

# Collaborative Provision Policy and Procedures

## A. Introduction

1. The University of Southampton's policies and procedures for the development, management, and renewal of collaborative provision arrangements are aligned with the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#).

2. The QAA's UK Quality Code [Advice and Guidance on Partnerships](#) focuses on

*'provision that leads to the award of academic credit and that is delivered, assessed or supported in partnership between two or more organisations. Its primary focus is on provision where the achievement of learning outcomes for the module or course are dependent on the arrangements made between the organisations.'*

and covers a wide range of partnerships including:

- Joint supervision of research degrees or provision for doctoral research to be conducted at another academic or industrial organisation (applicable either to individuals or cohorts of students).
- Doctoral Training Centres involving more than one organisation.
- Franchised programmes delivered by non- degree awarding bodies through a variety of models.
- Validated programmes delivered by non-degree awarding bodies.
- Joint, dual, double or multiple awards granted by one or more other awarding bodies.
- Provision by 'embedded colleges' of study preparatory to undergraduate or postgraduate higher education programmes'.
- Articulation arrangements, whereby all students who satisfy academic criteria on one programme are automatically entitled on academic grounds to be admitted with advanced standing to a subsequent stage of a programme of a degree awarding body.
- A range of work- based learning that may involve delivering full programmes, individual modules or elements of programmes for a specific employer, or otherwise using the workplace as a site of learning.
- Credit- rating of learning/training/continuing professional development provided by employers/other organisations.
- Placements, including those in industry, those required for teacher education, experience necessary for qualifications in the health professions (including for a Primary Medical Qualification) and continuing professional development.
- Study abroad, including exchanges and student mobility programmes such as ERASMUS.
- Provision of learning support, resources or specialist facilities.
- Branch campuses, educational villages and 'flying faculty' arrangements which include aspects of collaboration (such as provision of resources or employment of local administrative/clerical staff through arrangements with another organisation).
- Distance learning and online delivery/massive open online courses (MOOCs) involving work with delivery organisations or support providers.
- Collaboration between higher education providers on the delivery of Gaelic and Welsh- language provision (such as sharing resources, common curricula).

3. The University of Southampton works with a wide range of partners including employers, organisations, and educational institutions in the UK and overseas and engages in a variety of arrangements which range from allowing students to gain valuable experience in a work environment or study overseas. Study abroad arrangements are managed by the University's International Office.
4. Work placements at the University are governed by the University's Placements and Study Abroad policy.
5. The following types of arrangement are traditionally known as collaborative provision and the University will maintain the use of this term to describe these types of arrangement:
  - Articulation;
  - Branch campus;
  - Centre for doctoral training (with another institution);
  - Double and multiple awards;
  - Dual awards;
  - Flying faculty/off- site delivery (with elements of partner support);
  - Joint award (both taught and PhD);
  - Split- site PhD;
  - Validation.

Section C provides a typology of these different types of collaborative provision arrangements, together with the key characteristics of each. Appendix A to this policy provides a summary of the key stages involved in approving different types of arrangement and the type of agreement needed.
6. This document establishes the framework under which collaborative provision operates at the University of Southampton, and is intended to guide Faculties and Schools in the development, approval and ongoing operation of collaborative provision arrangements. It includes a typology of different collaborative provision arrangements and describes the various elements of processes associated with the establishment and maintenance of such arrangements.
7. Partner institutions may potentially work with the University across a range of different collaborative provision arrangements. Each new proposal should be considered separately but at the same time taking account of any due diligence and approval process which has already been carried out. Early communication with the Quality, Standards and Accreditation Team (QSAT) allows the University to share information across Faculties and Schools and the central administration and to avoid unnecessary duplication.
8. Types of arrangements that are felt to fall short of true collaborative provision include:
  - off campus delivery (provided that there is no partner support involved): see Appendix B for the approval process;
  - enhanced progression arrangements (entry to advanced point in a University programme subject to an academic admission hurdle): see Appendix B for the approval process;
  - progression (or admissions) arrangements (entry to the start of a programme) : see Appendix B for the approval process;
  - student exchange and study abroad arrangements: contact the International Office;
  - placement learning: see the University's [Placements Policy](#) and [Study Abroad Policy](#).

These arrangements will not normally be subject to the full approval process which applies to collaborative provision arrangements, but are still subject to appropriate approval processes and align with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education where appropriate. For the sake of clarity, these are described in Appendix B of this policy or in other University policies to which Appendix B refers.

## B. Principles

9. The University embraces the benefits of collaboration, and the opportunities that it brings to the institution and to its students. Working with partners builds strategic links, enhances the University's reputation and furthers the University's network of supporters and alumni.
10. The University is responsible for the quality and standards of all education delivered in its name, as indicated by the following core practices from the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education:

*'Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them.'*

*'Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them.'*

11. The University is not responsible for the educational quality or academic standards of awards made by other institutions. However, where partnerships are established which include an academic contribution towards, or entry to a University of Southampton award, the University must maintain confidence in the output standards of those arrangements.
12. All collaborative provision:
  - must be consistent with the University's Strategy;
  - will be delivered with partners who have appropriate academic standards, infrastructure, financial and legal standing to ensure that the University of Southampton is not compromised by the collaboration;
  - will meet, as a minimum, the quality of education delivered on campus and will be subject to the University's usual Quality, Monitoring and Enhancement activities;
  - will offer an equitable student experience for all students, regardless of the location of education provision;
  - will normally have English as the primary language of instruction and assessment;<sup>1</sup>
  - will be entered into at an institutional (rather than subject or individual) level and provide institutional level benefits;
  - must be financially viable and feasible, fully costed and priced accordingly;<sup>2</sup>
  - must have a Memorandum of Agreement (Memorandum of Agreement) in place signed by one of the University's authorised signatories (the President and Vice- Chancellor or the President and Vice- Chancellor's authorised representative).
13. The University has a proportionate approach to approving collaborative provision: depending on the partner, size, location, language, and amount of academic credit involved, different approval activities may be used. For example, articulation arrangements may be approved at Faculty level, but joint awards will need to be approved by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC); setting up an articulation will involve a one person site visit, whereas partner approval for a validation will require a full panel including external expertise. However, in all examples of provision, separate decisions should be made about the academic credibility of a proposed collaboration and the strategic and business aspects of a proposed collaboration.
14. Partner approval and programme validation are two separate processes. The procedures set out later in this document are those to be followed when approving a new partner. Programme

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<sup>1</sup> Non- language programmes may be taught in a language other than English only under exceptional circumstances, for which there is a clear strategic rationale.

<sup>2</sup> Appropriate costing should take into account all aspects of the provision, including travel, transportation of resources, infrastructure development, administrative support, ceremonies, production of certificates where non- standard features are required, etc

validation refers to the process required to approve a new programme. This can be found in the Quality Handbook.

15. All collaborations are approved on behalf of the University's Senate. Therefore, approval of any type of collaboration must be notified to or approved by Academic Quality and Standards Committee, the Committee of Senate with responsibility for overseeing collaborative provision. Collaborations that are judged by Academic Quality and Standards Committee to represent a higher than normal business risk to the University will be referred to Senate for approval.
16. Proposed partners might also have their own arrangements for collaborative provision. Therefore the University's procedures for approving a collaboration may have to adapt to meet a partner's needs, or at least should be mindful that the collaboration must be approved by all partner(s) involved in the collaboration before it is agreed. Where collaborative arrangements involve more than one School and/or University a lead School and/or University must be allocated.
17. All Collaborative Provision requires a formal Memorandum of Agreement between the partner institutions. This will normally be provided through the University's Legal Services department, working with the Collaboration Sponsor and QSAT. All Memoranda of Agreement must be signed by the President and Vice-Chancellor or the President and Vice-Chancellor's authorised representative.
18. The University publishes a list of all its collaborative provision activity, and once an agreement for collaborative provision has been signed, it will be recorded on the Collaborative Provision Register. This is maintained by QSAT.

## C. Typology

19. The University currently engages in the following arrangements that it classifies as Collaborative Provision. Section F describes the approval process. A summary of the stages in the approval process for specific types of arrangement can be found in Appendix A.

20. **Articulation Agreement**

A model whereby all students who meet the specified academic criteria by successfully completing a programme delivered and awarded by a partner institution, or one or more years of a programme at a partner institution, are **automatically guaranteed entry** (on academic grounds) with advanced standing to a subsequent stage of a named programme or programmes leading to an award of the University of Southampton. These are commonly known as 1+ 3 or 2+ 2 arrangements (other combinations are possible). The two separate components are the responsibility of the respective organisations delivering them, but together, contribute to a single award (of the University of Southampton). Credit achieved for the approved study at the first provider is normally transferred to contribute to the programme and award completed at the University of Southampton. Arrangements where students are admitted with advanced standing but are subject to an additional admissions hurdle i.e. admission is not automatic and the arrangement does not therefore correspond to the QAA's definition of an articulation arrangement, are called Enhanced Progression Agreements (see Appendix B for the approval process).

21. **International Branch Campus**

An international branch campus is a campus of the University of Southampton that is located in a country other than the home campus, has a physical presence in the host country including some local staffing, is at least partly owned by the University, and from which the students can earn University of Southampton degrees. University of Southampton Malaysia (UoSM) is an example of a branch campus. The decision to establish a branch campus would be a University level initiative rather than at the instigation of an individual School/Faculty.

22. **Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP)/Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT)**

An educational collaboration which may involve working with one or more other institution(s). DTPs and CDTs that do not involve working with another institution are not collaborative provision. DTPs/CDTs are centres for managing research council funded degrees. The University of Southampton hosts and participates in a number of Centres that are funded by one or more of the Research Councils. Each Centre offers a four- year multidisciplinary postgraduate programme. The taught first year includes short courses and project work tailored to students' backgrounds and research interests. This is followed by three years of research at PhD level.

23. **Double or multiple award**

A programme of study (taught undergraduate/postgraduate award or PhD) leading to a double or multiple award that involves each partner granting a separate award (at the same level) based on the same programme of study and assessed work. There will be a single set of criteria or learning outcomes. This is a relatively common model in Europe and is a feature of Erasmus Mundus programmes where it is not possible for some of the partners to offer a joint award. The programme must be a genuinely joint enterprise which involves all partners in the creation and ongoing management of the award. Students must meet the requirements of all degree-awarding bodies involved. Responsibility for the quality and standards of each award rests with the relevant awarding institution and cannot be shared.

24. **Dual award**

A programme of study leading to a dual award involves each partner granting a separate award (which may be at different levels). Each degree-awarding body is responsible for its own award but the two components form a single package, and the overall arrangement is a joint enterprise which involves all partners in the creation and ongoing management of the programme. Each award has its own set of criteria and learning outcomes and the student does not therefore have to satisfy the requirements of all degree-awarding bodies. The student may receive only one qualification if they do not meet the separate criteria or learning outcomes for the second qualification.

**25. Flying Faculty/off site delivery (with partner support)**

An arrangement whereby a programme is delivered in a location away from the main campus (often in another country) by staff from the University of Southampton, who also carry out all the assessment. Support for students may be provided by local staff or by staff from the University of Southampton. Schools setting up these types of arrangement should pay particular notice to legal requirements, such as employment and tax issues, which may impact the delivery of the programme.

**26. Joint award (taught programme)**

An arrangement under which two or more degree awarding bodies provide a programme leading to a single award made jointly by both, or all, parties. There is a single certificate (signed by each participating institution) that is issued on completion of a jointly delivered programme. The University is legally constituted to award a joint degree with another institution. The partner(s) must also be legally entitled to award a joint degree with another institution. The University will only enter into joint awards with higher education providers of equal standing.

