



The University of  
Nottingham



# The University Plan 2007-2010

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Located on our Jubilee campus and funded by an anonymous benefactor, 'Aspire' is Britain's tallest free-standing work of public art and makes a strong statement about the University's future.



## From the Vice-Chancellor

“The University of Nottingham shares many of the characteristics of the world’s great universities. However, we are distinct not only in our key strengths but in *how our many strengths combine*: we are financially secure, campus-based and comprehensive; we are research-led and recruit top students and staff from around the world; we are committed to internationalising all our core activities so our students can have a valuable and enjoyable experience that prepares them well for the rest of their intellectual, professional and personal lives.”

*Professor David Greenaway, Vice-Chancellor*



## Our Mission and Values

The University of Nottingham aspires to be **among the world's greatest universities** and distinguished for its international reach, its commitment to learning and its world-class research.

**Research excellence** lies at the core of our mission because we believe this defines a world-class university and provides the best context for excellent teaching. We will attract and retain staff committed to exemplary teaching and knowledge discovery focused on world-changing initiatives.

We are committed to a varied, accessible and **stimulating learning environment**, capable of developing students' knowledge, skills and employability, and will educate the **very best students**, regardless of country of origin or financial need, and offer a global learning experience.

We will remain focused on being **truly international** because we believe that in the 21st century this will be the key to success in terms of the quality of our research and our graduates. As a result of our international approach to research and teaching we will be a significant catalyst for improvement in the quality of life across the world.

### In pursuing our mission, we believe in:

- The value of learning and knowledge for their own sake and for the social and economic benefit they can bring.
- Providing teaching by staff who are active in, and renowned for, their research and committed to teaching in their subjects.
- The freedom of all academic staff to follow their academic interests as a basic requirement for engaging in research and teaching of the highest quality.
- Building international links to benefit research and learning.
- Promoting equal access and opportunity for staff and students.
- Supporting student involvement in productive non-academic activity.
- Preserving a strong financial base to ensure the sustainability of our mission.
- Respecting ethical requirements and our responsibilities towards the range of communities that are close to the University, and that we engage with.





# Introduction

Nottingham is one of the UK's leading universities and our distinctive research mission is well known internationally. We excel in knowledge transfer, have a long history of excellence in teaching, and our international strategy sets us apart in its ambition, depth and achievement.

## **Focus on research**

The University has opened more esteemed research centres like the Centre for Sustainable Energy Technologies (CSET) in China and the David Greenfield Human Physiology Unit in Nottingham.

Our strength is confirmed by external assessments, especially the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise and the 2005 QAA Institutional Audit, and our growing success in securing peer reviewed research awards. We are especially proud of Professor Keith Campbell in the School of Biosciences, who has been named joint winner of one of the most prestigious scientific prizes in the world, the 2008 Shaw Prize for Life Science and Medicine, for his pioneering work in stem cell research. He joins distinguished researchers including Professor Sir Peter Mansfield and Professor Sir Clive Granger, who both won Nobel Prizes in 2003, and who spent much of their careers at Nottingham and remain closely connected to the University. Our international strategy has its most visible successes in the two international campuses in Malaysia and China and this was recognised by the THES Higher Education Institution of the Year Award in 2006.

