

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH – MAPPING TO THE UK QUALITY CODE ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Theme – Partnerships

Expectations for standards

- The academic standards of courses meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework.
- The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards.

Core practices for standards

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.

Common practices for standards

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/partnerships>

Expectations for quality

- Courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student’s achievement to be reliably assessed.
- From admission through to completion, all students are provided with the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from higher education.

Core practices for quality

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.

Common practices for quality

The guiding principles given here are not mandatory for any provider. They are a concise expression of the fundamental practices of the higher education sector, based on the experience of a wide range of providers. They are intended as a framework for providers to consider when establishing new or looking at existing higher education provision. They are not exhaustive and there will be other ways for providers to meet their requirements.

Guiding Principle	Mapping to the University’s policies and/or practices	Additional notes
1. The awarding organisation will be accountable for assuring the overall quality and academic standards of the provision, regardless of the type of partnership.	<p>Accountability is maintained via policies covering the range of partnership activity conducted by the University. These policies ensure that all partnership activity is managed through robust processes that define the responsibilities of the University in relation to collaborative activity.</p> <p>All courses and programmes, including collaborative programmes, must be approved under the approval process stated in the Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy: this Policy covers all credit bearing provision, non-credit bearing online courses for external release, and non-credit bearing continuing professional development courses, including postgraduate research as well as taught courses and programmes, and online learning as well as on-campus provision. This policy sets out the levels of approval (School, College, or Senate) required for different proposals.</p>	<p>Reflective analysis (RA) Chapter 5 refers to guiding principles for partnerships, and these are scheduled to be published on the Edinburgh Global website by late August / early September.</p>

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	<p>This policy notes that in addition to following the normal development and approval processes for for-credit courses and programmes, all for-credit courses and programmes that involve collaboration with another institution require additional development and approval stages. Any collaborations that are non-standard, novel or higher risk require approval by the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee, following approval from the relevant College committee. Particularly large or novel collaborations may also require approval from the Senatus Academicus, and the University Court. These additional stages are described in section 2.</p> <p>All courses and programmes, including collaborative provision, fall within the remit of the University’s annual and periodic quality assurance processes: more information is provided in section 4.</p>	
<p>2. The awarding organisation will have in place appropriate governance to authorise and oversee the development and closure of partnership arrangements and to monitor their effective operation.</p>	<p>Policy and guidance is in place to ensure appropriate governance and authorisation of the range of partnership activity conducted by the University. These policies and guidance specify responsibilities for oversight of development, monitoring and closure of partnerships.</p> <p>Governance and authorisation</p> <p>The schedule of Delegated Authority for student and academic collaborations and collaborations (Delegated Authority Schedule, sections 9 and 11) sets out the authority required to approve partnership arrangements.</p> <p>Specific types of collaborative activity have different development and approval routes: these are summarised in the Taxonomy of collaborative arrangements on the Academic Collaborations Wiki.</p> <p>The Approval Processes for Collaborative Taught Programmes and Approval process for joint PhD Programmes (located on the Academic Collaborations Wiki) set out the approval processes for these partnerships, and these processes also</p>	<p>There is some overlap between the guidance provided by GaSP (website and wiki) and Edinburgh Global (Partnerships website and Global Partnerships Guidance). These are not in conflict but may be seen as confusing for staff and this is an area for development. The Global Partnerships team (Edinburgh Global), GaSP and Academic Services are actively discussing how this could be improved.</p>

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apply to Articulation Agreements. The Academic Collaborations Wiki also provides a suite of template Memorandum of Agreements for these partnerships.

Dual, double or multiple awards are managed under the [Dual, Double and Multiple Awards Policy](#). These are considered exceptional arrangements by the University, and there is no specific template for these partnerships, however a signed Memorandum of Agreement is required.

Centres for Doctoral Training and equivalent postgraduate research groupings require approval under the [Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy](#). Because these are often bespoke arrangements associated with collaborative bids for external funding, there is no specific template for these partnerships, however a signed Memorandum of Agreement is required.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are delivered in collaboration with EdX, Coursera and FutureLearn. Proposals are approved by the MOOC Strategy Board and the process is outlined on the [Online Learning website](#). One MicroMasters is currently delivered in collaboration with EdX. Courses associated with this are subject to the [Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy](#). The MicroMasters itself is not a University of Edinburgh award, but students are awarded credit by the University of Edinburgh if they successfully complete the final credit-bearing course.