**27. The Joint PhD**

As stated above, the University is legally constituted to award a joint degree with another institution. It has therefore approved the principle that formal agreements may be made between this University and a partner institution for the purpose of awarding a Joint PhD. Partners may be within the UK, mainland Europe or they may be international. As the Joint PhD is a collaborative undertaking with another institution, a University-level Memorandum of Agreement must be agreed and signed by both parties. Individual Joint Supervision Agreements are also required for each student on the programme. Students studying for a Joint PhD will have a supervisory team that includes at least one supervisor from each partner institution, with one award (and one certificate) jointly awarded by both institutions on successful completion of the examination. Each Joint PhD programme will have its own programme code. Periods of time to be spent at each partner institution will be clearly specified in the Memorandum of Agreement and/or the Joint Supervision Agreement for each student. A minimum of 12 months will be spent in Southampton.

**28. The Split- site PhD**

A model whereby the student spends a substantial amount of time in his/her home country at a partner institution. This model was developed specifically to allow flexibility for international students, and includes provision for supervisory contribution from both the University of Southampton and the partner institution. For each Split- site arrangement with a partner institution, a Memorandum of Agreement is signed at University level, with an individual supervision agreement for each student undertaking the programme.

The Framework for Split- site PhDs provides guidance on setting up Split- site arrangements including the process for making agreements between the University of Southampton and a partner institution, and for ensuring that safeguards are included.

**29. Validation**

A model whereby the University of Southampton as the awarding institution judges that a programme developed and taught by another institution or organisation is of an appropriate quality and standard to lead to a University of Southampton award. This is a higher risk model of collaborative provision that requires a substantial amount of time to develop and approve and significant ongoing oversight. The University will only validate programmes in a subject that the University itself offers. However, when considering proposals to validate external programmes, the University will take particular account of whether or not a similar programme is offered within the University, and if so, the implications of the proposed validation for existing internal provision. The University will only validate external provision which is equivalent to the University's own provision in terms of both standards of award and quality of provision (teaching, learning and student experience). The University will impose charges for undertaking validation of external provision which reflect the University's full costs.

Note: Programme Validation is also the term used by the University for its own programme approval process.

### 30. **Accreditation**

The Instrument of Accreditation is in Section VII of the University Calendar. The Instrument of accreditation applies to taught programmes of study; separate arrangements obtain for all research degrees, including those of instruction. In accordance with its Charter and Statutes, the University permits an institution which has been through the accreditation process to approve and offer taught programmes of study leading to the award of the University's degrees, diploma and certificates.

## **D. Faculty Roles and Responsibilities for Collaborative Provision**

### **31. Collaboration Sponsor**

The Collaboration Sponsor is the member of academic staff in a School who will take the lead on the partner approval process. The Collaboration Sponsor is normally a member of staff in a senior position and could be for example a Deputy Head of School (Education), Director of Programmes or a Programme Leader. The Collaboration Sponsor should not be an Associate Dean Education or anyone else who will be responsible for approving either the academic programme or the business plan of the University.

### **32. Academic Link Tutor**

The Academic Link Tutor represents the interests of the University and its students at an operational level and is responsible for the day-to-day liaison with the collaborative partner(s). The Academic Link Tutor may be the Director of Programmes or the Programme Leader. The Academic Link Tutor will be an employee of the University, either in a substantive position or by some other means, e.g. seconded from another organisation. The responsibilities of the Academic Link Tutor include, but are not limited to, monitoring standards of teaching and assessment and seeking assurance that expected standards are being maintained, ensuring that the educational and pastoral needs of students are being responded to and met in a timely and appropriate way, seeking assurance that all necessary governance procedures are being adhered to and promptly alerting the Programme Leader and/or Director of Programmes should any discrepancies or concerns arise.

### **33. Associate Dean Education**

As the Dean's nominee, the Associate Dean Education chairs the Faculty Education Committee and will therefore maintain an oversight of all collaborative activity within their Faculty. The responsibilities of the Associate Dean Education for collaborative provision include, but are not limited to, providing an educational opinion on proposed collaborative provision when discussed at Faculty Board and at times, Chair Collaboration Approval Panels for collaborative provision outside of their own Faculty.

### **34. Deputy Head of School (Education)**

The Deputy Head of School (Education) chairs the School Programmes Committee and will therefore maintain an oversight of all collaborative programmes within their School. The responsibilities of the Deputy Head of School (Education) for collaborative provision include, but are not limited to, providing support to Collaboration Sponsors in the initial concept stage of a proposal and assuring the quality of education delivered collaboratively (including through annual reporting to Academic Quality and Standards Committee). The Deputy Head of School (Education) may work with other senior roles within the Faculty, for example the Associate Dean Education, Associate Dean International or Faculty Director of Graduate School. The Deputy Head of School (Education) will also sit on, and at times Chair, Collaboration Approval Panels for collaborative provision outside of their own Faculty.

### **35. Associate Dean International**

The Associate Dean International steers and oversees the Faculty's international partnership developments, supporting the Director of Internationalisation and Head of School to ensure that both proposed and established partnerships, including collaborative provision arrangements, align with Faculty and institutional strategy. The Associate Dean International is responsible for involving the Associate Deans Education / Research and the Faculty Academic Registrar as appropriate, as well as relevant professional services.

### **36. Director of Internationalisation**

The Director of Internationalisation is a School-level role responsible for ensuring that any new international partnership proposal aligns with School strategy and can be adequately resourced. The Director of Internationalisation is responsible for involving the Deputy Head of School Education / Research and the Head of School, as well as consulting the Associate Dean International (to check alignment with Faculty strategy) and seeking guidance from relevant



professional services. Where there are no Directors of Internationalisation, the Associate Dean International will take on this responsibility.

### **37. Faculty Academic Registrar**

Potential new collaborative arrangements should be discussed at an early stage with the Faculty Academic Registrar. The Faculty Academic Registrar, or a delegated member of the Faculty Curriculum and Quality Team, will be closely involved during all stages of the collaboration approval process, and will assist the Collaboration Sponsor in completing and collating the collaborative provision documentation. The Faculty Academic Registrar may also be required to undertake a formal visit to the site of the proposed partner. If so they will be expected to liaise closely with the collaboration sponsor and University services such as iSolutions, Student Services and the Library. They will be required to provide a detailed report on the outcome of the visit and the standard of Student Administration and Assessment provided by the proposed partner. This will be considered by the Collaboration Approval Panel.

Faculty Academic Registrars are expected to act as panel members on Collaboration Approval Panels for Faculties other than their own and, when required, attend collaboration panels for Schools in their own Faculty.

The Faculty Academic Registrar is responsible for ensuring that the agreed quality standards, processes and procedures are adhered to for the duration of the collaboration. This includes ensuring that the School reviews collaborations in accordance with the process and timelines set out in this policy and prior to the expiry of the Memorandum of Agreement.

## **E. Quality, Standards and Accreditation Team (QSAT) Roles and Responsibilities for Collaborative Provision**

### **38. Advice and Guidance**

Schools setting up new collaborative provision arrangements should follow the stages set out in this policy. Any queries about the process should be directed to a member of QSAT.

For complex or hybrid arrangements, Schools should always seek advice on the approval process from a member of QSAT.

### **39. Collaborative Provision Register**

QSAT is responsible for maintaining records on collaborative provision, including the University's Collaborative Provision Register. QSAT updates the register annually and sends this to Schools to check for accuracy. The register is then submitted to Academic Quality and Standards Committee and to Senate for note.

A register of the University's Enhanced Progression Agreements is also maintained.

The registers are published in the University's Quality Handbook and linked to from the University's home pages.

### **40. Requests for legal and financial due diligence**

Requests to prospective partners for legal and financial due diligence are co-ordinated by QSAT, working with Legal Services, when required.

### **41. Due Diligence Approval Panels**

Due Diligence Approval Panels (DDAP) are organised by QSAT. The precise composition of the panel will vary according to the type of arrangement under consideration. QSAT convenes the panel and communicates the outcome to the Collaboration Sponsor.

### **42. Collaboration Approval Panels**

Collaboration Approval Panels (CAP) are organised by QSAT. A member of QSAT will usually act as Secretary to the panel and write the report.

## F. Approving a partnership

43. All collaborations are subject to a Partner Approval Process. This process happens in parallel to the Programme Validation Process.
44. The Partner Approval Process has 4 stages.
  - Stage 1 - Initiating a new arrangement
  - Stage 2 - Due Diligence and Due Diligence Approval Panel
  - Stage 3 - Partner Approval
  - Stage 4 - The Memorandum of Agreement

### **Stage 1: Initiating a new arrangement**

45. Collaborative Provision may be initiated by a number of routes: it may be part of an existing relationship with a partner, the University may be approached with a potential opportunity, or the University may seek to build a new relationship with a new partner. As an opportunity for collaborative provision arises, lead responsibility for taking the proposal forward, on behalf of the University, should be given to a Collaboration Sponsor. The holder of this role will work with the Faculty Curriculum and Quality Team with support from QSAT to set up the collaboration, and will be responsible for reporting on its operation when established. If the Collaboration Sponsor leaves the University, this responsibility should be passed to another individual within the School. A Collaboration Sponsor should normally be an academic member of staff (see section D for Faculty roles and responsibilities).
46. Potential new collaborative arrangements will always involve a period of informal negotiation and visits to the proposed partner's premises (where relevant) before developing into a firm proposal. They should always be discussed at an early stage with the Deputy Head of School (Education) and the Faculty Academic Registrar. Additionally, where international collaborations are proposed, they should be discussed with the Associate Dean International, and for collaborative provision at postgraduate research level, the Faculty Director of Graduate School should be involved.
47. A member of QSAT with responsibility for collaborative provision should also be informed about the potential new development at the earliest stage. QSAT will provide additional advice and guidance on developing new arrangements where required and will also discuss the potential arrangement with the Head of Admissions to ensure that the proposed model of working will enable the university to meet UKVI requirements where international students are concerned. QSAT will also be able to advise the Collaboration Sponsor if the proposed partner organisation has already been approved by Academic Quality and Standards Committee. Depending on the timing and nature of the new proposed collaboration this could reduce the due diligence requirements and avoid duplicate requests for information to proposed partners.
48. **International Collaborations**  
Schools should discuss the proposal with the International Office at an early stage who will be able to advise whether the proposed partner institution fits with the University's international strategy and is therefore likely to be supported by the University. Working with the International Office the School should complete the relevant sections of the International Agreements Proposal Template to seek approval from the Vice-President (International) that the proposed collaboration fits with the University's international strategy.
49. Where a new international partnership is proposed which involves one or more of the following:
  - a significant development in terms of student numbers;
  - a high risk model of collaboration which is new to the University;
  - requires substantial financial investment on behalf of the University (exceeding 100k);
  - countries judged "high risk" by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office;

The Vice-President (International) will decide whether the proposal should be referred to University Executive Board (UEB) for discussion before proceeding to full development.

50. Collaborations that are judged by the President and Vice-Chancellor, on the advice of UEB, to represent a higher than normal business risk to the University will require Senate approval. Collaborations which are judged by the President and Vice-Chancellor, on advice from UEB, to represent a significant financial or reputational risk to the University will be referred to Council for advice, and where appropriate, for approval. In such cases UEB and Council will agree whether it is sensible to proceed with a business plan for a proposed collaboration. However, full approval of a collaborative arrangement requires academic approval, which must be granted by Academic Quality and Standards Committee.
51. Following informal negotiations and discussions with relevant people within the University, the Collaboration Sponsor completes the following documentation for consideration by the Faculty Board:
- Collaborative Provision Initial Proposal Form (for UK partners)
  - International Agreements Proposal Template (for international partners, see paragraph 48)
  - Initial Risk Assessment Form
  - Site Visit Checklist
  - Business Case (prepared by Head of Faculty Finance)

Faculty Board will review the documentation and decide whether the proposal should proceed to the next stage of the approval process.

