Open Universities: The Next Phase

Report of a Roundtable of Open University Executive Heads convened by
Contact North | Contact Nord and
held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada on 16 October 2017

Background

From the 1970s onwards, the open universities that were established in many countries transformed older practices of distance education by introducing media and technology into the teaching/learning process and organising large-scale systems for student support. One manifestation of this transformation was the decision of the International Council for Correspondence Education, at its congress in Vancouver in 1982, to change its name to 'The International Council for Distance Education (ICDE)'.

Thirty-five years later, in 2017, ICDE returned to Canada and held its world congress in Toronto as the *World Conference on Online Learning: ICDE 2017*. Both the title of the conference and the large attendance (1,400 delegates from 95 countries) that it attracted marked another milestone in the evolution of distance education: the steady shift to the use of online technologies. The growing availability of online systems and their ease of use have attracted large numbers of higher education institutions (HEIs) – a majority in some countries – to launch distance education programmes alongside their campus offerings.

This has created a new context for the world's open universities, which at least until 2000, mostly had a monopoly for the offering of distance learning at scale in their countries. Contact North | Contact Nord, as the organisation hosting ICDE 2017, thought that it would be valuable to take advantage of the conference to hold a separate 'Roundtable' of the executive heads (presidents, rectors, vice-chancellors) of open universities to discuss this new context. Attendance was limited to executive heads and held under the Chatham House Rule[1].

The Roundtable was convened by Maxim Jean-Louis, President – Chief Executive Officer of Contact North | Contact Nord (CN | CN), and facilitated by Sir John Daniel, former Vice-Chancellor of the UK Open University (1990-2001) and Professor Alan Tait, Professor Emeritus of Distance Education and Development, UKOU with the administrative support of Nicole Lalonde Pilon (CN | CN). CN | CN's Board Chair, Paul Taillefer, graciously opened the proceedings.

Preparations for the Roundtable began a year in advance with the identification of more than 50 open universities on all continents. Invitations were sent to the executive heads of these institutions in October 2016 and elicited 22 replies. The facilitators then canvassed this group in order to identify the topics of most concern to them and develop an appropriate agenda for the Roundtable. In particular, beginning in March 2017, Professor Tait interacted with most

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[1] Chatham House Rule: participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.

of the respondents through a questionnaire and telephone interviews. He distilled his findings into a 2,500-word overview 'Open Universities: the next phase', which was sent to the respondents on a 'not-for-distribution' basis before the Roundtable (Annex 1).

Some twenty executive heads had confirmed their attendance by September 2017. In the event, nine of them were able to participate in the Roundtable in Toronto on 16 October 2017 (Annex 2). The others had to withdraw, some at the last minute, because of delays in obtaining visas or for various family, political or institutional reasons. Restricting attendance to executive heads undoubtedly limited the number of open universities represented. However, the heads welcomed this opportunity to address issues with their peers in a private setting, which made for candid discussions.

The programme for the Roundtable was developed to profile the topics in which the executive heads expressed most interest. Its format reflected their desire to spend the day interacting with each other (Annex 3.). Therefore, apart from a short presentation by Professor Tait of his overview, 'Open Universities: the next phase', the day was wholly devoted to breakout and plenary sessions during which the participants could interact with each other.

Notes on the discussions

There was no rapporteur for the Roundtable. The following notes, which are arranged by the titles of the breakout sessions, were taken by the facilitators and will be expanded by input from the participants when this draft report is circulated.

Session A: Innovation for Evolving Missions
Open Universities have made openness and access a mainstream concern across Higher Education generally. How should they now innovate in their own missions to strengthen their reputations and social relevance?

Participants agreed that the OUs had made openness and access more important issues for HEIs generally, although in some countries, conventional HEIs were doing little to respond to it. They agreed that the SDGs had legitimised this goal of serving wider populations. The challenge is that the really big numbers of new students will be in Asia and Africa, where the OUs are already under significant enrolment pressure. Is there a limit to how large an OU can become without losing effectiveness? Should OUs be more ambitious?

Two of the OUs present now have face-to-face teaching streams on campus. In one case, this face-to-face cohort accounts for half the student enrolment. These on-campus cohorts bring the OU to the attention of parents and a wider population.

Session B: How are Open University student demographics shifting? What innovations are needed now?
The demographics of OU student bodies are changing in different ways – some towards older students, some towards younger students. What innovations are needed to serve these evolving clienteles?