Guidance on Schools' responsibilities for the development, approval and monitoring of student exchanges is provided by the Study and Work Away team ([Setting up and Managing Exchange Partners](#)).

Collaborative activity with Associated Institutes is managed under the [Associated Institutions Policy](#).

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University of Edinburgh currently accredits provision by one external provider: Scotland's Rural College (SRUC). The arrangement is overseen by a University-level accreditation committee which reports annually to the Senate Quality Assurance Committee.

University of Edinburgh provides third party credit rating to a very limited number of organisations, and this is managed under the [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Third Party Credit Rating Policy](#).

Support for development

Development of partnerships is managed through the policies referenced above, and supported by guidance documents and networks as outlined below.

Academic staff seeking to develop an academic collaboration can seek advice and guidance from a number of sources.

The Virtual Collaborations Group is a group of key University contacts who can provide advice and guidance on specific collaborative projects. Information about this group is on the [Academic Collaborations Wiki](#). This wiki also provides guidance on developing new collaborations, and developing and authorising a detailed Memorandum of Agreement.

The International Ventures Group provides oversight and guidance on complex international collaborations and ventures. Information on this group can be found on the Edinburgh Global website:
<https://global.ed.ac.uk/partnerships-contacts>

Guidance is also provided on the Edinburgh Global website under '[Partnerships](#)'. This guidance relates to a wide range of partnership activity including partnerships related to academic courses and programmes.

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	<p>The Study and Work Away (SWAY) team provide a staff toolkit for staff considering establishing student exchange agreements, which provides information about due diligence and the appropriate approval processes for new student exchange agreements.</p> <p>Guidance and support can also be provided to Schools by relevant staff in College Offices, and College Deans whose remit includes international collaborations.</p> <p>Closure The template Memorandums of Agreement on the Academic Collaborations wiki include standard clauses on the term, review and termination of collaborative agreements.</p> <p>The Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy sets out Schools' responsibilities to students and to collaborative partners in the event of a programme being closed.</p> <p>Monitoring Arrangements for quality assurance monitoring are described in section 4 below.</p> <p>Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation are described in section 7 below.</p>	
<p>3. Due diligence enquiries are completed and legally binding written agreements are signed prior to the commencement of student registration - due diligence enquiries are refreshed periodically and</p>	<p>Information on the Academic Collaborations Wiki (Approval Processes for Collaborative Taught Programmes and Approval Processes for joint PhD Programmes) makes clear the requirement for all academic collaborations to go through academic due diligence before collaborative proposals can be approved.</p> <p>This guidance also sets clear expectations that a binding memorandum of agreement is a requirement prior to commencement of any collaborative provision. A suite of Memorandum of Agreement templates is provided to staff: Academic Collaborations wiki.</p>	<p>The template Memoranda of Agreement for taught and postgraduate research provision include provisions for review and renewal of agreements. The requirement to refresh due diligence enquiries at that point is not currently explicit in the templates or guidance, but now that this has been identified as a result of this mapping process this will be addressed by GaSP and Academic Services, in discussion with the Global Partnerships team.</p>

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<p>before agreements are renewed.</p>	<p>The International Ventures Group and Global Partnerships Team within Edinburgh Global provide support in due diligence checks for complex international partnerships.</p> <p>All academic collaborations are checked to ensure that all steps, including due diligence, have been adhered to prior to an agreement being passed forward for University signature: this check is carried out by Governance and Strategic Planning.</p> <p>Requirements for due diligence, memoranda of agreement, monitoring and renewal of Associated Institution status is set out in the Associated Institutions Policy.</p> <p>Requirements for due diligence, memoranda of agreement, monitoring and renewal of Third Party Credit Ratings is set out in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Third Party Credit Rating Policy.</p> <p>Further information on responsibilities for monitoring partnerships is provided in section 7.</p>	
<p>4. Provision delivered through partnership arrangements will be subject to quality procedures that are at least as rigorous, secure and open to scrutiny as those used for the provision delivered by the awarding organisation.</p>	<p>Memorandum of Agreement templates on the Academic Collaborations wiki include statements on the requirements for quality assurance. The default position in these template agreements is that collaborative programmes will be subject to the quality assurance regimes of both (or all) parties, and that each party will assist the other in monitoring and reviewing practice in line with these regimes.</p> <p>The School Annual Quality Report Template guidance on scope states that the report covers all taught and research credit-bearing provision including collaborative provision, and non-credit-bearing MOOCs.</p> <p>The University Remit for Internal Periodic Reviews states that the scope of these reviews includes provision delivered in collaboration with others.</p>	