52. Where setting up the arrangement will also involve a programme validation, Faculty Board should also consider the Programme Proposal at the same time as the completed Collaborative Provision documentation.
53. If Faculty Board decides that the proposal should proceed, the Collaboration Sponsor completes Section A of the Collaborative Provision Due Diligence Form and submits the following documentation to QSAT (qsa@soton.ac.uk) who will begin the formal Due Diligence process (see Stage 2 below):
- Collaborative Provision Initial Proposal Form (for UK partners)
  - International Agreements Proposal Sheet (for international partners)
  - Initial Risk Assessment Form
  - Site Visit Checklist
  - Business Case
  - Programme Proposal (where applicable)
  - Confirmation of Faculty Board approval
  - Collaborative Provision Due Diligence Form with Section A completed

QSAT will notify the Vice-President (Education) and, where appropriate, the Vice-President (International).

54. The programme validation should proceed to Stage 2 Programme Development and Academic Approval of the programme validation process. School Programmes Committee should be notified of Faculty Board's decision.

#### **Stage 2: Due Diligence and Due Diligence Approval Panel**

55. Following the initial approval to proceed with a proposal by Faculty Board and before entering into a formal agreement with another institution, the University carries out due diligence to consider the reputation, standing and academic performance of the prospective partner. This is to ensure the quality of education delivered as part of the collaboration, and to protect the University of Southampton's reputation.

56. This also reflects the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Advice and Guidance on Partnerships, which states that:

*'The awarding organisation and, where relevant, the partner should conduct a range of due diligence enquiries appropriate to the type of partnership, the detailed arrangements and the identified level of risk.'*

57. The Quality Code further states that:

*The purpose of due diligence by a provider is to identify the factors that may place it at risk, legally or reputationally, and to anticipate future developments which could jeopardise academic standards, the quality of students' learning opportunities and/or the viability of an award or a partnership. Due diligence processes provide the opportunity for reasonable care and caution to be exercised to mitigate corporate risk and ensure that students' interests are protected.*

*Due diligence processes (legal, financial and academic) provide the relevant information required for a provider to make clear judgements and assess any potential risk to the organisation or its students. The processes should be proportionate and timely, and will depend on a range of factors including, for example, the nature of the proposed partnership and the location and experience of the proposed partner. Providers should ensure that due diligence enquiries are carried out by appropriately qualified and/or experienced personnel; it is normal for enquiries to involve a range of staff from across a provider.'*

58. In exchange for due diligence on partners, the University anticipates that potential partners will scrutinise the University of Southampton's practice, operations and history. The University is aware that the Due Diligence process is sensitive, both politically and culturally. The investigation will therefore be conducted with appropriate tact and diplomacy, particularly as it is the expectation that any future partner will be a well-established institution with an excellent reputation. However, in order to act in a transparent way and to encourage the development of a partnership, the University will provide its own documents to a proposed partner first before requesting their information.
59. When setting up a new collaborative provision arrangement, the University will always carry out an exchange of due diligence letters with prospective partners, both in the UK or overseas. To aid this, QSAT sends a letter from the Vice President (Education) to prospective partner(s), confirming aspects of the University of Southampton's legal and financial status, and the University asks potential partners to respond with a similar statement of their position. This requirement may be waived, or a lighter touch approach taken, if the proposed partner has already undergone such enquiries within the last five years or where the proposed partner is considered low risk such as another UK Higher Education Institution..
60. In most cases, the University's standard due diligence letter will suffice. However, prior to sending out the due diligence letter, QSAT will discuss the Stage 1 paperwork with a member of Legal Services to agree if any additional information should be requested from the prospective partner at this stage. Partners are responsible for providing required information in English. If documents are not provided in English, QSAT will arrange for an official translation of the relevant documents which will be charged to the School.
61. Once the information has been received from the prospective partner, the Legal, Financial, and Insurance based due diligence documentation and the risk assessment, will be considered at a Due Diligence Approval Panel, (DDAP). The DDAP will be convened by QSAT and will include representatives from the following areas of the University.
- Insurance Office
  - Legal Services
  - Finance
  - Admissions (for UKVI requirements)
  - Human Resources (for staff mobility requirements)

Where time is of the essence, or where the proposed partner is considered low risk, the DDAP may consider the information received through an exchange of emails between members of the panel.

62. The DDAP will consider the evidence presented to it and establish whether the information on the proposed partner is adequate and hence whether the partner is appropriate for collaboration with the University of Southampton. The DDAP may require additional information before making a decision.
63. The DDAP will also consider if the risk assessment should be revised in the light of the information presented as part of the due diligence enquiries. The DDAP will make one of three judgements:
  - Recommend the proposed collaboration;
  - Recommend the proposed collaboration, subject to the provision of satisfactory additional evidence;
  - Reject the proposed collaboration (if this judgement is given, detailed feedback will be provided to the Collaboration Sponsor).

QSAT will notify the Collaboration Sponsor of the panel's judgement.

64. Following consideration by the DDAP, QSAT will submit the following documentation to the Secretary of the University's Collaborative Provision Subcommittee:
  - Collaborative Provision Initial Proposal Form;
  - Risk Assessment;
  - Collaborative Provision Due Diligence Form;
  - Collaborative Provision Site Visit Checklist.
65. The Collaborative Provision Subcommittee will consider the documentation and, dependent on the level of risk associated with the proposed partner or proposed arrangement, will determine whether:
  - a recommendation should be made to Academic Quality and Standards Committee not to proceed with the proposed arrangement. In such cases, the Collaborative Provision Subcommittee would provide the rationale for their decision
  - additional site visit/s or resources visits are required and by whom
  - discussions with other partners of the prospective partner organisation are required
  - for proposals requiring a Collaboration Approval Panel, whether the Collaboration Approval Panel should or should not involve an external
  - the Collaboration Approval Panel should be held at the partner institution
  - the Collaboration Approval Panel should be held at the University.
66. The Collaborative Provision Subcommittee may also request additional information or additional checks where it considers there to be an area of risk or where there is insufficient information to make a judgement on how the approval process should proceed.
67. The Secretary to the Collaborative Provision Subcommittee will complete the Collaborative Provision Due Diligence form in line with the Group's findings and send these to the Collaboration Sponsor.
68. For articulation arrangements, the Collaboration Sponsor will submit the completed Collaborative Provision Due Diligence Form, Site Visit Checklist and curriculum mapping exercise (see Appendix A) to the School Programme Committee for consideration.
69. For all other arrangements requiring a Collaboration Approval Panel, if the Due Diligence Approval Panel and Collaborative Provision Subcommittee recommend the collaboration,

proposal now moves on to Stage 3 of the partner approval process which is the Collaboration Approval Panel stage.

70. QSAT will maintain records of the due diligence carried out for each arrangement. This will enable the University to avoid duplicate requests should more than one arrangement be set up with the same partner in close succession.

71. **Legal Agreement**

The Collaboration Sponsor is also responsible for arranging for an appropriate legal agreement to be drafted on behalf of the University. These agreements secure the University's interests and reputation, and its capacity to discharge its responsibilities as the awarding institution. For collaborative arrangements this will be done through Legal Services.

72. **Degree Certificate**

If the proposed collaboration results in a joint award, involves students studying for a University of Southampton award outside of the University's UK campuses, or is taught or assessed in a language other than English, this might affect the final degree certificate and transcript. QSAT will work with the University's Exams, Awards and Graduation Office, or with partner institutions, to draft certificates in such cases. The proposed degree certificate should be included in the Memorandum of Agreement.

**Stage 3 - Partner Approval**

73. For Joint, Dual, and Single Awards involving teaching hosted by or with a partner, a Collaboration Approval Panel is required to discuss the collaboration on behalf of Academic Quality and Standards Committee. The purpose of a Collaboration Approval Panel is to approve the proposed partner institution. It is not to approve a new programme, which will be subject to the Programme Validation process. The Collaboration Approval Panel will be required to assure Academic Quality and Standards Committee and Senate that the learning environment, support services, and ethos of the partner will assure an appropriate student experience for students of the University.

74. In cases involving a validated award or where teaching will be provided by the proposed partner institution, both the Collaboration Approval Panel and Academic Scrutiny Group involved in Stage 2 of the Programme Validation process may meet at the proposed partner institution: this will be decided by the Collaborative Provision Subcommittee. The two processes should remain distinct and result in two separate reports, one focused on the partner, the other on the programme. It may/may not be possible to run a combined panel for such arrangements depending on the expertise of individual panel members.

75. For other types of arrangement, the Collaboration Approval Panel may/may not take place at the partner institution. The Collaborative Provision Subcommittee will make this determination once it has evaluated the risks associated with the new partnership and the nature of the arrangement.

76. **Collaboration Approval Panel Membership:**

- Chair of the Collaboration Approval Panel – normally the Vice-President (Education) or another senior member of the University from outside the Faculty in question, usually an Associate Dean Education or Deputy Head of School (Education);
- An additional academic of senior standing from outside the Faculty in question;
- A Faculty Academic Registrar from outside the Faculty in question;
- External Panel Member (if required);
- A member of QSAT will act as Secretary to the panel.

77. The external panel member should be a senior member of another UK university with substantial appropriate experience, ideally including experience of QAA institutional reviews. Where programme validation is carried out at the same time as Partner Approval, the external panel

member will need to have appropriate subject expertise as well as fitting the criteria set out above. Alternatively, there may be two external panel members. The Collaborative Provision Subcommittee, on the advice of QSAT, will approve external panel members for Collaboration Approval Panels.

78. The panel will aim to meet members of staff from both the University of Southampton and the partner involved in the proposal. It may also act as a representative body to the partner in the partner's own collaboration approval processes.
79. The Collaboration Sponsor should submit the relevant following documentation to the Secretary of the panel a minimum of 4 weeks in advance of the Collaboration Approval Panel. Not all of the documentation will apply to each type of arrangement. QSAT will advise on the precise documentation to be included.
  - The original Initial Proposal Document;
  - Completed Risk Assessment template;
  - Business Case;
  - Evidence of strategic approval by the Faculty Board;
  - Outcome of the Due Diligence Approval Meeting (including any additional evidence requested as part of the recommendation);
  - A brief evaluative report from the proposed partner institution which includes an introduction to the institution (size, type, student numbers, legal status, institutional values and mission); governance structure (organisation chart); QA arrangements; mechanisms for obtaining and acting on student feedback; staffing on the programme (including staff development opportunities); support services for students, resources (library, IT etc), personal tutoring arrangements;
  - Reports from external quality assurance bodies and the partner institution's response to recommendations and copies of action plans, where appropriate;
  - Partner institution policies including health and safety and equality and diversity;
  - Partner institution committee structure, TOR of committees, last year of minutes;
  - Partner prospectus and draft publicity materials relating to the collaborative arrangement;
  - SSLC minutes or equivalent for the last year;
  - Reports of visits to the proposed partner (including formal site visit reports if the Collaboration Approval Panel is not to take place at the proposed partner institution);
  - Comments from, and responses to, the External Advisor (from the Programme Validation Process);
  - Programme Validation form (at its current stage of completion);
  - Programme Specification and module profiles for any modules to be taught at or by the partner institution;
  - Draft Memorandum of Agreement, if available;
  - Draft Operations Manual;
  - A report from the Collaboration Sponsor detailing how, if at all, the proposal has changed since the Initial Proposal Document;
  - Any other evidence in support of the collaboration, for example reports from members of University staff who have worked with the proposed partner(s) previously, details of any infrastructure required to support the collaboration, visit reports etc.
80. The Collaboration Approval Panel should include the opportunity for a discussion of and, if appropriate, an additional visit to the partner's learning, student support and administrative services, and to meet with appropriate members of the partner's senior management team. A typical agenda might include
  - Private Panel Meeting