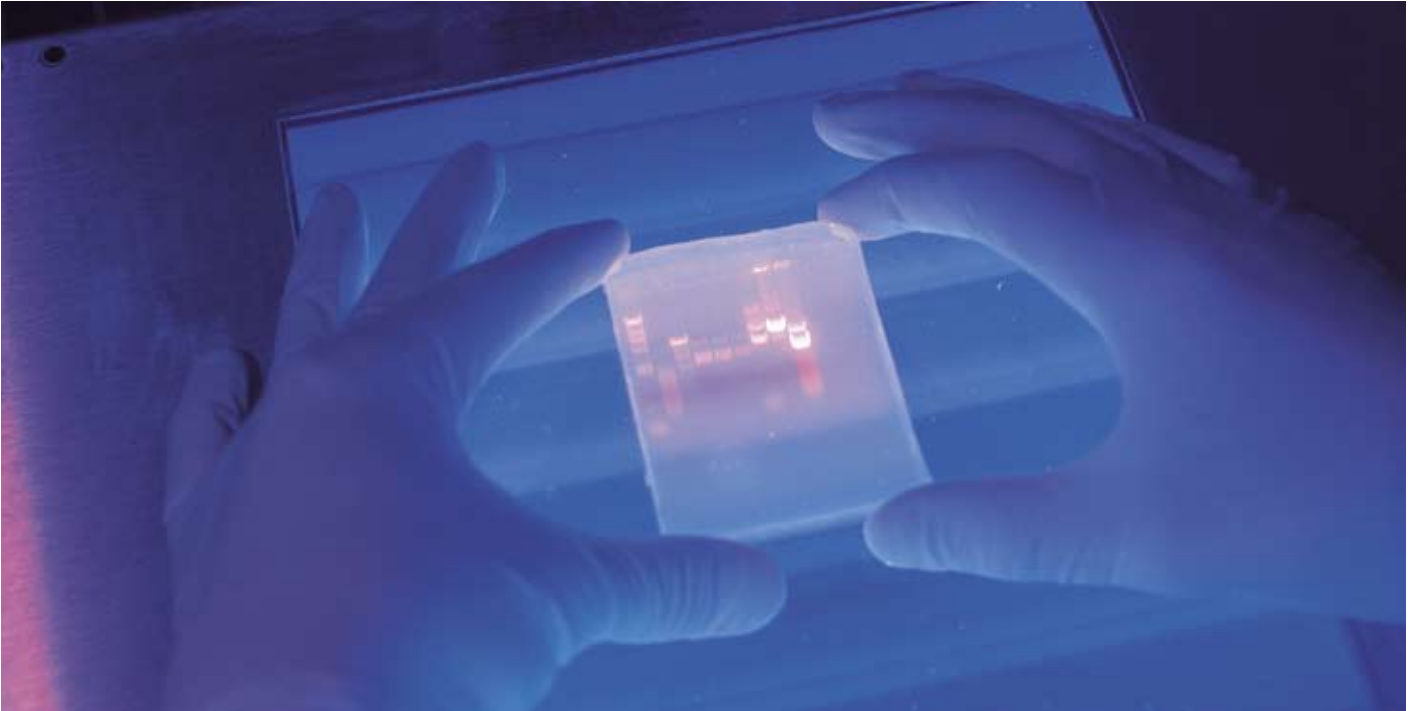
The environment we operate in has become more challenging. Student recruitment has become more volatile both for home and international students. In the longer term, international markets are likely to become more competitive as countries develop their own higher education systems and new educational providers enter the field. Research funding and the cost of equipment and facilities affect competitiveness, especially in science, engineering and medicine.

Like other leading UK research universities, the Government's Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) is our single largest source of income. Their policy is to keep public funding for universities stable in real terms. However, given other Government priorities public funding probably won't increase in the near future. We support the Government's ambition to encourage a wider range of people to attend university, to give students more flexibility in how they study, and for employers to be more involved in the development and delivery of courses.

Nottingham is well placed to prosper in this more competitive environment. We have a very broad range of disciplines, so we can adapt to changing patterns of student demand, and have recently extended our academic coverage, notably in veterinary medicine and sciences and Chinese studies. Despite heightened competition for international students, we increased the number of international students we accepted for three consecutive years. In research, we received record levels of new funding in the last few years and remain highly successful in attracting income from industry. Our campuses attract many students, and the international campuses give us a unique way to enhance the learning experience of students on Nottingham-based courses. In the longer term this will help us to remain competitive despite a fall in international demand.

The higher home undergraduate fee from 2006 means the University's income from UK students increased, as they make up most of our student body. Since 2005, the Government has changed the way it funds research with the introduction of full economic costing, which to date has had a substantial positive impact on our research income. These changes will help to secure our financial base.

This plan sets out our strategies for meeting these challenges over the next few years. They will improve our position in the core areas of research, knowledge transfer, the student experience and internationalisation and help us realise our ambition to be recognised as one of the leading universities in the world.



# Research, Knowledge Transfer and Commercialisation

Research excellence drives our reputation and international standing. It also underpins excellence in teaching, which allows us to attract the best staff and students who, in turn, maintain the University's quality and contribute to society and to wealth creation.

## **Leading the field**

Opened in 2006, the School of Veterinary Medicine and Science is a leader in national and international veterinary medicine.



We believe the best research comes from scholars who are strong in their own disciplines, though an increasing amount of our activity takes place in initiatives that combine several academic fields, where we have focused recent investments.

These include academic appointments, improved IT infrastructure and a spending programme of more than £50 million. Postgraduate students also make a vital contribution to research and we intend to increase substantially their number and provide greater support through the Graduate School.

