed in the case studies on the three higher education institutions (HEIs).

5.2 Similarities

5.2.1 Motives

- It can be concluded that money cannot and should not be a motive for initiating TNE, as Roger Woods of UoN stated. The assessment of the two German HEIs also follows that line, considering their ambition to make the TNE projects cost-efficient instead of profitable. Moreover, this line of reasoning is also supported by the fact that the legal structures of all TNE projects assessed have a not-for-profit basis.

- Exploring new possibilities for the research agenda of a university is a shared motive of two of the interviewed institutions. For UoN, the two locations of its IBCs enabled more research opportunities in terms of affected people and a larger absolute improvement of the quality of life for the local population. For Hochschule Wismar, as with many German HEIs, broadening the international dimension of research projects was a motive to initiate the TNE project.

- The potential impact of TNE in educational terms also seems to motivate HEIs to initiate TNE projects. For example, all three institutions wanted to offer a style of teaching that was not traditional for the host country. Thereby, they wanted to educate a new generation of students and contribute to the quality of education in general.

- TNE is moreover seen as a means to enhance internationalisation processes of a HEI, both in order to improve the global position, as to internationalise the experience of studying at the home campus.

5.2.2 Risks

- UoN and Osnabrück both saw a financial risk, as they both could not use the resources that were assigned to them for the provision of higher education in their home countries. Both institutions therefore looked for external resources. UoN agreed that its Chinese partner WEG was financing the set-up phase of the IBC, and that UoN would contribute financially via the tuition fees that would increase as the programme was running. Osnabrück found another solution, via an application for funding at the DAAD.
5.2.3 Build-up and consolidation phase

- All HEIs assessed in the case studies initially started their TNE project small. For example, UoN already had experience in other forms of TNE, such as articulation, and likewise had another IBC in Malaysia before it started its TNE project in China. Moreover, the campus in China was also starting with a limited amount of disciplines and a limited geographical scope for recruitment. The campus expanded from this basis to the current broad campus it currently is, attracting students from all over Asia. The two German HEIs were on the contrary new to the field of TNE, but therefore only started with one single programme.

5.2.4 Quality assurance

- The three TNE projects analysed in this report all dealt with two external accreditors: the accreditation organisation of the home country and the one of the host country.
- Internally, all three HEIs internalised the quality assurance of their overseas programmes into the system of the home institution. It can be stated that UoN does not even see a difference between the audits in Nottingham or Ningbo. All courses are led by the same standards, and employers are flown around the world for internal audits. Osnabrück likewise has implemented a strict internal system, also to ensure the funding of DAAD.

5.2.5 Successes

- All HEIs indicated that the support from the home campus for the project was essential for the success of the project. UoN created incentives to make the project appealing for its staff, convincing them to contribute to the education offered overseas.
- The important role individuals play is visible in all three projects analysed. For UoN, this was the influence of the main executive who introduced the right partner from China, and had a commitment to internationalise the university. Due to the small scale of Wismar’s and Osnabrück’s TNE projects, the teams involved were small. Therefore, the individuals in these small teams had to remain enthusiastic about and fully committed to the projects in order to succeed. In addition, both the fact that Wismar has a permanent officer in Indonesia present and the fact that Osnabrück would not have started its TNE project without the professor that convinced the institution to start it.

5.2.6 Lessons learned

- In the cases analysed, there seems to be a consensus about the need to learn from past experiences. UoN even pleads for an expert panel that can assist newcomers in the establishment of TNE projects and can help them assess offers they might get from foreign universities to establish a TNE project. Furthermore, in Germany, DAAD organises seminars for institutions engaged in the field of TNE. Moreover, this report also attempts to contribute to that process, by presenting in-depth analyses of existing projects.
- All three HEIs assessed encountered a difference in style of education. UoN already noticed this upfront when it was still thinking about offering a hybrid programme
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with Chinese and UK styles of education combined. However, UoN discovered that there was demand for such a programme and that there was much interest in the UK style of education. The two German HEIs also noticed the difference in the way of how they were used to educate students, and what could be expected from them. Both Wismar and Osnabrück indicated that students in their TNE programmes faced problems with individually performing research with a critical attitude towards conducting their theses.

5.3 Differences

5.3.1 Initiating transnational education

- Whereas UoN and Wismar were actively looking for TNE opportunities, Osnabrück was asked due to its reputation in the field of event management. It can consequently be stated that TNE projects can be started with a prior TNE strategy, such as UoN and Wismar had. Moreover, it is also possible to cease an opportunity to establish a TNE project if that opportunity arises, as Osnabrück did.

5.3.2 Partners

- Germany seems to be an exception to the rule of not using public money for foreign educational activities. Whereas UoN is not allowed to use its public resources from the UK government for its TNE activities, the German institutions both used public money from the DAAD scheme to establish their programmes.

5.3.3 Risks

- UoN and Wismar both saw a potential risk in letting a partner provide parts of the educational programme. However, they both found a different solution to cope with this risk. On the one hand, UoN did not want to be harmed in its reputation because an educational partner would deliver its part in a different, possibly worse way than UoN itself would do. Therefore, it agreed with its Chinese partner that UoN would have full academic control and responsibility on the content taught at its IBCs. On the other hand, Wismar also seemed to be reserved in its enthusiasm with regard to the content of the collaborative programme taught by its Indonesian partner. Instead of agreeing to offer every part of the course itself, Wismar chose to invest in exchange of information between the two institutions before the TNE project started. It can be argued that Wismar thus invested in building trust and a good relationship between itself and its Indonesian partner ITS to mitigate this risk.

- Although the two solutions of UoN and Wismar to the same risk are different, this is also more logical seen the type of TNE they chose to offer. Whereas UoN’s IBC was more a stand-alone activity, Wismar’s double degree programme was based on cooperation. Consequently, it is not possible to offer a programme by one institution if the TNE project is aimed to be collaborative provision of TNE.

5.3.4 Quality assurance

- Whereas the German HEIs share academic control with their respective foreign partners, UoN has full academic control over its TNE activities. This difference is
however explained by the category of TNE in which the projects are placed, as described in chapter one. The German institutions provide the courses collaboratively, instead of independently. Therefore, it is not surprising that they likewise share the quality assurance and control of the content of the programmes.

5.4 Suggestion for further research

The case studies analysed in this report are examples of how HEIs are active in the field of TNE. Consequently, this report serves as a portfolio of how ‘it is done’ by others. What might have strengthened this report is the inclusion of institutions that are hesitant about the continuation of their TNE projects. As these case studies would present information on the motives to end TNE projects, this report could have been able to also present examples of ‘how it should not be done’.

Although institutions with such TNE projects have been approached during the case selection for this report, it was not possible to conduct interviews with representatives of these institutions. Seen the lessons newcomers in the field of TNE could learn from terminated TNE projects, further research on these instances is worthwhile.
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