

## Mapping Against the QAA Quality Code – Part B, Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with others

Indicator	Collaborative Provision
<p><b>Indicator 1</b></p> <p>A strategic approach to delivering learning opportunities with others is adopted. Appropriate levels of resources (including staff) are committed to the activities to ensure that the necessary oversight is sustained.</p>	<p>One of the eight key goals of the University, as set out in its Strategic Plan 2009-2015 is Working with the Best, with a focus on a range of partnership activity both domestically and internationally. Central to this activity is academic collaboration for the delivery of franchised and validated provision. The Partnership Office is a unit with dedicated staff within the University's Academic Registry that has responsibility for support of collaborative provision. University committees at senior level provide oversight and strategic direction for the partnerships. Schools receive payment for their support of the University's academic partnership arrangements in order to be in a position to provide link tutors, exam board chairs and academic representation on validation and recognition panels.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 2</b></p> <p>Governance arrangements at appropriate levels are in place for all learning opportunities which are not directly provided by the degree-awarding body. Arrangements for learning to be delivered, or support to be provided, are developed, agreed and managed in accordance with the formally stated policies and procedures of the degree-awarding body.</p>	<p>All arrangements, procedures and policies governing collaborative provision are approved by the University's Teaching and Learning Committee and reflect the University's own procedures and processes. Collaborative Provision Committee maintains direct oversight of collaborative activity and reports to TLC, while Steering Groups provide senior-level strategic guidance. A Partner Handbook is produced annually, which pulls together all the detail of partnership arrangements, and is distributed to partners, link tutors and other stakeholders and interested parties.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 3</b></p> <p>Policies and procedures ensure that there are adequate safeguards against financial impropriety or conflicts of interest that might compromise academic standards or the quality of learning opportunities. Consideration of the business case is conducted separately from approval of the academic proposal.</p>	<p>All potential partners go through an institutional recognition process to enable them to become either a full or associate partner of the University. The process is risk based. The financial and business status of the potential partner is examined. A report on the financial standing is prepared by the University's Finance department following submission of accounts etc and the business case is constructed prior to reaching the recognition stage. As part of the conditions set at recognition, partners are expected to keep the University apprised of any changes to the</p>

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	<p>organisation, structure or finance that could have an impact on the partnership arrangements or the reputation and standing of the University.</p> <p>Academic proposals are considered separately from the recognition process and only following successful (re)recognition.</p>
<b>Indicator 4</b>  Degree-awarding bodies that engage with other authorised awarding bodies to provide a programme of study leading to a joint academic award satisfy themselves as to their own legal capacity to do so.	<p>The University is legally entitled to deliver joint degrees. This is part of the University's Charter – "To co-operate and collaborate with other institutions and individuals and to award joint degrees or other awards."</p>
<b>Indicator 5</b>  The risks of each arrangement to deliver learning opportunities with others are assessed at the outset and reviewed subsequently on a periodic basis. Appropriate and proportionate safeguards to manage the risks of the various arrangements are determined and put in place.	<p>The robust recognition process is repeated every three to five years, with this period determined by the perceived level of risk to the University. Partnership arrangements are constantly monitored throughout the recognition period. Steering Group meetings take place annually, with operational meetings happening on a more regular basis. Partners provide annual monitoring and annual examination board reports that are scrutinised at Collaborative Provision Committee. The University normally chairs final examination boards at partner institutions and external examiners are appointed by the University.</p> <p>If an issue of significant concern is identified out of cycle, a due diligence process will be instigated.</p>
<b>Indicator 6</b>  Appropriate and proportionate due diligence procedures are determined for each proposed arrangement for delivering learning opportunities with an organisation other than the degree-awarding body. They are conducted periodically to check the capacity of the other organisation to continue to fulfil its designated role in the arrangement.	<p>As mentioned in response to Indicator 5, the recognition process takes place every three to five years, and should any significant cause for concern, for example financial, managerial, reputational, be identified during a period of recognition, a due diligence process would be triggered.</p>