While we actively support curiosity-driven fundamental research, we are also committed to applied research to create wealth and for the public good. Some 15% of our research income comes from working with industry and businesses, and we will develop these links further to ensure research innovation is moved rapidly to the market place. We are also a leading supporter of student enterprise, since we want to be sure our graduates are equipped to succeed in an entrepreneurial and commercial world.

In spring 2008 we launched a comprehensive review of our Research and Knowledge Transfer portfolio to ensure we are appropriately positioned to succeed in a rapidly changing research environment. This will report in late autumn 2008 and will bring forward recommendations on our key medium term research priorities and the policies and investment required to succeed in delivering them.

In 2005 the government named six Science Cities, including Nottingham. With this title came opportunities to improve networks between research, industry and services, and to create new jobs and revenue. This gave the University the opportunity to link our teaching, research and knowledge-transfer activities to the wider issues of science, community and business. The University of Nottingham Innovation Park, which opens in 2008, will complement BioCity and become a key point of access to the research base of the University for businesses. It will maximise the chances that our science finds business support and a practical use to encourage regional innovation and new business ventures.

## Aims

- Sustain a motivated community of scholars, committed to outstanding research.
- Be a leader in the East Midlands region, work with others, and make the most of Nottingham's Science City status.
- Encourage interdisciplinary research in priority areas based on Research Committee assessment.
- Maximise opportunities resulting from involvement in the Energy Technology Institute.
- Provide excellent facilities, equipment and environments for research.
- Work with other international centres of research excellence.
- Attract international scholars to work with Nottingham staff.
- Increase and build on major industrial collaborations.
- Increase the proportion of postgraduate students.
- Continue to develop student enterprise activities.
- Increase research income and research margins.
- Enhance the commercialisation of research.

## Specific objectives

- Complete the comprehensive Review of Research and Knowledge Transfer and begin its implementation.
- Determine allocations of the research component of the University's Capital Investment Fund to support the University's Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy.
- Increase in the number of research collaborations, technology transfer activities, and personnel exchange programmes with U21 partners and other leading international universities.
- Increase the proportion of income received from Government Research Councils from 45% to 50% of our portfolio and maintain a sustainable research profile balance between government, UK charities, industry, EU funding and other sources.
- Develop a plan to increase the proportion of our postgraduate student population.



## The Student Experience

Our sight is fixed on offering the highest quality experience for students at all of our campuses, from their first contact with us, through learning, social, community and sporting activities, to graduation and beyond. This takes place in and is enhanced by attractive campus environments. As with research, an excellent student experience helps to attract the best staff and students and is essential to ensuring our quality and reputation into the future.

As reflected in the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy, our teaching has three main strengths: it is set in an international context, makes increasing use of modern technologies and most importantly is based on our research. At undergraduate level, the goal of our teaching strategy is to develop graduates who have a thorough grounding in their subject of study, are aware of research, have a critical approach to knowledge, can study independently, and have the skills and attributes to be successful in employment. At postgraduate level, our objective is to take students to the limits of their subject and to develop research skills so they are equipped to become leaders in their field. The University embraces new technologies for improving the learning experience at all levels.

Teaching is based on research in two ways. First, nearly all teaching is led by staff who are themselves active researchers and who bring that experience to their teaching. Second, teaching is informed by research into teaching itself. Through the four Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs), funded by HEFCE, and the Institute for Research into Learning and Teaching, we help to ensure that we provide the best possible teaching across the University.

A distinctive feature of Nottingham's diversity is our commitment to a rich international dimension to the University, which is increasingly built into the curriculum, and experienced through the range of nationalities and cultures across the University.

We continually work to ensure our teaching is supportive and inclusive so all students can succeed. We offer a broad range of services, to give a good support network for undergraduate and postgraduate students, both academically and for their general welfare. By providing a range of accommodation, sporting, cultural and social facilities, and a wide variety of opportunities to interact with and within the local community, we want to create the best possible student experience and, as a result, the best possible graduates. Some of the services and opportunities are delivered in partnership with the Students' Union, which has a distinctive and crucial role in this area. At Nottingham we listen to our students, and obtain their views through a variety of feedback mechanisms, such as the National Student Survey, because we believe they make a valuable contribution to policy development.

Our Access Agreement with the Office for Fair Access sets out our scheme to provide bursaries to undergraduate students from lower-income backgrounds. The scheme has been successful in attracting more low-income students and will be reviewed in 2008-09 to ensure that it remains appropriate to students' needs. Our commitment to a clear, fair bursary scheme, along with initiatives such as the award-winning Certificate in Health Sciences partnership with the University of Lincoln, reflect the importance we attach to the diversity of the student community and the contribution it makes to the overall student experience.