- Discussion with Collaboration Sponsor/other academic staff involved in delivering the collaboration
  - Discussion with staff and students from the partner organisation (face to face, telephone, Skype)
  - Discussion with staff from the University's Professional Services
  - Private Panel Meeting
  - Feedback
81. In the final validation report, the Collaboration Approval Panel will, on behalf of the University, comment on the following issues:
- The rationale for the partnership
  - Whether the partner has a complementary mission, ethos and environment for a collaboration with the University of Southampton
  - Details on who the lead Faculty and/or University is (if applicable)
  - The effectiveness of the quality, monitoring and evaluation systems proposed for the collaboration
  - The student support arrangements for students studying at the proposed partner(s)
  - Details (where relevant) of
    - Admissions and enrolment procedures
    - How student engagement and feedback will be encouraged
    - Access by students to appropriate student representation (i.e. SUSU or an equivalent)
    - Any placement activity required
    - Whether the proposal will be subject to scrutiny by quality assurance bodies from other jurisdictions, and how this will be managed
    - Arrangements for assessment
    - How complaints and appeals will be handled
    - How suspected breaches in academic integrity will be handled
    - Graduation ceremonies and production of awards
    - If the proposed collaboration includes teaching not in English, the Panel will look at students' relationship with the University of Southampton, and how the University will be assured that appropriate quality assurance and enhancement will be followed, particularly in relation to assessment.
82. The Collaboration Approval Panel will make one of the following recommendations to Academic Quality and Standards Committee:
- To approve the collaboration
  - To approve the collaboration subject to conditions of approval and/or recommendations
  - Not to approve the collaboration
83. The Panel's Report will be sent to the Collaboration Sponsor, Associate Dean Education, Deputy Head of School (Education), Faculty Academic Registrar, all of the relevant Directors of Professional Services and to the Secretary of the Collaborative Provision Subcommittee.
84. Where conditions of approval are set, the panel should state the timescale for the Faculty/School/Partner to meet these. The Programme Team is required to provide an action plan detailing its response to both conditions and recommendations. The action plan will be circulated to the panel and feedback is required from all panel members on whether the response is satisfactory. Conditions must be met to the satisfaction of all panel members before the partner is recommended for approval.

85. The Collaborative Provision Subcommittee will consider the panel's report and the Programme Team's action plan (and draft Memorandum of Agreement) and make a decision about whether or not to endorse the Collaboration Approval Panel's recommendation. The Secretary to the Collaborative Provision Subcommittee will send the report, action plan and Subcommittee's recommendation to the Secretary of Academic Quality and Standards Committee for approval by Academic Quality and Standards Committee.
86. The programme validation will proceed to Stage 3 Programme Approval of the Programme Validation Process.

#### **Stage 4 - Memorandum of Agreement**

87. As indicated in paragraph 69 above, the Collaboration Sponsor should initiate preparation of a draft Memorandum of Agreement at an early stage as this will also need to be considered and approved by the partner organisation. The Faculty Academic Registrar and QSAT should be consulted in the preparation of draft agreements to ensure that the arrangements regarding the quality and monitoring of the provision are appropriate. For agreements regarding PhD arrangements, the Doctoral College should also be consulted.
88. Memoranda of Agreement for collaborative arrangements are prepared by Legal Services (contact the Head of Legal Services).
89. Memoranda of Agreement will specify both the University and partner institution's responsibilities and will meet the requirements of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.
90. The content of agreements

The following list (which is not exhaustive) highlights matters relating to academic standards and quality that may be addressed when drafting an agreement, contract or other document for an arrangement for learning opportunities to be provided by an organisation other than the degree-awarding body.

- The distinction between those aspects of the arrangement that relate to the organisational-level relationship and collaboration between the parties in general, and those aspects that are particular to the delivery of specific programme(s) encompassed by the arrangement (which might be the subject of annexes to the agreement).
- Definitions of the roles, responsibilities and obligations of each of the parties.
- Definition of any powers delegated (or, in the case of joint degrees, shared) in each arrangement (for example, the management of admissions, arrangements for student engagement or the conduct of annual monitoring)
- Clarification as to which regulations and quality assurance processes apply.
- The services to be provided by each organisation taking account of the obligations to ensure that learning opportunities are delivered to the requirements of the degree-awarding body.
- Financial arrangements.
- Insurance and indemnity.
- Arrangements for complaints and appeals.
- Specification of the role of external examiners in ensuring that the degree awarding body can fulfil its responsibility for the academic standards of the awards.
- Arrangements for ownership of copyright and intellectual property rights.
- A statement of the arrangements through which the parties will ensure compliance with statutory obligations including equality, data protection, freedom of information, health and safety, immigration, taxation, employment law and environmental law.
- The source or location of any quality- related information or statistical data to be produced, for example for a funding council or PSRB, and responsibility for submission of this information.

- A statement as to whether serial arrangements involving further sub- contracting are precluded, and, if they are not, what sorts of arrangements might be permitted and under what conditions.
  - Arrangements governing the use of the degree- awarding body's name and logo; and provision for oversight, by the degree- awarding body, of information relating to the arrangement and any associated promotional activity that has been placed in the public domain.
  - An obligation on the delivery organisation, support provider or partner to notify the degree- awarding body or other higher education provider of any change to its status or ownership.
  - The consequences of a private delivery organisation or support provider changing ownership and what this might imply for re- recognition or revalidation and establishing a revised agreement.
  - Specification of the law applicable to the agreement and the legal jurisdiction under which any disputes would be resolved.
  - Provisions to enable either organisation to suspend or withdraw from the agreement if the other party fails to fulfil its obligations.
  - Termination and mediation provisions and financial arrangements to be followed if the arrangement ceases (including scope for compensation).
  - Specification of the residual obligations of both parties to students on termination of the collaborative arrangement, including the obligations of the degree- awarding body to enable students to complete their studies leading to one of its awards.
  - Procedures for amending the agreement and/or for agreeing additional appendices.
  - Date and mechanism for review of the agreement.
91. Agreements will also (where relevant) confirm responsibilities for providing translations of documents.
92. Memoranda of Agreement must only be signed by the President and Vice- Chancellor or the President and Vice- Chancellor's authorised representative. Agreements should be signed by both parties before any arrangement commences.

## G. Operating Collaborative Provision

93. The University's responsibilities for the operation of any collaborative provision arrangement and those of the partner institution will be specified in the Memorandum of Agreement. For complex partnerships an Operations Manual will be put in place for the collaboration, which will detail the arrangements for the collaboration and amplify the Memorandum of Agreement.
94. In collaborative arrangements where the University is not the lead institution, the University's responsibilities will be stated in the Memorandum of Agreement. The remainder of section G below is written from the perspective of when the University is the sole awarding body or lead institution.

### **Admissions**

95. The University must determine the admission requirements and acceptable entry qualifications for all students joining a programme provided under a collaborative agreement, paying due regard to equal opportunity issues as appropriate. Any criteria and procedures for the Recognition of Prior Learning or English language entrance requirements that may be in place should be clear and documented, and the School is responsible for ensuring that this information is shared with the partner.
96. The Memorandum of Agreement must detail the responsibilities for the management of the admissions process and detail who has the authority to make admissions decisions based on the University's approved admissions policies and criteria relevant for that programme. However, the School must monitor the application of the requirements, paying due regard to the expectation set out by any professional, statutory and regulatory bodies where appropriate. This will require information to be supplied by the partner organisation to the School on a regular basis. How and when this will be done should be determined by the School, but should be decided after careful consideration of University deadlines for such information. Schools must include data from their collaborative programmes in their regular reports to the University on student entrance qualifications, and related admissions reports.
97. As a minimum the School should ensure that it holds details of the entry qualifications of all entrants to a collaborative programme, so that they can be monitored against the agreed criteria. The equivalence of any non- UK qualifications, or other entry qualifications likely to be routinely accepted for entry onto the programme, should be established in consultation with the International Office and must be clearly documented for both parties. Equivalences will be approved by Recruitment and Admissions Subcommittee.
98. The School must also ensure that it receives information from the partner organisation on a regular basis concerning all cases of withdrawal or non- progression arising within each cohort of students.

### **Assessment and Examinations**

99. The examination and assessment requirements for programmes provided under a collaborative arrangement must be devised so as to ensure that the academic standards of the awards are equivalent to those of the same or comparable programmes delivered at the University.
100. For collaborative programmes that are taught at the University as well as at a partner organisation the examination and other assessment requirements should be the same as those required by the same University programme/modules. If variations are essential these must only be made with the prior approval of the School, on behalf of the University. The School must be satisfied that it has demonstrated that equivalent and appropriate academic standards are being articulated and achieved.
101. The Agreement should make clear the assessment procedure at each institution and, where relevant, the School should ensure that the partner organisation understands and follows the University's requirements for the conduct of assessments and examinations.
102. All marks must be received by the School's Board of Examiners for confirmation before they can be considered final.

103. In collaborative provision arrangements, the University must ensure that the appointment and functions of external examiners meet required standards, as laid out in the QAA's UK Quality Code. Wherever possible, external examiners should conform to the University's policy and procedures relating to the appointment of external examiners for taught programmes of study.
104. The partner institution is required to have in place external examining arrangements which conform to UK HE expectations, including annual assurance to the University about the quality and standards of any credits or degrees they have awarded under the collaborative arrangement. Alternatively, partner institutions are required to accept external examiner oversight arranged by the University of Southampton. This requirement will be applied to any new partnership and when any existing one is renewed
105. Where the same programme is delivered both on campus and at a partner organisation, the same external examiner should ideally be appointed for both programmes in order to assure comparability of standards.
106. Where the collaborative programme involves a non- UK organisation the School should, in addition, consider what provisions need to be in place in the assessment and examination process to address:
  - the necessary language skills of internal and external examiners where instruction and/or assessment arrangements is not in English;
  - the experience and understanding of UK higher education of internal examiners.
107. Schools involved in collaborative arrangements should ensure that the role of external examiners in ensuring that the University can fulfil its responsibility for the academic standards of the awards made in its name are clearly defined and communicated to the partner organisation and to the individual external examiners.
108. The external examiner's annual and end of service reports must be submitted to the University as per the University's policy and procedures. The School must address the reports as they would all other external examiner reports in consultation with the partner.

#### **Certificates and Transcripts**

109. The issuing of award certificates and transcripts must remain under the control of the University, except where this is expressly declared otherwise within the agreement. Transcripts can be issued by the partner organisation but they must make clear the collaborative nature of the programme, the name of the awarding body as the University of Southampton and the language of instruction (if applicable). To this end the School is responsible for ensuring that any partner's transcript template for a collaborative programme meets the requirements of the University's policy on transcripts and contains accurate and appropriate information.
110. Except in cases where this is prohibited by another country's legislation, the certificate or transcript should record the name of the awarding body and the partner organisation. It should also clearly state the language of instruction in the exceptional cases where this was not English. If the language of assessment was not the same as that used for instruction this should also be clearly recorded on the Certificate or transcript. Where such information is recorded on the transcript only, the award certificate must refer to the existence of the transcript.
111. The words and terms used on the certificate or transcript should be consistent both with those used by the University on the certificates and transcripts for the same or comparable programmes it provides and with any relevant qualifications or awards frameworks.

#### **Communication and Liaison**

112. Regular communication between the University and partner institutions is essential to the effective management of any collaborative provision arrangement and to ensuring sufficient oversight of quality and standards. For that reason, each arrangement will have an Academic Link Tutor responsible for maintaining regular contact with a named individual at the partner institution.

### **Complaints and Appeals**

113. Any student registered on a University of Southampton award, including those offered with a partner organisation, has the right of complaint and appeal through the usual University procedures. Therefore, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the Memorandum of Agreement, the University's regulatory framework will apply, not that of the partner organisation.

### **Enrolment, Registration and Induction**

114. The management of the enrolment, registration and induction processes should be detailed in the Memorandum of Agreement.
115. The School is responsible for ensuring that all students accepted on a collaborative programme are enrolled and registered on the University's student record system in good time.