While some OUs are seeing the median and average ages of their student body increase, and are having to adapt to the habits and attitudes of older learners, the general trend is in the

other direction. Most OUs are seeing an increase in younger students, though not usually in school leavers. These younger students are not always more technologically savvy – and they usually have less money to spend – than the older students.

Session C: Winning the Competition - effective and attractive ODL for today's world: innovations that work.
Technologies are expanding the options for ODL – which ones hold most promise?

Some of the OUs present are now teaching entirely online, whereas others are using printed materials. All have plans to increase their online teaching, but the main impression at this session was that IT is proving most useful in the administrative and student support functions. OUs using paper for teaching now have IT systems for admissions and the processing of assignments. By speeding up processes, these have positive impacts on student progression and retention. Those present felt that focussing technological innovation largely on pedagogy meant that more promising opportunities were sometimes missed. In the majority of countries, governments now authorise all HEIs to offer online and distance learning, putting considerable competitive pressure on the OUs. It is now rare for OUs to have a monopoly on offering higher education at a distance.

Session D: Mastering the use of technology at scale: sharing experiences
OUs must operate at scale – what are the implications?

The OUs present at the Roundtable operate at very different scales – and this does not always relate to the size of the country's population. Two of the OUs present had student bodies of similar size, even though the population in one of the two jurisdictions is twenty times larger than in the other.

It may be that some of the smaller OUs have handicapped themselves by adopting too fully the division of labour and specialisation of functions characteristic of the industrial model of the larger OUs. Also, it was surprising to find that, with the notable exception of the UKOU and its creation of FutureLearn, the OUs generally have not engaged much with MOOCs.

Session E: Collaboration and partnerships: sharing good and bad experiences.
Are there opportunities for collaboration among OUs?

It seems that most of the OUs present already have the partnerships they need. There is, for example, extensive course sharing between the state OUs in India. However, partnerships need close attention and management, even when the original agreements are clear. An OU that is formally a private institution has had some bad experiences in trying to collaborate with private sector organisations. The challenges of partnerships are several times greater when they are offshore.

Session F: Blending flexibility, quality and scale.
This is the fundamental challenge for OUs today. How do we achieve it?

Flexibility is good, but so is structure. One OU had improved its completion and retention rates dramatically simply by tightening up the regulations about start dates and completion deadlines. It is necessary to put reasonable obligations on students in order to make them give some priority to their studies.

Additional Comment: OUs and government relations

Whilst there was no session at the Roundtable on government relations, this vital aspect of OU management came up repeatedly. Most OUs have been the darling of their government at some stage in their development, but it is impossible to retain this status for decades as governments and their political ideologies change. Success in this vital relationship comes, not surprisingly, from trying to use the considerable power and reach of the OU to help government achieve its education and training goals. This will often mean shifting the focus of the academic staff, in particular, to new aims. The smaller OUs have special challenges and both the Canadian OUs have lived through near-death experiences, emphasising the absolute importance of nurturing the link between an OU and its government's priorities.

Nomenclature

A refrain throughout the day was that whereas most of the OUs felt that the quality of their teaching and support was at least as good as that of the conventional HEIs in their jurisdictions, they – or ODL generally – still had a poor reputation with the public. Some heads felt that using the term 'distance education' – and even the term 'open' was not helpful.

Sir John Daniel
Professor Alan Tait
2017-10-25

ANNEX #1

Open Universities: the next phase

Alan Tait

Professor Emeritus of Distance Education and Development, The Open University, UK

This confidential overview was prepared as a basis for discussion at the Roundtable of Presidents/Vice-Chancellors of Open and Distance Teaching Universities held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada on October 16th 2017, organised and hosted by Contact North | Contact Nord.

Introduction

Open Universities in the modern sense have a record of nearly 50 years of operation, dating from the foundation of the Open University UK in 1969. There are other claimants to the title, namely the University of London External Examinations system, from 1858, and UNISA, the University of South Africa, from 1948 onwards. However, a recognisable open university using distance education as a single mode of delivery is about 50 years old. The first 10 years generated enormous excitement. Back in 1981 Daniel and Stroud were moved to write:

> 'A revolution in education was proclaimed with appropriate hyperbole, buses were rented with the international academic jet-set of academic pilgrims descending on Milton Keynes to watch the OU campus rising from the mud, and governments of many political hues, noting an Open University to be the educational equivalent of an airline in terms of international status, sponsored similar projects'.
>
> (Daniel and Stroud, 1981, p147)

In the near half-century since then some 60 open universities or single-mode distance teaching universities (DTU's) have been established, with the largest number being found in Asia, followed by the regions of Europe and Africa. Latin America by contrast has very few DTU's, given its huge population, and some notable countries did not take up the model at all in the first phase, including Australia, France, Russia and the USA. There is, of course, much distance and online education in these countries, and in the last decade or so new online colleges and universities have been established, many of them for-profit, with a concentration on work-related programmes.