## Aims

- Implement the Learning and Teaching Strategy.
- Optimise our use of learning and teaching resources.
- Improve the student experience as measured by student feedback surveys.
- Enhance the curriculum, promoting better academic choices, rather than more choice.
- Enshrine in our practices the importance to the University of excellence in teaching.
- Develop coordinated strategies to ensure the quality of student recruitment, admissions, accommodation, and support.
- Make use of the work of the Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning throughout the University.
- Implement effective checks on the quality of our teaching and support services.
- Support students getting involved in productive non-academic activity.
- Continue to improve our bursary provision in line with best practice in the sector.

## Specific objectives

- Improve the average tariff score of new undergraduates (407 in 2007-08).
- Maintain our low drop-out rate (this is measured by the Higher Education Standards Authority for young entrants and was 3.5% in 2006-07).
- Determine allocations of the teaching component of the University's Capital Investment Fund to support the University's Teaching and Learning Strategy.
- Implement the first phase of the Nottingham Award, recognising the skills and learning acquired by students in activities outside their core academic programme.
- Prepare for the Quality Assurance Agency's Institutional Audit of Nottingham in the autumn of 2009.



## Internationalisation

Nottingham is helping define what it means to be an international university. For us it means doing research that addresses global human concerns and social problems, attracting dedicated staff and top students from around the world, and having our own campuses in several countries.

The main purpose of our internationalisation strategy is to provide globally excellent and internationally relevant teaching, research and knowledge transfer activities to our key external stakeholders. The strategy emphasises breadth and diversity of activity and seeks to embed an international dimension across the range of University activity. In achieving these purposes, our internationalisation strategy will establish the University of Nottingham as a leading global university and give us a competitive advantage over universities in the UK and Europe.

We believe that being truly international will be a key to success in the 21st century, so we invested in this area with greater depth and imagination than most universities worldwide.

This is most visible in the large numbers of international students at Nottingham and our two international campuses in Malaysia and China. We are justifiably proud of the international campuses, which have established a new model for the globalisation of university education. If we look across all of our campuses, more than a third of our thirty-six thousand students are from outside the United Kingdom. These campuses provide Nottingham staff and students with a range of study and travel opportunities. Through traditional forms of recruitment, we provide study opportunities for UK students to gain experience of working with colleagues from around the globe. Programme mobility and distance learning enable us to deliver specific educational programmes in a number of locations to better serve less mobile students.

By recruiting permanent and visiting international academic staff and incorporating globally relevant content and skills into our curriculum, we will ensure that students receive a genuinely international education that gives them a unique opportunity for success within the global employment market. Our involvement in networks such as Universitas 21 allows us to work with the world's best scholars across all areas of activity, and we intend to develop and enhance such teaching and research partnerships.

Finally, we take our broader social responsibility as an international university seriously. We will continue to contribute to the development of the higher education capacity within the developing world through a variety of activities including scholarships, flexible programme delivery, research partnerships and expert volunteering.

## Aims

- Expand and enhance the teaching and research at the campuses in Malaysia and China to ensure that within five years each is recognised as the leading institution for both teaching and research within their regional context.
- Recruit high-quality international students to Nottingham, backed by an innovative scholarship programme.
- Develop new and existing international research and teaching partnerships, paying particular attention to emerging regions.
- Build partnerships and links to support capacity building in higher education (both teaching and research) in the developing world.
- Maximise the opportunities for all students to study outside the UK, through inter-campus, U21, summer school and other exchanges, to give them a distinct advantage in the international employment market.
- Explore the greater integration of an international dimension within the curriculum to benefit those students who are unable to exploit mobility opportunities.

## Specific objectives

- Ensure the successful launch of undergraduate engineering in China and develop a pipeline of new courses for future expansion at both UNNC and UNMC.
- Progress the development of at least three new partnerships which will increase the flow of international students to the UK campus.
- Expand research activity at the international campuses with particular emphasis on increasing the volume of externally funded and collaborative research.
- Develop strategies to support an increase in the number of research collaborations, technology transfer activities, and personnel exchange programmes with U21 partners and other leading international universities.
- Lead an update of systems and processes to support the greater integration of activities between the UK and the international campuses.
- Ensure that we meet our current and future commitments in Malaysia and China with high-calibre staff and that we manage their reintegration to Nottingham effectively.