### **Marketing and Information for Students**

116. It is important that the public cannot be misled about any collaborative arrangement or about the nature and standing of the programme provided under such arrangements. The University must therefore retain control over the accuracy of all public information, publicity and promotional activity relating to the programmes and awards for which it has responsibility, particularly where information is published on its behalf. Details of the branding arrangements and the process for monitoring publicity and marketing must be included in the Memorandum of Agreement.
117. Schools involved in collaborative arrangements must approve any publicity or marketing about particular collaborative provision arrangements and also check these on a regular basis, including spot checks of any websites. Schools must keep a record of when approval and any checks have been carried out. The Collaborative Provision Annual Report form requires confirmation of this.
118. Information given by the partner organisation to prospective students and to those registered on a programme about the nature of the programme, the academic standards to be met and the quality of the provision which is offered should:
- be approved by the School, on behalf of the University;
  - define clearly the nature of the collaborative arrangement; and
  - outline the respective responsibilities of the parties.
119. The School is responsible for ensuring that the information is comparable with that given by the University to its own potential and registered internal students. The information should be monitored regularly and updated as appropriate. The Collaborative Provision Annual Report form requires confirmation that this has been carried out.
120. The information should include directions to students about the appropriate channels for particular concern, complaints and appeals.

### **Monitoring Quality and Standards**

121. Collaborative Provision is subject to the University's usual Quality, Monitoring and Enhancement processes which are detailed in the Quality Handbook:
- Annual Quality Monitoring processes (module report form, a separate annual programme report form for Collaborative Provision);
  - Standard student feedback mechanisms (module survey, Staff Student Liaison Committee);
  - Usual procedures for the use of feedback from, and reporting to, external examiners;
  - Standard Board of Examiners procedures;
  - Programme Validation at least every five years;
  - Review and re-approval of the partnership at least every five years.

Where collaborative arrangements involve more than one School the Collaborative Provision Annual Report should be discussed at the lead School's Programme Committee and noted at the other School's Programme Committee

122. In addition, all Collaboration Sponsors are responsible for completing a Collaborative Provision Annual Report form as part of the University's Quality Monitoring and Enhancement Framework. This is discussed by the relevant School Programmes Committee and also by the University's Collaborative Provision Subcommittee which will draw together an overview of the University's collaborative provision arrangements for discussion at Academic Quality and Standards Committee. The reporting requirements for different types of arrangement can be found at Appendix D of this policy.

## H. Renewing a Collaborative Arrangement

123. All programmes are subject to regular (at least every five years) validation. In addition, collaborations are reviewed prior to the expiry of the Memorandum of Agreement in order to enable the University to satisfy itself that the institutional level conditions for the partnership continue to be met. Where a Memorandum of Agreement has been signed for a period longer than five years, an interim review should take place. It is strongly recommended that Schools begin to map out the renewal process and timeline 24 months before any review is due. The renewal process should commence 18 months prior to the expiry of the Memorandum of Agreement.
124. The process for revalidating an existing programme can be found in the Programme Revalidation Policy and Procedure.
125. The collaboration/partner re-approval process mirrors the partner approval process and has four stages.
- Stage 1 - Strategic approval to renew
  - Stage 2 - Due diligence and Due Diligence Approval Panel
  - Stage 3 - Partner Re- approval
  - Stage 4 - The Memorandum of Agreement

### **Stage 1 Strategic Approval to renew**

126. The Collaboration Sponsor should complete the following documentation for consideration by Faculty Board:
- Proposal to renew a collaboration form (for UK partners)
  - International Agreements Proposal Template (for international partners)
  - Risk Assessment form
  - Site Visit Checklist
  - Revised Business Case (prepared by the Head of Faculty Finance)
127. Faculty Board will decide whether the collaborative arrangement should proceed to the next stage of the renewal.
128. Where renewing the arrangement will also involve a programme revalidation, Faculty Board should also consider the Programme Evaluative Report at the same time as the completed Proposal to renew a collaboration form. Questions which feature on both forms should be completed on the Programme Evaluative Report only, for those questions the Proposal to renew a collaboration form should refer to the Programme Evaluative Report.
129. Once renewal has been discussed by Faculty Board, the Collaboration Sponsor will inform QSAT of the decision. QSAT will notify the Vice-President (Education) and, where appropriate, the Vice-President (International) and log the proposed renewal.
130. Where Faculty Board does not give strategic approval to renew the arrangement, the Collaboration Sponsor is responsible for ensuring that the activity ceases in line with Section I, whilst presenting the least disruption for students. If strategic approval to renew the arrangement is given, the Collaboration Sponsor completes Section A of the Collaborative Provision Due Diligence Form and submits the following documentation to QSAT (qsa@soton.ac.uk) who will begin the formal Due Diligence process (see Stage 2 below):
- Proposal to renew a collaboration form
  - Initial Risk Assessment Form
  - Site Visit Checklist
  - Revised Business Case



- Programme Evaluative Report
- Confirmation of Faculty Board approval to proceed with the renewal
- Collaborative Provision Due Diligence Form with Section A completed.

131. The programme revalidation should proceed to Stage 2 Programme Development and Academic Approval of the programme revalidation process. School Programmes Committee should be notified of Faculty Board's decision.

### **Stage 2 - Due Diligence and Due Diligence Approval Panel**

132. Following strategic approval to renew the arrangement, the University will also renew its due diligence enquiries in line with the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Advice and Guidance on Partnerships, which advises that:

*'due diligence enquiries are refreshed periodically and before agreements are renewed.'*

133. As when setting up a new collaborative provision arrangement, the University will carry out an exchange of due diligence letters with prospective partners, both in the UK or overseas. To aid this, QSAT sends a letter from the Vice-President (Education) to the partner institution, reconfirming aspects of the University of Southampton's legal and financial status, and asking the partner to respond with a similar statement of their position. This requirement will be waived if the proposed partner has already undergone such enquiries within the last five years or where the proposed partner is considered low risk such as another UK Higher Education Institution.

134. In most cases, the University's standard due diligence letter will suffice. However, prior to sending out the due diligence letter, QSAT will discuss the exact requirements with a member of Legal Services to agree if any additional information should be requested from the prospective partner at this stage or if any of the requests in the letter should be waived. If documents are not provided in English, QSAT will arrange for an official translation of the relevant documents which will be charged to the School.

135. Once the information has been received from the prospective partner, the Legal, Financial and Insurance- based due diligence documentation, the risk assessment and site visit checklist will be considered at a Due Diligence Approval Panel (DDAP). The DDAP will be convened by QSAT and will include representatives from the following areas of the University:

- Insurance Office
- Legal Services
- Finance
- Admissions (for UKVI requirements)
- Human Resources (for staff mobility requirements)

136. Where time is of the essence, or where the proposed partner is considered low risk, the DDAP may consider the information received through an exchange of emails between members of the panel.

137. The DDAP will consider the evidence presented to it and establish whether the information is adequate. The DDAP may require additional information before making a decision.

138. The DDAP will also consider if the risk assessment should be revised in the light of the information presented as part of the due diligence enquiries. The DDAP will make one of three judgements:

- Recommend the proposed renewal;
- Recommend the renewal, subject to the provision of satisfactory additional evidence;
- Reject the proposed renewal (if this judgement is given, detailed feedback will be provided to the Collaboration Sponsor).

QSAT will notify the Collaboration Sponsor of the Panel's judgement.

139. Following consideration by the DDAP, QSAT will submit the following documentation to the Secretary of the University's Collaborative Provision Subcommittee:
- the Proposal to renew a collaboration form/or International Agreements Proposal Template
  - Risk Assessment
  - Collaborative Provision Due Diligence form
  - the last 3 collaborative provision annual reports
  - the last 3 annual programme reports
  - the last 3 external examiner reports
140. The Collaborative Provision Subcommittee will consider the documentation and, dependent on the level of risk associated with partner or arrangement, will determine whether
- a recommendation should be made to Academic Quality and Standards Committee not to proceed with the proposed renewal. In such cases, the Collaborative Provision Subcommittee would provide the rationale for their decision
  - additional site visit/s or resources visits are required and by whom
  - for proposals requiring a Collaboration Approval Panel, the Collaboration Approval Panel should or should not involve an external
  - the Collaboration Approval Panel should be held at the partner
  - the Collaboration Approval Panel should be held at the University.
141. The Collaborative Provision Subcommittee may also request additional information or additional checks where it considers there to be an area of risk or where there is insufficient information to make a judgement on how the approval process should proceed.
142. The Secretary to the Collaborative Provision Subcommittee will complete the Collaborative Provision Due Diligence form in line with the Subcommittee's findings and send this to the Collaboration Sponsor.
143. For articulation arrangements, the Collaboration Sponsor will submit the completed Collaborative Provision Due Diligence Form, Site Visit Checklist and curriculum mapping exercise to the School Programme Committee for consideration.
144. For all other arrangements requiring a Collaboration Approval Panel, if the Due Diligence Approval Panel and Collaborative Provision Subcommittee recommend the renewal, proposal now moves on to Stage 3 of the partner approval process which is the Collaboration Approval Panel stage.
145. QSAT will maintain details of the due diligence carried out for each arrangement. This will enable the University to avoid duplicate requests should more than one arrangement be set up with the same partner in close succession.
146. **Legal Agreement**
- The Collaboration Sponsor is also responsible for arranging for a new legal agreement to be drafted on behalf of the University. This will usually be done through Legal Services.
147. **Degree Certificate**
- If the proposed collaboration results in a joint award, involves students studying for a University of Southampton award outside of the University's UK campuses, or is taught or assessed in a language other than English, this might affect the final degree certificate and transcript. QSAT will work with the University's Exams, Awards and Graduation Office, or with partner institutions, to draft certificates in such cases. Certificates for existing collaborative provision that already take a different format to standard University of Southampton awards will be considered by the Collaboration Approval Panel.

### Stage 3 - Partner Re-approval

148. For Joint, Dual, and Single Awards involving teaching hosted by or with a partner, a Collaboration Approval Panel is required to discuss the renewal of the collaboration on behalf of Academic Quality and Standards Committee. The purpose of a Collaboration Approval Panel is to re-approve the proposed partner institution. It is not to validate the programme, which as an existing programme will be subject to the Programme Revalidation Policy and Procedure. The Collaboration Approval Panel will be required to assure Academic Quality and Standards Committee and Senate that the learning environment, support services, and ethos of the partner will continue to assure an appropriate student experience for students of the University.
149. In cases involving a validated award or where the partner institution will provide teaching, both the Collaboration Approval Panel and Academic Scrutiny Group involved in Stage 2 of the Programme Revalidation Process may meet at the partner institution: to be determined by the Collaborative Provision Subcommittee. The two processes should remain distinct and result in two separate reports, one focused on the partner, the other on the programme. It may/may not be possible to run a combined panel for such arrangements depending on the expertise of individual panel members.
150. For other types of arrangement, the Collaboration Approval Panel may/may not take place at the partner institution. The Collaborative Provision Subcommittee will make this determination once it has evaluated the risks associated with the partnership and the nature of the arrangement.
151. Collaboration Approval Panel Membership:
- The Chair of the Collaboration Approval Panel – normally the Vice-President (Education) or another senior member of the University from outside the Faculty on question, usually an Associate Dean Education or Deputy Head of School (Education);
- An additional academic of senior standing from outside the Faculty in question;
- A Faculty Academic Registrar from outside the Faculty in question:
- External Panel Member (if required);
- A member of QSAT will act as Secretary to the panel.
152. External members of panels should be nominated through the External Panel Member Nomination Form, with approval sought from School Programmes Committee. The external panel member should be a senior member of another UK university with substantial appropriate experience, ideally including experience of QAA institutional reviews. Where programme revalidation is carried out at the same time as Partner Approval, the external panel member will need to have appropriate subject expertise as well as fitting the criteria set out above. Alternatively, there may be two external panel members. The Collaborative Provision Subcommittee, on the advice of QSAT, will approve external panel members for Collaboration Approval Panels.
153. The panel will aim to meet members of staff from both the University of Southampton and the partner involved in the proposal. It may also act as a representative body to the partner in the partner's own collaboration approval processes.
154. The Collaboration Sponsor should submit the relevant following documentation to the Secretary of the panel a minimum of 4 weeks in advance of the Collaboration Approval Panel:
- The proposal to renew a collaboration form/or International Agreements Proposal Template;
  - Completed Risk Assessment template;
  - Business Case;
  - Evidence of strategic approval by the Faculty Board;
  - Outcome of the Due Diligence Approval Meeting (including any additional evidence requested as part of the recommendation);