From the early days, there has been critical comment from within the open university movement itself about the strength of the model and its sustainability for the future. Already by 1982 Keegan and Rumble, in an early work on open universities around the world, asked questions such as 'Will DTU's survive?' and 'Are DTU's really necessary?' (Keegan and Rumble, p 243). Later, in another volume on open universities, Mugridge posited that 'The future of university education, particularly perhaps at a distance, lies not with the large open universities catering to

massive numbers of students, but to extended networks of smaller institutions' (Mugridge, 1997 p169).

However, in the course of the 1980s and 1990s open universities in some countries grew to enormous size, counting their students in the millions, notably India's Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), China's China Central Radio and TV University (CCRTVU - now the Open University of China), and Turkey's Anadolu University in its distance teaching faculty.

At this point, Daniel singled out a subgroup of large open universities, coining the term *Mega-universities* to signify distance teaching universities with more than 100,000 students. He noted competitive advantage as the core explanation for the rapid growth of these Mega-universities, in addition to their cost advantage and their capacity to pioneer innovations in learning technologies. He also commented that competing higher education institutions had few strategies for teaching working adults or those who could not come to campus (Daniel, 1996 p 71).

Starting with Daniel's central notion of the competitive advantage of open universities and building on the further work of Tait (2008), we can summarise the first-mover advantage for open universities in 1970-1990's as having various components:

1. Vision and mission: the courage to advocate and operationalise the move from an elite to a mass HE system, with notions of openness and access;

2. Innovation in learning and teaching: the admission of non-traditional student cohorts, usually people in employment or with family responsibilities, which demanded a new flexible student-centred practice;

3. Innovation in technologies for learning: initially this was based on innovative developments in instructional design, combined with TV and radio, and today with online teaching, peer learning, OER's, MOOCs and other online activities;

4. Innovation in educational logistics: the development of industrial-style management of services to students in large numbers and of high quality;

5. Significant scale: breaking the mould of craft-based teaching to create university systems of hitherto unimagined scale.

However, these first mover advantages have now been substantially eroded. Other universities, both public and private, are adopting these practices as their own, enabled by digital technologies along with a change in the culture of higher education for which open universities can fairly claim responsibility (Scott, 1995, p47). In the recent period, at least four open universities have been threatened with closure or merger, either because of these competitive challenges and/or perceptions of their own poor performance.

This overview aims to provide a framework for discussion of this set of strategic challenges and opportunities for the next phases of development of open universities.

Analysis of current issues

In order to provide a basis for discussion at the Toronto Roundtable, we sent invitations to all leaders of open universities or distance teaching universities in ICDE membership, asking them to provide information through interviews (See Appendices 1 and 2 for the questions and a list of participants). In the event 14 universities responded, and their replies are summarised below. While the limited size of the sample cannot make this summary completely representative, it does provide an insight into current developments, opportunities and strategic challenges, and stimulates a number of questions. Information was collected under the following headings.

Context

Student number trends: there is no clear pattern but wide variety reflecting a range of national contexts. Where there is a continuing rise in numbers studying in open universities it is primarily, though not entirely, found in countries with expanding secondary school provision and buoyant repressed demand for Higher Education, such as India, Nigeria and South Africa. But there are also increases in Germany, Italy and Quebec. In recruiting students, open universities face challenges of demographics, notably a decline in the number of people seeking lifelong education at undergraduate degree level and more intense competition. In Indonesia, the achievement of graduate status by most of the nation's school teachers, who made up a significant majority of Universitas Terbuka's students, has caused a decline in student numbers and led the University to expand its range of programmes. The Open University UK has been hit hard by a change in government funding in England that has caused fees to rise very significantly and student numbers to decline sharply, by as much as one third, over the last seven years. In another case an open university was not highly regarded in its country, which constrained recruitment.