## Infrastructure and Environment

To support our research and teaching we need well managed and up to date buildings, equipment, and communication networks. Developing the University's estates is also important to us because they improve the quality of life of our staff and students.

### **David Wilson Millennium Eco-house**

The Eco-house is one of seven purpose-built, cutting edge projects at the School of the Built Environment on University Park.

Over the last decade we invested more than £320 million in new buildings and facilities and redeveloping old buildings and facilities across all of our campuses to improve research, teaching and support facilities. There have been several notable developments over the past year, including:

- A £30M development at Jubilee Campus, including phase 1 of the 'Innovation Park';
- A BASF experimental house on University Park; and
- A new Centre for Sustainable Energy Technologies building at the China Campus.

On the Jubilee campus In July 2008 we opened 'Aspire', Britain's tallest free-standing work of public art, which is about the University and the city making a bold statement about its future.

At Nottingham our commitment to the environment is more than symbolic. In recent years we have invested in new initiatives to support energy management, traffic management and recycling across all of our campuses and this is set to continue. One major project is that we will develop a transport strategy and car park charging programme in response to the city's plans to implement the Nottingham City Workplace Parking Levy in 2010.

Information services are an essential part of a modern university, just as much as buildings and open spaces. Maintaining a robust and leading-edge technical network and making sure that people can access information in traditional and electronic forms are vital for teaching and research. Our recent investments total more than £13 million over three years and include over £1 million on setting up a new Primary Data Centre and a similar amount on a new Manuscripts and Special Collections facility. We have also invested heavily in upgrading our information network, developing new technologies such as portals and mobile computing, and providing access to major electronic collections of historical works. We actively explore new technologies to enhance the learning environment such as online collaboration and social networking facilities. We are also redeveloping several library sites to provide state-of-the-art flexible learning and research environments, which benefit from the latest technology.

## Aims

- Continuously improve the infrastructure to enhance the student experience and support internationally competitive and interdisciplinary research.
- Increase our efforts to protect the environment and ensure those efforts get the recognition they deserve.
- Improve the way we use our buildings, including selling or demolishing buildings that we don't use.
- Continue the development of an Innovation Park.
- Manage, regulate and develop our networks and electronic services.
- Manage and improve our collection of research and teaching materials, making them available in as many ways as possible.

## Specific objectives

- Progress acquisition opportunities to extend the University's landholding at Jubilee Campus and the University of Nottingham Innovation Park.
- Assess the potential for relocating the School of Nursing from Derby Royal Infirmary to the new Derby City General Hospital, integrated with the University Graduate Entry Medicine building.
- Complete the new engineering research building at the Malaysia Campus by February 2009.
- Complete the construction of the 'GRACE' building at the University of Nottingham Innovation Park by spring 2010.
- Begin construction of the new Academic Building for Biosciences, Veterinary Sciences, and Environmental Sciences at Sutton Bonington for completion in summer 2010.
- Complete construction of the Institute of Population Health building (adjacent to the Clinical Sciences building, City Hospital) by spring 2010.
- Refurbish Levels 3 and 4 of Hallward Library to complete the updating of this central facility by September 2008.
- Implement a new Web content management system and refresh the look and feel of the University website.
- Implement the new videoconferencing strategy and introduce an 'intelligent classroom' pilot programme, deploying high-specification audiovisual, collaboration and communication technologies in teaching rooms.
- Introduce further identity and access management technologies underpinned by clear policies relating to role-based information and business system entitlements.



## Securing our Future

This plan covers the period 2008-2010, but in the longer term the University is committed to establishing itself in the top tier of global universities. This means maintaining the leadership, governance and financial strength needed for a secure future.

## Our ability to provide excellent research and teaching depends on our people, and we attribute much of our success to the quality of our academic and support staff.

The trends identified elsewhere in this plan, towards increased demands from Government funding bodies, our focus on developing international links, and more competition, mean that more than ever, we need to attract, retain, and motivate staff of the highest calibre. Support for curiosity-driven research, an innovative promotion strategy, competitive salaries and the opportunities offered to support the local community are among the features of life at Nottingham that staff particularly value. Some of our people will develop into the next generation of leaders and we will need to identify and prepare them so we can respond as an institution to the challenges we will face.