- A brief evaluative report from the proposed partner institution which includes an introduction to the institution (size, type, student numbers, legal status, institutional values and mission); governance structure (organisation chart); QA arrangements; mechanisms for obtaining and acting on student feedback; staffing on the programme (including staff development opportunities); support services for students, resources (library, IT etc), personal tutoring arrangements and which assesses the effectiveness of the partnership since the original approval;
  - Reports from external quality assurance bodies and the partner institution's responses to recommendations and copies of action plans, where appropriate;
  - Partner institution policies including health and safety and equality and diversity;
  - Partner institution committee structure, TOR of committees, last year of minutes;
  - Minutes from any Joint Committee for the last year;
  - Partner prospectus and current publicity materials relating to the collaborative arrangement;
  - SSLC minutes or equivalent for the last year;
  - Collaborative Provision Annual Reports for the last three years;
  - Annual Programme Reports for the last three years;
  - External Examiner Reports for the last three years;
  - A copy of the Degree Certificate for the programme, if it varies from the standard University of Southampton format;
  - Reports of visits to the partner (including formal site visit reports if the Collaboration Approval Panel is not to take place at the proposed partner institution);
  - Comments from, and responses to, the External Advisor (from the Programme Validation Process);
  - Programme Validation form (at its current stage of completion);
  - Programme Specification and module profiles for any modules to be taught at or by the partner institution;
  - Draft Memorandum of Agreement, if available;
  - Current Operations Manual;
  - A report from the Collaboration Sponsor detailing how, if at all, the proposal has changed since the proposal to renew a collaboration form was completed;
  - Any other evidence in support of the renewal of the collaboration, for example reports from members of University staff who have worked with the proposed partner(s) previously, details of any infrastructure required to support the collaboration etc.
155. The Collaboration Approval Panel should include the opportunity a discussion of and, if appropriate, an additional visit to the partner's learning, student support and administrative services, and to meet with appropriate members of the partner's senior management team. A typical agenda might include
- Private Panel Meeting
  - Discussion with Collaboration Sponsor/other academic staff involved in delivering the collaboration
  - Discussion with staff and students from the partner organisation (face to face, telephone, Skype)
  - Discussion with staff from the University's Professional Services
  - Private Panel Meeting
  - Feedback
156. In the final validation report, the Collaboration Approval Panel will, on behalf of the University, comment on the following issues:

- The rationale for the partnership
  - Whether the partner has a complementary mission, ethos and environment for a collaboration with the University of Southampton
  - Details on who the lead Faculty and/or University is
  - The effectiveness of the quality, monitoring and evaluation systems proposed for the collaboration
  - The student support arrangements for students studying at the proposed partner(s)
  - Details (where relevant) of
    - Admissions and enrolment procedures
    - Arrangements for assessment
    - How complaints and appeals will be handled
    - How suspected breaches in academic integrity will be handled
    - How student engagement and feedback will be encouraged
    - Access by students to appropriate student representation (i.e. SUSU or an equivalent)
    - Any placement activity required
    - Graduation ceremonies and production of awards
    - Whether the proposal will be subject to scrutiny by quality assurance bodies from other jurisdictions, and how this will be managed
    - If the collaboration includes teaching not in English, the Panel will look at students' relationship with the University of Southampton, and how the University will be assured that appropriate quality assurance and enhancement will be followed, particularly in relation to assessment.
157. The Collaboration Approval Panel will make one of the following recommendations to Academic Quality and Standards Committee:
- To re-approve the collaboration
  - To re-approve the collaboration subject to conditions of approval and/or recommendations
  - Not to approve the collaboration, which will start the process for terminating a collaborative arrangement.
158. The Panel's Report will be sent to the Collaboration Sponsor, Associate Dean Education, Deputy Head of School (Education), Faculty Academic Registrar, all of the relevant Directors of Professional Services and to the Secretary of the Collaborative Provision Subcommittee.
159. Where conditions of approval are set, the panel should state the timescale for the Faculty/School/Partner to meet these. The Programme Team is required to provide an action plan detailing its response to both conditions and recommendations. The action plan will be circulated to the panel and feedback is required from all panel members on whether the response is satisfactory. Conditions must be met to the satisfaction of all panel members before the partner is recommended for re-approval.
160. The Collaborative Provision Subcommittee will consider the panel's report and the Programme Team's action plan (and draft Memorandum of Agreement) and make a decision about whether or not to endorse the Collaboration Approval Panel's recommendation. The Secretary to the Collaborative Provision Subcommittee will send the Subcommittee's recommendation to the Secretary of Academic Quality and Standards Committee for approval by Academic Quality and Standards Committee.
161. QSAT will keep a record of the approval.
162. Programme validation will proceed to Stage 3 Programme Approval.

#### **Stage 4 - Memorandum of Agreement**

163. As indicated in paragraph 146 above, the Collaboration Sponsor should initiate preparation of a draft Memorandum of Agreement (Memorandum of Agreement) at an early stage as these also need to be considered and approved by the partner organisation. The Faculty Academic Registrar and QSAT should be consulted in the preparation of draft agreements to ensure that the arrangements regarding the quality and monitoring of the provision are appropriate. For agreements regarding PhD arrangements, the Doctoral College should also be consulted.
164. Memoranda of Agreements for all collaborative arrangements are prepared by Legal Services (contact the Head of Legal Services).
165. Memoranda of Agreement must only be signed by the President and Vice- Chancellor or the President and Vice- Chancellor's authorised representative. Agreements should be signed by both parties before any arrangement commences.

## I. Termination a Collaborative Arrangement

166. The decision to terminate a collaborative provision arrangement may be taken by the University or by a collaborative partner. The procedure to be followed to terminate an arrangement should be specified in the Memorandum of Agreement. An agreement which has expired and no longer has any students is automatically terminated and no further work is required.
167. The University may decide to end a collaborative arrangement for a variety of reasons. These include:
- the effluxion of time;
  - a breach by either the partner institution or the University of terms in the Memorandum of Agreement;
  - the end of the natural life of the arrangement, for example, due to insufficient recruitment to the programme/s;
  - a change in University strategy;
  - significant concerns raised by external examiners, by the Academic Link Tutor, through the annual module and annual programme reporting process or through the Collaborative Provision Annual Report form process and which remain after appropriate remedial action has been taken;
  - significant concerns raised as part of the validation, partner/collaboration renewal processes and which the University considers incapable of remedy or which remain after appropriate remedial action has been taken;
  - a change in status or ownership of the partner organisation.
168. The decision to terminate a collaborative provision arrangement by the University will be made following discussions between the relevant Associate Dean Education, the Deputy Head of School (Education), the Head of Quality, Standards and Accreditation and the Vice-President (Education). Where the arrangement involves an international partner, discussions will also involve the Associate Dean International, the Director of Internationalisation, Vice-President (International) and the International Office. Discussions should normally also take place with the partner institution in advance of the formal notice to terminate.
169. Once the decision has been made a formal letter, prepared by Legal Services and signed by the President and Vice-Chancellor, will be sent to the head of the partner institution confirming the decision to terminate the partnership and clearly setting out the reasons for termination. The letter will specify the date of the final intake to the programme.
170. The School Programmes Committee and Academic Quality and Standards Committee will also be notified of the decision and the rationale behind this and will also be advised of plans to be put in place to maintain the quality and standards during any teach out phase. Where relevant, a programme withdrawal form will also be completed by the School and submitted to Academic Quality and Standards Committee.
171. The University recognises that:
- the interests of students enrolled on a University of Southampton award are paramount;
  - the University remains responsible for ensuring that students already enrolled are able to complete their programme of study;
  - the University remains responsible for monitoring the quality and standards on the programme during the teach out phase.
172. During the teach out phase, the University's normal Quality, Monitoring and Enhancement processes will continue to apply. Where there is a lengthy teach out period these may include a partner/collaboration review and programme validation. Academic Quality and Standards Committee through its Collaborative Provision Subcommittee will be responsible for overseeing the closure of the partnership and for ensuring that the quality of students' learning opportunities are not compromised by the ending of the relationship.

173. The Academic Link Tutor should discuss with the partner how the exit will be managed, and in particular:

- Agree a communication plan with the partner institution which clearly sets out how and what staff and students are told about the closure of the partnership to ensure a consistent message and to minimise damage to the reputation of both parties;
- Confirm final completion dates and resit opportunities;
- Agree the date to amend marketing communications;
- Confirm that the University's normal Quality, Monitoring and Enhancement processes will continue to apply.

The Academic Link Tutor should ensure ongoing communication with the partner institution during the teach out phase and that a full record of all communications is kept.

174. Partner institutions will have their own internal procedures for closing a partnership. In such cases partner institutions must comply with the terms set out in the Memorandum of Agreement. This includes ensuring that any remaining students enrolled on the programme are able to complete their studies

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## Appendix A

Summary of key stages involved in approving different types of arrangement and the type of agreement needed

### A1. Articulation Arrangement Summary of Approval Process

- i. Collaboration Sponsor notifies relevant people of potential new development
- ii. QSAT logs this
- iii. Collaboration Sponsor completes Collaborative Provision Initial Proposal Form, Initial Risk Assessment and Site Visit Checklist. Head of Faculty Finance prepares business case. All four documents approved by Faculty Board
- iv. Collaboration Sponsor completes Section A of the Collaborative Provision Due Diligence Form and submits this with the documentation above to QSAT who co-ordinates exchange of due diligence including legal and financial information and convene a Due Diligence Approval Panel (DDAP)
- v. Collaboration Sponsor contacts the International Office to ask for an agreement to be drawn up
- vi. School carries out curriculum mapping exercise to ensure the partner programme(s) is positioned at the appropriate level and that the subject content is appropriate for entry to the University of Southampton programme(s)
- vii. QSAT notifies Collaboration Sponsor of outcome of DDAP
- viii. Outcome of DDAP and curriculum mapping exercise approved by SPC
- ix. SPC Secretary notifies the University Collaborative Provision Subcommittee Secretary and AQSC Secretary of outcome
- x. New arrangement noted at AQSC
- xi. QSAT adds new articulation arrangement to the Collaborative Provision Register

### Memorandum of Agreement

This model is subject to a signed articulation agreement which will be prepared by Legal Services. Legal Services will keep signed copies of these agreements. Agreements must be signed by the President and Vice Chancellor or his authorised representative.

### A2. BRANCH CAMPUS

The decision to establish a branch campus would be a University level initiative rather than the instigation of an individual Faculty/School or Collaboration Sponsor.

### A3. DUAL/DOUBLE/MULTIPLE AWARDS

Dual/double/multiple awards can be associated with a number of different types of collaborative provision arrangement (for example articulation or Erasmus Mundus). Where a collaborative provision arrangement is expected to result in a dual/double or multiple award, the Collaboration Sponsor should alert QSAT to this at initial proposal stage and provide clear details about the composition of each proposed award. QSAT will discuss all such cases with the Vice-President (Education). All proposals which will lead to a dual/double or multiple award will require final approval by AQSC. Specific guidance on the establishment of dual PhDs can be found in the Quality Handbook in document entitled [Research Degrees that include periods of off-campus study](#).