Age: there is wide variation but a dominant trend that the student age profile is getting younger, although not extending to school leavers in most cases. Exceptions include South Korea where the 25-39-year cohort is in decline and numbers of older students are on the increase, and Italy where the over 50-year-old cohort is the largest.

Gender: it is widely though not universally true in this sample that proportions of female students equal or exceed those of men (e.g. up to 70% women in the Korea National OU).

Previous education: there is broad variation in trends here, but with a widespread increase in the number of students of lower previous educational background enrolling at Bachelor level. However, some open universities have a significant appeal to students who are already well qualified but wish to continue learning later in life.

University income: the proportion of open universities' income coming from government grants varies widely. The most dramatic change has been the radical shift in policy in Higher Education in England, which has seen most government grant eliminated, to be replaced by tuition fees. This is the primary, if not the only cause, of the marked decline in student numbers at the UK Open University referred to above.

Proportion of national higher education enrolment in open universities: here again there are significant variations because open universities range so greatly in size.

Strategic directions

Opportunity: within the institutional variety we can identify groupings. Some open universities have a close and privileged relationship with government that makes them able to provide national solutions for educational priorities. This provides stability and confidence. Other open universities see their major opportunities as continuing to be the dominant institution for part-time and lifelong learning. UNINETTUNO of Italy sees international recruitment and an internationalised curriculum as its major avenues for the future.

Challenges: many open universities are experiencing severe competitive threat from other local universities or from foreign entrants who are taking advantage of new technologies to move quickly, sometimes more quickly than they can, into the online space, and to recruit adults already in employment to compensate for demographic downturns in school leavers. More than one open university notes the damage done to the reputation of online learning by poor quality and inadequately regulated competition. One open university has developed a campus-based operation which now enrols as many students as its distance cohort.

Competition: a minority of open universities retain their assured position either because of lack of interest from other universities or because government protects their privileged position in offering distance and online learning. However, the majority report a severe level of competition that erodes the early status of the open universities as the sole providers of opportunities for part-time home-based study and the main promoters of innovation at scale.

Innovation and technology

All respondents were committed to a vision for online study and digitally supported student administration, but they have travelled very different distances on that journey so far. Progress, however, is not necessarily a function of developing or developed country status. Some open universities make an explicit commitment to the development of mobile learning. Some have made progress with Learning Analytics while some aspire to do so. Privacy laws inhibit progress with Learning Analytics in a minority of countries. A minority of open universities have produced MOOCs. Only one open university has declared a major commitment to OERs, and has evidence that OER use in course production reduces time and cost. A minority declared themselves to be already fully online providers or close to that goal. Several mentioned closing regional centres. The pedagogy of online learning was explicitly mentioned by only two respondents as being central to the research identity of the university. A networked system of international partnerships has been established by UNINETTUNO of Italy and represents a major element of its innovation. Rethinking curriculum for competency-based learning for adult learners in the workplace was a priority for one open university. Resistance to change by

academic staff and the need for professional development was an explicit concern of a minority, as was the need for improvement of digital skills in students.

National ICT infrastructure; assessment; access; student support

A range of open universities lobby governments in order to increase the number of Wi-Fi hotspots; create a national platform for e-learning; meet the needs of rural populations and prisoners; and reduce cost of broadband. One open university had received earmarked government funding for its own ICT infrastructure.

In the area of assessment there are widespread developments, including the move to online examinations; an overall reduction of assessment; online marking and the digitalisation of scripts; more automated assessment and feedback. A minority acknowledge that change is slow, sometimes because of concerns expressed by academic staff.

Access, openness and flexibility remain a concern to the majority of open universities. Current reforms include restraint on increasing course fees; more flexible start times for courses; the development of a wider range of local centres; assessment of prior learning; programmes for refugees; and links to employers.

Student support is also under review in a majority of open universities. Notable is the use of more advisors and e-tutors with more flexible availability, supported in some instances by data driven from Learning Analytics. Personalised learning was emphasised as an avenue for the future by one open university, and continued attention to the needs of minorities by others. Careers guidance was also noted as a rising priority by one open university. Rather surprisingly, only one open university explicitly mentioned the challenge of student drop-out.

Completing the move to mass Higher Education

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a framework for future priorities. Unlike the earlier Millennium Development Goals, the SDGs explicitly embrace tertiary education, including university and lifelong learning, and the supply of teachers. They commit governments by 2030 'to ensure equal access for women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university' (UNESCO, 2016).