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<b>Indicator 7</b>  There is a written and legally binding agreement, or other document, setting out the rights and obligations of the parties, which is regularly monitored and reviewed. It is signed by the authorised representatives of the degree-awarding body (or higher education provider without degree-awarding powers arranging provision by a third party) and by the delivery organisation, support provider or partner(s) before the relevant activity commences.	  A Memorandum of Agreement is drawn up for each partnership. The MoA is reviewed regularly and it sets out the rights and obligations of the parties. The document is signed by authorised representatives of both institutions. In addition, there is an annual operational agreement, which is signed by the Head of Partnerships at the University and the main operational representative of the partner institution, setting out in detail the responsibilities of each party within the annual academic cycle.
<b>Indicator 8</b>  Degree-awarding bodies take responsibility for ensuring that they retain proper control of the academic standards of awards where learning opportunities are delivered with others. No serial arrangements are undertaken without the express written permission of the degree-awarding body, which retains oversight of what is being done in its name.	  The MoA clearly states that the responsibility for the oversight and maintenance of academic standards of validated and / or franchised programmes delivered by the partner institution, leading to awards of the University, lies with the University.  The University does not permit serial franchise or validation arrangements.
<b>Indicator 9</b>  Degree-awarding bodies retain responsibility for ensuring that students admitted to a programme who wish to complete it under their awarding authority can do so in the event that a delivery organisation or support provider or partner withdraws from an arrangement or that the degree-awarding body decides to terminate an arrangement.	  Annex 12 of the MoA deals with the termination of a partnership arrangement and within that it states that the partner institution shall continue to provide the services for the current academic year, for the academic year following termination for students who remain on programme or who remain within their period of registration and for students already enrolled on future programmes. A further clause states that if the partner institution is unable to fulfil its obligations, it shall provide the University with all the know-how to continue to provide the services

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<b>Indicator 10</b>  All higher education providers maintain records (by type and category) of all arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with others that are subject to a formal agreement.	The University maintains records of all the minutes and papers of Collaborative Provision Committee, which include all reports from partners, all recognition and validation reports, all external examiner and link tutor reports and records of all the students on validated programmes at partner institutions, on an annual basis.
<b>Indicator 11</b>  Degree-awarding bodies are responsible for the academic standards of all credit and qualifications granted in their name. This responsibility is never delegated. Therefore, degree-awarding bodies ensure that the standards of any of their awards involving learning opportunities delivered by others are equivalent to the standards set for other awards that they confer at the same level. They are also consistent with UK national requirements.	The MoA clearly states that the responsibility for academic standards lies with the University as the degree-awarding body. All programmes offered collaboratively with other academic partners undergo a scrupulous validation process. The documentation submitted by partners for this process indicates where they have considered and met the national UK requirements and the process follows the University's own process. There is an external member on all validation panels.
<b>Indicator 12</b>  When making arrangements to deliver a programme with others, degree-awarding bodies fulfil the requirements of any professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) that has approved or recognised the programme or award, in relation to aspects of its delivery and any associated formal agreements. The status of the programme or award in respect of PSRB recognition is made clear to prospective students.	This is taken into consideration during the programme (or course) validation process and, where appropriate, a representative of the PSRB is also invited to sit on the panel. Students are made clear of any impact the PSRB recognition may have on the status of the programme or award.

