

Nancy Rothwell, Chair of the Russell Group

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00:01

Hello, I'm Nancy Rothwell. I'm President and Vice Chancellor of the University of Manchester where I've held this post for 10 years. I'm a neuroscientist by training, still trying to do some research in what little spare time I can get. And I'm very much looking forward to taking over from Anton Muscatelli.

00:17

As chair of the Russell Group of universities, I do want to say what an amazing job Anton has done. Universities, including all the members of the Russell Group have played a critical role in understanding developing treatments, developing vaccines, developing diagnostics for Covid-19. And of course, much else besides that. We cover research from everything from climate change, to behaviour, to history, to physics. And I think in the future research is going to be fundamental. It's one of the things that the UK is a world leader in, and indeed our universities are world leaders. So we expect to play a major role in the recovery and the return to work of the United Kingdom.

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To me a university is not a university without our students. These are the future of our society. And these are incredibly important to us. Obviously, we are trying to get back to normal as much as possible, and give our students a wonderful experience because they are going to be leaders of the future.

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The priorities for teaching, of course, #1 is the safety of our students and staff. And #2 is delivering something that's really valuable to them, that they can gain a great deal from and hopefully, also enjoy themselves at the same time.

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The Russell Group of universities is 24 research intensive universities, quite diverse in their nature, but they stand for excellence in research, excellence in teaching, and a huge commitment to our communities on our economy. We aim to contribute to all aspects of life in this country and globally as well. We hope to find solutions to world problems, and we hope to create leaders of the future.

01:56

I'm very proud of the fact that the Russell Group universities are located across the United Kingdom, including the devolved nations in big cities, in the countryside, and in all parts of this nation.

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So the government has a strong agenda for levelling up. To me, that means trying to bring up the economic and social delivery of regions outside the most prosperous in the United Kingdom. This is important not just for those regions, but for the whole country. It absolutely does not mean to me taking away from successful regions it means finding ways to support those areas that have not done as well. And that means also universities contributing to this contributing locally but also to parts beyond where they're located, to the towns to the rural regions which have felt left behind, and universities are doing a great deal to help to bring those regions up to the levels of prosperity productivity, and to flourish in ways that we really hope they will do in the future.

02:55

I want to say to all our students, whether new students just starting this semester or the returning students, you've had a pretty tough time - we know that - we're doing our very, very best to make your next stage of your student experience as good as it possibly can be. All of us in universities are utterly committed to you getting a safe and a valuable student experience and enjoying your time with us.