Such a significant ambition means, in effect, extending the move to mass higher education to middle income and poorer countries. The growth in numbers will be primarily in the continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America, rather than Europe and North America where participation rates in higher education already reach up to 85%. Europe and North America, however, continue to have marked patterns of exclusion and disadvantage as well as wider challenges of economic and social development, and therefore also need further reform and innovation in higher education. Clearly, the challenge to open universities in Europe and North America for the next phase of development will be different from that in Asia, Latin America and Africa, where *prima facie* the need for new and large scale innovative institutions such as open universities remains central.

In addition to growth in the number of places in the tertiary sector, the UN SDGs also propose *Quality* as a priority, as well as equipping students with knowledge and understanding of the concept and practice of *Sustainability*. Quality represents a multi-faceted and contested range of issues, with both objective and subjective dimensions. The reputation of some open universities is acknowledged in some places to be weak, for both objective and subjective reasons. Open universities could, however, make a major contribution to both quality concepts and quality outcomes in mass higher education by addressing the issue in the context of the SDGs for 2030. Equally, with such a large proportion of open university students already in the workplace, open universities are in a strong position to offer leadership in re-engineering curricula across all subject areas to develop a workforce and a citizenry knowledgeable about the principles and practice of sustainability.

While the challenges for poor, middle-income and richer countries are clearly different, contributing to social and economic development at scale through educational interventions of an innovative nature is a task with significant common elements for which co-operation and collaboration amongst open universities at the global level would be invaluable. Tait proposed a framework of development concepts for open university activity using Sen's Capability Approach, which could be relevant for this discussion (Tait, 2013).

Conclusion

As well as the potential to grow the domestic capacity of higher education through open universities, the expanded number of places will also be provided in part by student mobility to other countries; increased participation from foreign universities developing local campus and online operations; and renewed competition from local universities offering blended and more flexible patterns of study. Are open universities in the strongest position to contribute substantially to the SDG goals, in terms of both scale and quality? And has their achievement of the last 50 years led governments around the world to see them as continuing to be vital drivers of innovation in higher education at scale?

These issues create a pressing agenda for leadership development, in order to ensure the continued contribution that open universities present and future can surely make to the SDGs to which our governments have committed. ICDE, AAOU and EADTU all have a record of contribution to leadership development in this field, and this Roundtable could valuably refine and promote proposals for new programmes and activities. Relevant themes arising from this research might include:

- Leadership in challenging policy environments
- Leadership for quality and reputation
- Institutional change and the Digital Revolution
- Leadership for sustainability across the institution.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix 1

Questions for interviews with open university leaders

CONTEXT

1.How many students are currently enrolled and how are these numbers changing?

2.How is the profile (age, gender, previous education, etc.) of your student body evolving?

3.How does the income of your University break down between government grants and student fees?

4.What proportion of the total higher education enrolments in the country are accounted for by your University?

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1. What is the most important opportunity facing your University?

2. What is the most important challenge facing your University?

3. How is the competitive environment of higher education in the country changing?

INNOVATIONS

Specific questions:

1. What is your University's most successful recent innovation or development?

2. How is your University taking advantage of developments in technology?

3. What new delivery tools and resources for learning is your university using?

- What improvements would you like to see in the country's technological infrastructure?

- Is technology changing the ways you assess students? Which new models of assessment is your university using?

4. What specific steps are you taking to expand access, openness and flexibility at your university?

5. How is your approach to student support evolving?

Appendix 2

List of open universities interviewed or which replied in writing

B. R. Ambedkar Open University, India (Prof Seetharama Rao, Vice-Chancellor)

FernUniversität, NRW, Germany (Prof Ada Pellert, Rector)

Korea National Open University ((Dr Byung-Gi Moon, Dean)

Open Polytechnic of New Zealand (Dr Caroline Seelig, Chief Executive)

Open University of Hong Kong (Dr K.C.Li, Director of University Research Centre)

Open University of Israel (Prof Sarah Guri-Rosenblit, Dean)

Open University of Japan (Prof Tatsuhiko Ikeda, Rector)

Open Universiteit, Netherlands (Prof Anja Oskamp, Rector)

Open University U.K. (Guy Mallinson, Director Strategy)

Université TÉLUQ, Québec, Canada (Dr Noel Martin, Director-General)

Università Telematica Internazionale UNINETTUNO, Italy (Prof Maria Amato Garito, Rector)

Universitas Terbukas, Indonesia, (Prof Tian Belawati, Rector)