### A4. FLYING FACULTY/OFF SITE DELIVERY (WITH ELEMENTS OF PARTNER SUPPORT)

Summary of Approval Process

- i. Collaboration Sponsor notifies relevant people of potential new development.
- ii. QSAT logs this
- iii. The School will need to consider the implications of any staff mobility such as the method of employment, corporate and individual tax affairs and visa requirements. Discuss with Legal Services and Human Resources.
- iv. School organises site visit to the partner to review the administrative infrastructure and resources available to support the programme
- v. Collaboration Sponsor completes Collaborative Provision Initial Proposal Form, Initial Risk Assessment and Site Visit Checklist. Head of Faculty Finance prepares business case. All four documents approved by Faculty Board
- vi. Collaboration Sponsor completes Section A of the Collaborative Provision Due Diligence Form and submits this with the documentation above to QSAT who co-ordinates exchange of due diligence including legal and financial information and convene a Due Diligence Approval Panel (DDAP)
- vii. QSAT notifies Collaboration Sponsor of outcome of DDAP
- viii. School begins programme validation process. Where the programme has already been validated for delivery on campus, the validation process should not duplicate those areas of the programme proposal form which are unchanged for offsite delivery but should focus on those sections which are

affected by location, for example stakeholder consultation which would focus on offsite resources and administration. The programme validation process would also consider any change to pattern of delivery for example from weekly lectures over a semester or academic year to concentrated block delivery.

- ix. QSAT organise a Collaboration Approval Panel which may/may not meet at the proposed partner institution.
- x. The report and recommendations from the Collaboration Approval Panel event are considered the University's Collaborative Provision Subcommittee and are then approved by AQSC.
- xi. Partner approval and programme validation should be considered by the same meeting of AQSC.
- xii. QSAT adds the Flying Faculty/off site arrangement to the Collaborative Provision Register

### **Memorandum of Agreement**

This model is subject to a signed agreement which will be prepared by Legal Services. Legal Services will keep signed copies of these agreements. Agreements must be signed by the President and Vice Chancellor or his authorised representative.

## **A5. JOINT DEGREE**

### **Summary of Approval Process**

- i. Collaboration Sponsor notifies relevant people of potential new development
- ii. QSAT logs this
- iii. The School will need to consider the implications of any staff mobility such as the method of employment, corporate and individual tax affairs and visa requirements. Discuss with Legal Services and Human Resources.
- iv. School organises site visit to the partner to review the administrative infrastructure and resources available to support the programme. School invites proposed partner institution to visit Southampton to carry out same.
- v. Collaboration Sponsor completes Collaborative Provision Initial Proposal Form, Initial Risk Assessment and Site Visit Checklist. Head of Faculty Finance prepares business case. All four documents approved by Faculty Board
- vi. Collaboration Sponsor completes Section A of the Collaborative Provision Due Diligence Form and submits this with the documentation above to QSAT who co-ordinates exchange of due diligence including legal and financial information and convene a Due Diligence Approval Panel (DDAP)
- vii. QSAT notifies Collaboration Sponsor of outcome of DDAP
- viii. School contacts Legal Services to arrange for the agreement to be drafted, unless it is agreed that the proposed partner institution's Legal Services should draft the agreement.
- ix. School begins programme validation process. The programme should be approved by both institutions. Instead of carrying out two separate validation exercises, it would be preferable for both parties to agree whose process is to be followed.
- x. School, QSAT and proposed partner institution organise a combined event to act as both the Collaboration Approval Panel (partner approval) and Academic Scrutiny Group (programme validation) or the equivalent if the proposed partner's process is being followed. This could take place at either institution but must involve representation from both institutions and an agreed panel which contains representation from both institutions.
- xi. If the University of Southampton's validation process is being followed, the report from the programme approval proceeds to Stage 3 of the programme validation process.
- xii. The report and recommendations from the approval event are considered the University's Collaborative Provision Subcommittee and are then approved by AQSC. Partner approval and programme validation should be considered by the same meeting of AQSC.
- xiii. QSAT adds joint degree to the Collaborative Provision Register.
- xiv. QSAT liaises with the Exams, Awards and Graduation Manager over production of the joint degree certificate.

### **Memorandum of Agreement**

This model is subject to a signed agreement which will be prepared by Legal Services or the partner institution. Legal Services will keep signed copies of these agreements. Agreements must be signed by the President and Vice Chancellor or his authorised representative.

## **A6. Research Degrees that include periods of Off- campus Study**

For guidance relating to the approval of Split- site and joint PhDs, see the document 'Research Degrees that include periods of off- campus study' in the [Quality Handbook](#).

## A7. VALIDATION

### Summary of Approval Process

- i. Collaboration Sponsor notifies relevant people of potential new development
- ii. QSAT logs this
- iii. School organises site visit to the partner to review the administrative infrastructure and resources available to support the programme
- iv. Collaboration Sponsor completes Collaborative Provision Initial Proposal Form, Initial Risk Assessment and Site Visit Checklist. Head of Faculty Finance prepares business case. All four documents approved by Faculty Board
- v. Collaboration Sponsor completes Section A of the Collaborative Provision Due Diligence Form and submits this with the documentation above to QSAT who co-ordinates exchange of due diligence including legal and financial information and convene a Due Diligence Approval Panel (DDAP)
- vi. QSAT notifies Collaboration Sponsor of outcome of DDAP
- vii. School begins programme validation process
- viii. School and QSAT organise a combined Collaboration Approval Panel (partner approval) and Academic Scrutiny Group (programme validation) which will take place at the proposed partner institution.
- ix. The event will require two days and will first of all consider partner approval before progressing to consideration of the programme.
- x. The report from the programme approval proceeds to Stage 3 of the programme validation process.
- xi. The report and recommendations from the Collaboration Approval Panel event are considered the University's Collaborative Provision Subcommittee and are then approved by AQSC. Partner approval and programme validation should be considered by the same meeting of AQSC.
- xii. QSAT adds the new validation arrangement to the Collaborative Provision Register.

### Memorandum of Agreement

This model is subject to a signed validation agreement which will be prepared by Legal Services. Legal Services will keep signed copies of these agreements. Agreements must be signed by the President and Vice Chancellor or his authorised representative.

## A8. Erasmus Mundus EuroMasters degree

Erasmus Mundus partnerships often include a lead institution, several awarding partners, and other collaborating providers. The approval process, therefore, may vary depending on Southampton's role in the collaboration.

### Summary of Approval Process

- i. Collaboration Sponsor notifies relevant people of potential new development
- ii. QSAT logs this
- iii. School organises site visit to all awarding partners in the agreement to review the administrative infrastructure and resources available to support the programme
- iv. School undertakes (by preference) a site visit or undertakes a desk study (including remote interview and exchange of letters) to answer relevant points from the site visit checklist on all delivery partners involved in the partnership who will not be making an award in the final agreement.
- v. It is expected that the partners will work together on a bid to be submitted to the European Union for recognition of the Erasmus Mundus EuroMasters.
- vi. Collaboration Sponsor completes Collaborative Provision Initial Proposal Form, Initial Risk Assessment and Site Visit Checklist. Head of Faculty Finance prepares business case. All four documents approved by Faculty Board
- vii. Collaboration Sponsor completes Section A of the Collaborative Provision Due Diligence Form and submits this with the documentation above to QSAT who co-ordinates exchange of due diligence including legal and financial information and convene a Due Diligence Approval Panel (DDAP)
- viii. QSAT notifies Collaboration Sponsor of outcome of DDAP
- ix. School begins programme validation process
- x. School and QSAT organise a Collaboration Approval Panel (partner approval). This may be hosted by one of the partner institutions, or at Southampton, but there must be representation from all partners (by video conferencing). Adequate time should be scheduled to allow a full discussion of all collaborating partners.
- xi. If Southampton is the lead institution in the partnership, Southampton will also hold the Academic Scrutiny Group (Programme Validation) at this stage. If Southampton is not the lead institution, the Collaboration Approval Panel will seek explicit reassurance that a process similar to Programme Validation will be hosted by the lead institution. As a minimum, there should be an external representative and student engagement in this process, and the approval process must include detail on how credit and marks will be translated between the different institutions.
- xii. If a combined event is being led by Southampton, the event will require two days and will first of all

- xiii. consider partner approval before progressing to consideration of the programme. The report and recommendations from the Collaboration Approval Panel event are considered by the University's Collaborative Provision Subcommittee and are then approved by AQSC. Partner approval and programme validation should be considered by the same meeting of AQSC.
- xiv. At this point, the Erasmus Mundus bid is submitted to the European Union for approval.
- xv. If hosted by Southampton, the report from the programme validation process proceeds to Stage 3 of the programme validation process.
- xvi. If a programme approval process has been hosted by another institution, a report of the process should go to AQSC.
- xvii. QSAT adds the new arrangement to the Collaborative Provision Register.

#### **Memorandum of Agreement**

This model is subject to a signed agreement which will be prepared by the lead institution, and developed through Legal Services. Legal Services will keep signed copies of these agreements. Agreements must be signed by the President and Vice-Chancellor or his authorised representative.

#### **A9. Centres for Doctoral Training**

The process below is for the approval of new applications for CDTs and DTPs involving other organisations. **It is for cases where the University is the lead partner.** It is recognised that other institutions will have their own approval processes with which the University of Southampton will need to comply. In the interests of streamlining the approach, discussions should take place with the other partners to ascertain if the Southampton process will also serve their institution's requirements.

**Where Southampton is not the lead university, the University will follow the approval process specified by the lead university.**

- i. There should be a nominated lead academic at the University of Southampton responsible for a particular CDT or DTP. This is the Collaboration Sponsor role in the Collaborative Provision Policy.
- ii. The Collaboration Sponsor notifies relevant people of a potential new application. This includes the Director of the Doctoral College, the Vice-President (Research) and the Head of QSAT.
- iii. QSAT logs this.
- iv. All CDT/DTP proposals will be routed through the Doctoral College and Vice-President (Research) prior to submission. All must also be approved at Faculty level. Where there is a tight window for applications, it may not be possible to complete the due diligence process below prior to submission of the bid. The process below should be completed as soon as possible and may be ongoing while the bid is under consideration.
- v. The Collaboration Sponsor completes the Collaborative Provision Initial Proposal Form and Initial Risk Assessment. Head of Faculty Finance prepares business case. All three documents are approved by Faculty Board. Approval of the business case at Faculty level is already a requirement before submission to the research council.
- vi. Collaboration Sponsor completes Section A of the Collaborative Provision Due Diligence Form and submits this with the documentation above to QSAT who co-ordinates exchange of due diligence including legal and financial information and convene a Due Diligence Approval Panel (DDAP)
- vii. QSAT notifies Collaboration Sponsor of outcome of DDAP and submits documentation to the Collaborative Provision Subcommittee.
- viii. Collaborative Provision Subcommittee discusses and agrees if any additional information is required or any additional checks.
- ix. If the bid is successful a Collaboration Approval Panel is convened on behalf of all partners to scrutinise the detail of the proposed arrangements.
- x. Any new taught elements of the programme are approved by the School.
- xi. The report and recommendations from the Collaboration Approval Panel are considered by Collaborative Provision Subcommittee which recommends approval to AQSC.

#### **Memorandum of Agreement**

This model is subject to a signed agreement which will be prepared by Legal Services in conjunction with the partner institutions. Legal Services will keep signed copies of these agreements. Agreements must be signed by the President and Vice-Chancellor or his authorised representative.

## Appendix B - Arrangements with other institutions which fall short of collaborative provision

The University does not classify the following arrangements as collaborative provision and they are therefore subject to different approval arrangements as indicated below.

