



## A Long-standing Partnership University of Plymouth

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### **The Plymouth-NSBM academic partnership has been a long-standing one. How do you view this academic partnership?**

The University of Plymouth values its partnership with NSBM highly indeed. NSBM is our largest transnational partnership and the cornerstone of the delivery of our mission, vision and principles with overseas partners. We are delighted that the partnership is going from

strength to strength, with new programmes in development that significantly broaden the scale and disciplinary reach of our collaboration. At the same time as institutions, we remain true to the principles upon which the partnership was founded and of which we at Plymouth are proud of : genuine partnership that respects the role of each institution and from which a model of higher education can develop that is culturally sensitive, appropriate to the country where it is delivered, and brings the best of each education system

together. Our vision remains as it always has been: a UK education framed by a Sri Lankan context delivered by academic staff from the University of Plymouth and colleagues from NSBM.

**As a relatively young university, NSBM has been able to expand the limits of the local higher education system. Where would you place the potential of the NSBM**



## Green University in the future?

We are well aware that NSBM is already the nation's premier degree awarding Higher Education Institute and South Asia's first green university. We are delighted to see NSBM growing rapidly, especially with its Phase II campus developments under the visionary leadership of its founder and Vice-Chancellor, Prof. E A Weerasinghe along with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Chaminda Rathnayake, and we are excited to see the accompanying expansion of NSBM's subject base and disciplines. Through the continued support of leading academic and non-academic staff, NSBM is broadening the range of students able to benefit from its unique '360-degree' higher education, its powerful blend of academic and real-world experiences aligned to current industry trends. The University of Plymouth is delighted to be supporting this significant portfolio development and, by ensuring a truly rich international

learning experience, assisting NSBM to achieve its ambition of providing exceptional global education locally. It is clear then that NSBM is rising to the challenge it has set itself 'to be Sri Lanka's best performing graduate school and to be recognized internationally' with vigor, imagination and energy.

## What new strategies would you suggest to strengthen the partnership between the two universities?

Universities are always going to be most successful when they are creating knowledge and pushing the boundaries of understanding as well as teaching. Universities have three key missions teaching, research and knowledge exchange applying the research. These are not separate activities but clearly symbiotic and each supports the other providing world-class opportunities for students.

As our partnership grows we look forward to future collaborations within both the research and sustainability agendas that are core principles for both institutions.

## Before the pandemic, the University of Plymouth flying faculty has been a prominent feature in the academic setup of NSBM. What are your thoughts on this model and what benefits both universities can gain through this?

The University is proud of our flying faculty model with NSBM, through which leading academics from Plymouth are able to work alongside both staff and students at NSBM and directly contribute





their knowledge into our joint programmes at NSBM. Academics working together building understanding across borders and cultures is at the heart of our mission in transnational education and cooperation. As such physical interaction in the shape of Flying Faculty will always be at the heart of our partnership. Yet the pandemic has taught us much about how we can supplement this through the use of technology to work even more closely together promoting sustained, interactive, engaging synchronous and asynchronous blended learning. And as institutions with global sustainability at the heart of

our mission, we should be excited about the possibilities for our globalised student experience to be supported through sustainable, digitally-backed practices that complement the unique and irreplaceable experience of face-to-face teaching.

**Another important feature of this academic partnership is the University of Plymouth Summer School. According to your viewpoint, what values and advantages are provided to the**

## **participants of this programme?**

The University always looks forward to welcoming students from NSBM to our campus here in Plymouth, Britain's Ocean City. It enables students to experience first-hand more of our academics and our facilities, to build lifelong friends through meeting Plymouth students from the UK and the rest of the globe and to experience our local community here in Plymouth. Global education is about broadening horizons, and time spent in Plymouth can be an introduction to the postgraduate opportunities open to students who want to come and spend more time in the UK on the completion of their studies in Sri Lanka, working for a further degree at the University of Plymouth.

## **NSBM is proudly celebrating the 5th anniversary this year, what message would you like to extend on this occasion?**

The University of Plymouth would like to congratulate NSBM on this milestone, pay tribute to its achievements so far, and wish it all the best for the next exciting stage of its journey. The University is proud of its partnership with NSBM and is looking forward to exciting future developments, further extending the strength and breadth of our partnership. It has been a privilege to be involved over the last 5 years, and we look forward to the future with excitement. ■



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