J.S.Smith——英国利物浦大学

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

Professor J. S. Smith
Department of Electrical
Engineering and Electronics
The University of Liverpool
Brownlow Hill
Liverpool
L69 3GJ

Tel: (44) (0) 151 794 4514
Fax: (44) (0) 151 794 4540
Email: j.s.smith@liv.ac.uk

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Dear Sir or Madam,

My academic career at the University of Liverpool has combined teaching, research, and academic leadership in electrical and electronic engineering. Over the years, I have taught subjects including Digital Electronics, Digital Systems Design, Microprocessor Systems, Software Engineering, Neural Networks, and Robotic Systems. I have always considered it important that engineering courses evolve alongside technological development. I have therefore drawn on both emerging technologies and my own research to refresh course content, laboratory activities, and student projects. My involvement in departmental quality assurance, curriculum development, and undergraduate education has also given me extensive experience of how academic standards can be translated into meaningful learning experiences for students.

My association with Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University began in 2005, when I was involved in preparing the paperwork for the creation of the University which required approval by the Chinese Ministry of Education. When permission to create the University was given I was seconded to the University as Academic Dean (later retitled Vice-President for Academic Affairs) and contributed to the development of its early academic structures and educational approach. This was not simply a process of transferring a British curriculum into a Chinese setting. It required colleagues from China and the United Kingdom to examine programme aims, teaching methods, assessments, quality assurance, and student support together, and to consider how international standards could work effectively in a different educational and cultural environment.

The dialogue established during those early years has continued. Through ongoing exchanges with colleagues at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, I have followed the University's development in international engineering education, cross-cultural learning, and practice-based teaching. These exchanges have always been mutually beneficial. Experience from Liverpool has contributed to curriculum and quality processes at XJTLU, while XJTLU's adaptations and innovations have, in turn, offered useful perspectives for teaching and curriculum discussions at Liverpool. In particular, its experience has demonstrated that international education is most effective when educational principles are interpreted carefully in relation to students' backgrounds, local industry, and wider social needs.

This understanding has influenced the way I approach my own teaching. In digital systems, robotics, and related engineering subjects, I have increasingly used research-informed content, real engineering challenges, and open-ended design work. Students from different academic and cultural backgrounds are encouraged to discuss alternative approaches, develop systems collaboratively, and test their ideas through practical implementation. The purpose is not only to strengthen technical knowledge, but also to develop communication, teamwork, judgement, and the ability to respond constructively to different perspectives.

My experience with Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University has reinforced my belief that international engineering education should be based on genuine exchange rather than one-way transfer. Strong international standards remain essential, but they become educationally valuable only when they are connected with disciplinary developments, local circumstances, and the needs of students and society. This continuing process of collaboration and mutual learning has provided lasting inspiration for my work in curriculum development, teaching, and academic management.

In summary our collaborations between the University of Liverpool with Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University and particularly the School of Advanced Technology (SAT) under the leadership of Eng Gee Lim, has successfully developed an international engineering education model over the past two decades. The key themes include cultivating globally minded engineering graduates who can contribute to China's future development, establishing an innovative education model through international collaboration, and successfully implementing professional accredited engineering programmes (e.g IET and BCS). It is hoped that this international engineering education model can be applied to other joint ventures in the future.

Yours faithfully,

J.S. Smith