### B1. Offsite delivery of a programme (with no elements of partner support)

Where a School wants to set up a partnership model that involves specialist facilities or equipment supplied by a support provider, the approval process is therefore described in the Collaborative Provision Policy.

An offsite delivery arrangement which has no involvement from another organisation apart from providing rooms should not be treated as collaborative provision. The offsite delivery should be approved through the University's programme validation process and particular attention paid to the learning and teaching environment and access to resources. A legal agreement should still be put in place for offsite delivery which includes *inter alia*, responsibility for insurance and public liability.

### B2. Enhanced Progression Agreements and Progression Agreements

Where a School wants to set up an articulation arrangement which guarantees entry to groups of students with advanced standing, the approval process is as described in the Collaborative Provision Policy.

Where entry with advanced standing or to the beginning of a programme is not guaranteed, the following two models should be followed.

#### a. Enhanced Progression Agreement

Enhanced progression is a partnership model whereby the University of Southampton recognises a specific institution's programme for the purposes of entry with advanced standing to a specified programme(s) and award(s). This only grants eligibility to apply, it does not guarantee entry to the programme and each application is considered on an individual basis for direct entry. The University recognises and grants specific credit from the partner institution to enable successful candidates to commence the programme beyond the standard point of entry. As entry is with advanced standing, the University must be satisfied that the syllabus and learning outcomes required for the award are equivalent to those that students would have achieved to date on the receiving programme of study at the University. Candidates applying via an enhanced progression agreement may be subject to individual admission hurdles such as an interview or examination of their performance on their current programme.<sup>3</sup>

Memorandum of Agreement. This model is subject to a signed Memorandum of Agreement entitled 'Enhanced Progression Agreement' between the University of Southampton and the respective partner. The agreement is produced by the Legal Agreements Manager in the International Office. Legal Services will keep signed copies of these agreements. Agreements must be signed by the President and Vice-Chancellor or his authorised representative.

Approval Process. Shorter due diligence form (site visit not compulsory but good practice, information about the standing and reputation of the partner still needed e.g. from Admissions or International Office, no exchange of legal and financial due diligence), risk assessment, curriculum mapping exercise needed. Approval of due diligence form and curriculum mapping by School Programmes Committee.

#### b. Progression Agreement (or Admissions Agreement)

Progression is a partnership model whereby the University of Southampton recognises a specific institution's programme for the purposes of entry without advanced standing to a specified programme(s) and award(s). This only grants eligibility to apply for entry to the first year of a University of Southampton programme under the usual admission criteria after the successful completion of an award at the partner institution, it does not guarantee entry to the programme and each application is considered on an individual basis for direct entry. The University does not grant specific credit to applicants from the partner institution who, if successful, enter the University of Southampton programme at the same point as standard applicants. Candidates applying via a progression agreement may be subject to individual admission hurdles such as an interview or examination of their performance on their current programme.

Memorandum of Agreement. This model is not collaborative provision but may be subject to a signed legal agreement if both the partner and the University wish to enter into one. The agreement is produced by the

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<sup>3</sup> Some partner institutions may use the credits achieved at the University of Southampton to contribute towards their own award. This is not a dual or double award as this is not joint enterprise which involves all partners in the creation and management of the programme, see the definitions for dual and double awards in the Typology. The University of Southampton makes its own award based on recognition of prior learning at the partner and the credits achieved at the University of Southampton.

Legal Agreements Manager in the International Office. Legal Services will keep signed copies of these agreements. Agreements must be signed by the President and Vice-Chancellor or his authorised representative.

Approval Process. Shorter due diligence form (site visit not compulsory but good practice, information about the standing and reputation of the partner still needed e.g. from Admissions or international Office, no exchange of legal and financial due diligence) and risk assessment needed. Approval of due diligence form by School Programmes Committee.

## Appendix C - Operations Manual Template

An Operations Manual should be produced by the relevant School when setting up all complex collaborative provision arrangements. It is intended to assist both Southampton staff and those at the partner institution in the day to day management of the collaborative arrangement and to provide a reference point clarifying processes and communication routes. The content of the manual should be agreed by both the University and partner institution. The manual should be reviewed, and updated where required, on an annual basis.

The headings below are intended to act as a guide to those responsible for the production of the manual. Not all headings will be relevant in all cases and additional headings might be required depending on the nature of the specific collaborative arrangement.

### 1. The Scope and Function of the Operations Manual

- 1.1. Explanation of the scope of the handbook e.g defines and outlines the key functions and activities required in the management and day to day operation of academic provision delivered under the this partnership and the generic responsibilities of the University and the partner in the delivery of this model
- 1.2. School, Faculty and Partner Institution key contacts and responsibilities (in particular the named contacts at both institutions responsible for liaising about the operation of the collaborative arrangement and programme/s)
- 1.3. How the manual will be updated
- 1.4. Where it will be approved
- 1.5. Programmes and overview of delivery model

### 2. Governance and Liaison between the University and Collaborative Partner

- 2.1. Include a governance structure diagram detailing any reporting lines between University and Collaborative Partner Committees.
- 2.2. Detail the scheduled communication points between the University and Partner Institution each year (include dates for submission of reports)

## SECTION A – Staffing and Staff Development

### 3. Staffing

- 3.1 Academic Staff – roles and responsibilities – who is responsible for recruiting staff, approval of staff by UoS
- 3.2 Administrative Staff – roles and responsibilities – who is responsible for recruiting staff.
- 3.3 Staff Contracts – insurance, tax, visas, expenses
- 3.4 Staff Insurance
- 3.5 Staff Health and Safety
- 3.6 Risk Assessment
- 3.7 Access – what UoS resources and facilities do staff have access to. Are they provided with UoS IT log-in and ID card?
- 3.8 Staff Offices

### 4. Staff Development

- 4.1 Induction and country briefings
- 4.2 Training in UoS policies and procedures
- 4.3 Staff Development Policy, any discounts offered etc

## SECTION B - Student Life Cycle

### 5. Marketing/Advertising/Promotion

- 5.1. Marketing material including programme flyers and leaflets
- 5.2. Marketing visits, trips or events
- 5.3. Marketing meetings
- 5.4. Process for approving any marketing material produced by the partner organisation

### 6. Recruitment

- 6.1. Exhibitions
- 6.2. International student recruitment
- 6.3. External contacts
- 6.4. Other

### 7. Admissions

- 7.1. University Admissions Policy and Regulations
- 7.2. Entry Requirements

- 7.3. Admissions Procedures and Process
- 7.4. Student Numbers Planning

## **8. Student visas (Where appropriate)**

## **9. Registration and Enrolment**

- 9.1. Enrolment Policy (including enrolment status e.g University of Southampton students, will they receive ID cards etc)
- 9.2. Enrolment Procedures
- 9.3. Induction

## **10. Fees and Funding**

- 10.1. Fees Setting
- 10.2. Student Financial Support
- 10.3. Fee Payment

## **11. Student Records**

- 11.1 Maintaining Student Records
- 11.2 Provision of Student Data to External and Internal Agencies
- 11.3 Records Retention

## **12. Assessment**

- 12.1. Assessment Policy
- 12.2. Assessment and Examination Regulations
- 12.3. Management of Examination Scripts
- 12.4. Assessment Design, Marking and Recording
- 12.5. Assessment Submission
- 12.6. Assessment Feedback
- 12.7. Boards of Examiners
- 12.8. External examiners

## **13. Progression to University of Southampton (where applicable)**

- 13.1. Progression requirements including English Language requirements

## **14. Certificates, Transcripts and Graduation Ceremonies**

- 14.1. Certificates, Transcripts
- 14.2. Graduation ceremonies

## **SECTION C - Academic Support**

This section should clarify how each of the following will work for the particular collaborative arrangement and how the information in relation to regulatory matters will be communicated to students.

### **Learning Resources**

- 15.1. Learning and Teaching Facilities e.g. provision and maintenance of teaching rooms, labs etc
- 15.2. Library e.g. purchase of books, access to UoS online material
- 15.3. Blackboard – will students have access to this and how will it be accessed.
- 15.4. IT Equipment
- 15.5. IT Support
- 15.6. Timetabling

### **Academic Integrity**

### **Special Consideration**

### **Programme Withdrawal/Suspension**

### **Student Complaints**

### **Student appeals in relation to academic matters**

### **Student Discipline**

### **Student Handbooks (including checks by the University of any information for students produced by the partner institution)**



**23. Student Health and Safety**

**SECTION D - Student Support**

For each heading below, detail which partner will be responsible for providing support and describe how the students will be advised to access support.

**24. Personal Academic Tutors**

**25. Enabling Services**

**26. Counselling**

**27. Accommodation - at partner and when they progress to Southampton (if applicable)**

**28. Students Union**

**29. Placements Support (if applicable)**

**30. Careers Advice and Guidance**

**31. Sports Facilities**

**32. Alumni**

**SECTION E - Quality Assurance**

This section should describe how each of headings below will operate for the particular collaborative arrangement and should clarify who is responsible for each area in both institutions.

**33. Partner Re-approval (overview of process, who is responsible for producing documents)**

**34. Programme Validation (including Strategic decision making, specific requirements e.g. process for accreditation of programmes, reporting of changes, translation of documents and programme maintenance, PSRB requirements)**

**35. Programme Closure**

**36. Module/Programme Changes**

**37. Programme Specifications**

**38. Module Profiles**

**39. Annual Programme Monitoring**

**40. Collaborative Provision Annual Report**

**41. Student representation**

**42. Staff Student Liaison Committees**

**43. National Student Survey**

**44. Module survey**

## Appendix D

Arrangement/Type of Arrangement	Type of reporting required	Person responsible for writing report
USMC	One collaborative provision annual report form jointly produced by School(s) involved and USMC. Considered by relevant SPCs.	Collaboration Sponsor + relevant staff at USMC
	Separate annual programme reports for each programme produced by School with input from staff at USMC.	Director of Programmes + relevant staff at USMC
Jointly delivered University of Southampton programme e.g. Dalian Polytechnic University, Marwell	One collaborative provision annual report form produced by School(s) involved.  Annual Programme Report for each programme produced by School working in conjunction with partner.	Collaboration Sponsor  Director of Programmes + relevant staff at partner
Articulation	Collaborative provision annual report form produced by School.	Collaboration Sponsor
	Annual Programme Report for each programme produced by School which explicitly considers those students who have progressed to the University from the partner institution.	Director of Programmes
CDTs/DTPs	One collaborative provision annual report form produced by School(s) involved.	Collaboration Sponsor
	PhD included in School's annual report on research degree provision.	Doctoral Programme Director
Double/Multiple Award Dual Award Joint Award e.g. Erasmus Mundus Programmes	Collaborative provision annual report form produced by School.	Collaboration Sponsor
	Annual Programme Report produced by School which should reflect on the whole programme not just the Southampton modules OR an equivalent document which has been jointly produced by the consortium.	Director of Programmes/Consortium
Joint PhDs and Split-site PhDs	One collaborative provision annual report form produced by School(s) involved.	Collaboration Sponsor
	PhD included in School's annual report on research degree provision	Doctoral Programme Director
Flying Faculty/off site delivery	One collaborative provision annual report form produced by School(s) involved.	Collaboration Sponsor
	Annual Programme Report for each programme produced by School with appropriate input from partner	Director of Programmes
Validated provision	One collaborative provision annual report form produced by School(s) involved.	Collaboration Sponsor
	Annual Programme Report for each programme produced by School working in	Director of Programmes

	conjunction with partner.	
Online distance learning with partner support e.g. MA ELT, ESPR	<p>Collaborative provision annual report form produced by School(s) involved.</p> <p>Annual Programme Report for each programme produced by School with appropriate input from partner</p>	<p>Collaboration Sponsor</p> <p>Director of Programmes</p>