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<b>Indicator 13</b>  Degree-awarding bodies approve module(s) and programmes delivered through an arrangement with another delivery organisation, support provider or partner through processes that are at least as rigorous, secure and open to scrutiny as those for assuring quality and academic standards for programmes directly provided by the degree-awarding body.	<p>Modules and programmes are approved through the validation process, which is explained to partners and is set out in the Partner Handbook. Approval must be given by the University before any programme can be developed for delivery by a partner. The Partnership Office works closely with all partners to support them to ensure they understand and comply with all the processes and procedures in place for collaborative provision. The whole process is rigorous and transparent.</p> <p>Any changes to the programme during the validation period must be approved by the University before being implemented by the partner.</p>
<b>Indicator 14</b>  Degree-awarding bodies clarify which organisation is responsible for admitting and registering a student to modules or programmes delivered with others, and ensure that admissions are consistent with their own admissions policies.	<p>The admissions policies of partners are scrutinised and approved at institutional recognition. The MoA clarifies where responsibility lies for admissions and registration.</p>
<b>Indicator 15</b>  Degree-awarding bodies ensure that delivery organisations involved in the assessment of students understand and follow the assessment requirements approved by the degree-awarding body for the components or programmes being assessed in order to maintain its academic standards. In the case of joint, dual/double and multiple awards, or for study abroad and student exchanges, degree-awarding bodies agree with their partners on the division of assessment responsibilities and the assessment regulations and requirements which apply.	<p>General assessment regulations are approved at institutional recognition. Specific arrangements are approved at programme validation. The University normally provides a chair for final examination boards, who is required to provide a report to Collaborative Provision Committee following those boards.</p>

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<b>Indicator 16</b>  Degree-awarding bodies retain ultimate responsibility for the appointment, briefing and functions of external examiners. The external examining procedures for awards where learning opportunities are delivered with others are consistent with the degree awarding body's approved practices.	  The University appoints external examiners, briefs them and provides details of the role and function of the examiner. The procedures in relation to collaborative provision reflect those of the University and form part of the University's handbook for external examiners.
<b>Indicator 17</b>  Degree-awarding bodies ensure that modules and programmes offered through other delivery organisations, support providers or partners are monitored and reviewed through procedures that are consistent with, or comparable to, those used for modules or programmes provided directly by them.	  Partners provide monitoring reports and examination board reports on an annual basis. External examiners are appointed by the University. All changes to programmes are approved by CPC and validation and revalidation follows a three-to five-year cycle. These procedures are consistent with the University's procedures for the monitoring of on-campus provision. In addition, the University provides an academic link tutor who works closely with partners and monitors programmes.
<b>Indicator 18</b>  Degree-awarding bodies ensure that they have effective control over the accuracy of all public information, publicity and promotional activity relating to learning opportunities delivered with others which lead to their awards. Information is produced for prospective and current students which is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy. Delivery organisations or support providers are provided with all information necessary for the effective delivery of the learning or support.	  The MoA clearly states that all public information, in relation to any programmes validated by the University, must be approved in draft form prior to publication.  Students on validated provision are supplied with a pamphlet when they initially join their programme, clarifying their relationship with the University and providing links to further, web-based information such as a student FAQ page.  Partners receive a Partner Handbook annually that contains all the franchise- and validation-relevant processes and procedures.  Partners are able to contact the Partnership Office on a daily basis for clarity on any matter in relation to the partnership.

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### Indicator 19

When degree-awarding bodies make arrangements for the delivery of learning opportunities with others, they ensure that they retain authority for awarding certificates and issuing detailed records of study in relation to student achievement.

The certificate and / or record of academic achievement states the principal language of instruction and / or assessment where this is not English.<sup>20</sup> Subject to any overriding statutory or other legal provision in any relevant jurisdiction, the certificate and / or the record of achievement records the name and location of any other higher education provider involved in the delivery of the programme of study.<sup>21</sup> Where information relating to the language of study or to the name and location of the delivery organisation or partner is recorded on the record of achievement only, the certificate refers to the existence of this formal record.

The University issues all certificates for programmes that lead to an award of the University. The certificates are issued following receipt of the original signed pass lists. All certificates state the name and location of the HE provider where the student studied.

The detailed transcript is provided by the partner institution where the provision is validated.

Responsibilities are stated in the MoA.

<sup>20</sup> The exception to this are awards for programmes or modules relating to the study of a foreign language where the principal language of assessment is also the language of study, and programmes provided and assessed by Welsh and Scottish institutions in the Welsh or Gaelic languages.

<sup>21</sup> This applies to higher education providers which have delivered the entire programme or to multiple partners involved in a joint, dual/double or multiple award.