The way we secure funding is expected to change in the next few years. The increased fee for UK undergraduate students, together with predicted increases in international students, will increase the proportion of income from tuition fees. This in turn will increase the importance of recruiting high quality students each year. Additional income will come from the recently established School of Veterinary Medicine and Science, the Campaign for Nottingham and external income associated with the Innovation Park on the Jubilee Campus. Full economic costing of research has so far had a substantial positive impact on our research income. Meanwhile, our international campuses will start to make a net profit over the next few years. The Government may tighten higher education funding, and there is significant risk that the competition for international students will increase. This reinforces the need to maintain a strong underlying financial position.

## Equality and diversity are important for a vibrant scholarly community and for their own sake.

We value and respect all individuals in the university community and will do our best to create conditions in which all members of staff and students are treated solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential. This applies throughout the University, from the admission of undergraduates to the retirement of staff.

## Aims

- Ensure that the University returns a growing financial surplus.
- Ensure that the University maintains a borrowing facility that provides sufficient headroom over anticipated mid year borrowing peaks.
- Reduce the overall level of University borrowings by £5m each year, subject to unplanned land acquisitions.
- Improve the quality of the management team throughout the University.
- Identify and develop new leaders to make sure we have a large pool of home-grown future leadership talent.
- Support changes to staff profiles and roles post-RAE 2008.
- Increase incentives to improve performance in Schools.
- Prosecute a comprehensive and global Development Campaign.
- Make sure that all staff and students are treated fairly in order to meet our legal responsibilities and make the most of the diversity of our community.
- Make sure that we manage health and safety issues well throughout the University.

## Specific objectives

- Return a surplus of £8.0M in 2008/9, £11.6M in 2009/10, and £13.7M 2010/11.
- Develop our Leadership Development Programme to help staff who take up senior positions.
- Work together to build a strong Human Resources policy framework (based on good practice) by 2008.
- Improve the current Standard & Poor's credit rating of AA-.
- Keep the amount of interest we pay on money we have borrowed below 2% of annual turnover (half the level allowed in the Higher Education Funding Council for England Long Term Financial Covenant).
- Make sure all schools and support departments have a clear financial strategy with specific financial targets to 2009 to 10.
- Review administrative processes within and between Schools and Central Support Services and carry out any changes necessary to reduce administration costs by 5% over three years.
- Increase the proportion of female and ethnic minority staff in senior positions (21% and 7% respectively at January 2007).





## Meeting our Civic Responsibilities

We have always been strongly committed to the City of Nottingham and to our local communities. We have responsibilities that come with a high level of public funding, but individual members of the University also give their time to promoting the public good.

### **The Council House**

The University has a proud history of working closely with the City Council to improve and enhance the life of Nottingham and its communities.



Our campuses in general and the attractive 330 acre University Park in particular, are popular areas for recreation, both for those at the University and the local community.

It is important that the whole community takes pride in our environment. We recently won several awards for maintaining and improving our environment, including our fifth Green Flag Award (a national award given to the best public parks and green spaces), a Royal Horticultural Society Public Park Award for University Park and The Times Greenest Buildings citation for the Jubilee Campus.

We make links with the local community at many levels. The Active Communities initiative, together with Student Community Action, encourages staff and students to support their local communities through volunteering. We have introduced a Staff Volunteering Policy to encourage this. We support local people who want to continue their learning through an extensive programme of outreach activities. We encourage local involvement in the arts through the Lakeside Arts Centre. Because we accept that the increasing number of students who live off-campus may create some difficulty for local residents, we devote resources to make sure that we identify the concerns of local residents and create positive relationships between student and non-student residents. Working together with the Students' Union, we hold meetings with residents' associations, local councils, the police and other agencies.

We are the first university in the U.K (and in the Russell Group) to sponsor a City Academy, the Nottingham University Samworth Academy in Bilborough, which opens in 2009. The Academy will be a model of good practice in education and a centre for local community activities. We will continue to use research-based evidence to improve the quality of education throughout Nottingham and beyond, working with the Local Authority. In the year leading up to the Academy's opening we will work closely with them to provide exciting opportunities for learning.

## Aims

- Promote the importance and value of our contribution to the life of the city of Nottingham and its communities.
- Make sure that the value of staff and student volunteering activities to the University is more fully recognized and celebrated.
- Build a solid foundation for our work with the City Academy project.

## Specific objectives

- Carry out a study during 2008-09 to raise awareness among senior staff of the value of volunteering and find out how well the volunteering policy works.
- Set up and run a series of educational projects in Bilborough, so staff and students can prepare for the City Academy opening in 2009.



**The University of Nottingham Ningbo, China**

A view of the University's main administration building.



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