University of South Africa (UNISA) (Prof Mandla Makhanya, Vice-Chancellor)

Wawasan Open University, Malaysia, (Prof Ho Sinn Chye, Vice-Chancellor)

ANNEX #2

Executive Heads of Open Universities present at the Roundtable
Toronto, 2017-10-16

NAME	INSTITUTION	ABBREVIATION	COUNTRY/JURISDICTION
Professor Anbahan Ariadurai, Vice-Chancellor	Open University of Sri Lanka	OUSL	Sri Lanka
Professor Dato' Dr. Ho Sinn Chye, President and Vice-Chancellor	Wawasan Open University	WOU	Malaysia
Melinda de la Pena Bandalaria, Chancellor	University of the Philippines Open University	UPOU	Philippines
Professor Dr. Mansor Fadzil, President/Vice-Chancellor	Open University of Malaysia	OUM	Malaysia
Dr. Neil Fassina, President	Athabasca University	AU	Canada, Alberta
Mr Martin Noël, Directeur général et Directeur des affaires académiques	Université TÉLUQ	TÉLUQ	Canada, Quebec
Professor Anja Oskamp, Rector	Open Universiteit	OUNL	Netherlands
Professor K. Seetharama Rao, Vice-Chancellor	Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University	BRAOU	India, Andhra Pradesh & Telangana
Professor Yuk-Shan Wong, President	Open University of Hong Kong	OUHK	Hong Kong SAR, China

ANNEX #3

Roundtable for Vice-Chancellors/Presidents of Open Universities
Sheraton Centre, Toronto, 16 October 2017
Organised and Hosted by Contact North | Contact Nord

Final programme

Note from the Roundtable facilitator to Vice-Chancellors/Presidents

I am greatly honoured to facilitate this unique event with the able assistance of Professor Alan Tait, Professor Emeritus of Distance Education and Development, The Open University, UK. This programme for the day's discussions reflects the many excellent suggestions that you have sent us. In those comments, you identified the key topics that you would like to discuss and emphasised that the Roundtable should maximise the possibilities for interaction between you.

Sir John Daniel (Vice-Chancellor, UK Open University, 1990-2001)

Time	Programme	Arrangements
08:00	**Registration – Group convenes at Sheraton Centre**	**Simcoe Room – 2nd floor**
08:30	Welcome by Mr. Maxim Jean-Louis, President – Chief Executive Officer of Contact North | Contact Nord	All at Boardroom Table
08:35	Session 1: Greetings and Introductions	Breakout – Groups of 4/5*
09:00	Session 2: Sir John Daniel introduces Professor Alan Tait	All at Boardroom Table
09:05	Professor Tait gives highlights of his overview: *Open Universities – The Next Phase*	All at Boardroom Table
09:30	Session 3: Innovation for Evolving Missions *Open Universities have made openness and access a mainstream concern across Higher Education generally. How should they now innovate in their own missions to strengthen their reputations and social relevance?*	Breakout – Groups of 4/5*
10:15	Session 4: How are Open University student demographics shifting? What innovations are needed now?	Breakout – Groups of 4/5*

	The demographics of OU student bodies are changing in different ways – some towards older students, some towards younger students. What innovations are needed to serve these evolving clienteles?	
11:00	Session 5: Winning the Competition - effective and attractive ODL for today's world: innovations that work. *Technologies are expanding the options for ODL – which ones hold most promise?*	Breakout – Groups of 4/5*
11:45	Session 6: General discussion on the morning's topics	All at Boardroom Table
12:30	**Lunch**	**Room to be announced**
13:30	Session 7: Mastering the use of technology at scale: sharing experiences *OUs must operate at scale – what are the implications?*	Breakout – Groups of 4/5*
14:15	Session 8: Collaboration and partnerships: sharing good and bad experiences. *Are there opportunities for collaboration among OUs?*	Breakout – Groups of 4/5*
15:00	**Refreshment Break**	**All at Boardroom Table**
15:15	Session 9: Blending flexibility, quality and scale. *This is the fundamental challenge for OUs today. How do we achieve it?*	Breakout – Groups of 4/5*
16:00	Session 10: General discussion: conclusions; takeaways; next steps…	All at Boardroom Table
17:00	Concluding remarks: Sir John Daniel and Maxim Jean-Louis	All at Boardroom Table

* The assignments of Vice-Chancellors to the breakout groups will change from session to session in order to give all participants
a chance to work with each other.

2017-10-10