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<p>5. Awarding organisations that make arrangements for the delivery of learning opportunities with others, retain the authority and responsibility for awarding certificates and records of study in relation to student achievement</p>	<p>Memorandum of Agreement templates on the Academic Collaborations wiki include statements on responsibility for awarding certificates and maintaining student records.</p> <p>The award of credit and decisions on progression for students on study abroad exchange programmes are managed under the Undergraduate Degree Regulations (27-33) and College Progression Boards for Optional Study Abroad Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Certificates of completion for non-credit bearing courses may be provided by collaborative partners, and student records are held by the collaborative partners (Coursera, EdX and Future Learn).</p> <p>MicroMasters delivered in collaboration with EdX are not University of Edinburgh awards, and certificates confirming the award of a MicroMasters are issued by EdX. The MicroMasters includes one credit-bearing University of Edinburgh course (the final course, entry to which has specific admissions requirements). Students who enrol on this credit-bearing course are enrolled as University of Edinburgh students and records of their achievement are maintained by the University.</p>	
<p>6. All awarding organisations maintain accurate, up-to-date records of all partnership arrangements that are subject to a formal agreement.</p>	<p>Governance and Strategic Planning maintain a repository of academic collaborations. This provides details of arrangements where there is joint provision or where a joint or dual University of Edinburgh award is to be made.</p> <p>This repository is updated on receipt of signed Memorandum of Understanding or Memorandum of Agreement. An electronic record is maintained, including electronic files. Hard copies are also retained in a central area.</p>	<p>Data on collaborative partnerships is also held by Edinburgh Global. Data consolidation is a priority for the Global Partnerships team and they are working with GaSP and Academic Services on moving towards better integration of collaborations data.</p>
<p>7. Awarding organisations monitor and evaluate</p>	<p>Schools' responsibilities to monitor and review collaborative agreements are set out in the guidance on the Academic Collaborations wiki (Approval Processes for</p>	<p>Monitoring and evaluation by Schools:</p>

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<p>their partnership arrangements to satisfy themselves that the arrangements are achieving their stated outcomes and that academic standards and quality are being maintained.</p>	<p>Collaborative Taught Programmes and Approval Processes for joint PhD Programmes).</p> <p>Guidance on Schools’ responsibilities for the monitoring of student exchanges is provided by the Study and Work Away team (Setting up and Managing Exchange Partners).</p> <p>Requirements for monitoring of Associated Institution status are set out in the Associated Institutions Policy.</p> <p>Requirements for monitoring of Third Party Credit Ratings are set out in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Third Party Credit Rating Policy.</p> <p>The School Annual Quality Report Template guidance on scope states that the report covers all taught and research credit-bearing provision including collaborative provision, and non-credit-bearing MOOCs.</p> <p>The University Remit for Internal Periodic Reviews states that the scope of these reviews includes provision delivered in collaboration with others.</p>	<p>Prior to an agreement being renewed, a School is required to assess the impact and the effectiveness of the arrangement, although Central University does not produce specific guidance about how this should be done. Whilst we do not produce specific guidance about how academic collaboration arrangements are evaluated, we are explicit in our academic collaborations guidance that Schools should set a date and process for review (normally no longer than three years), or set an interim review at the request of the collaborating universities.</p> <p>Reflecting on the guidance we issue to Schools and Colleges when setting up an academic collaboration, we have identified that within our templates for our arrangements, the need for monitoring, evaluation and impact should be more explicit.</p> <p>We will need to engage in discussions with College representatives to consider what this guidance should look like, what Schools will be required to do, and how and to whom this is reported. This work will be carried out by GaSP and Academic Services.</p> <p>Monitoring and evaluation at institutional level: There could be a gap in our institutional (rather than School) monitoring and evaluation. For example, the Associated Institution Policy states that ‘The University will also review its collaborative arrangements periodically, at</p>
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		<p>strategic, operational and academic levels' (16). Course and Programme level Quality Assurance processes clearly include collaborative activity within their scope. The arrangements for strategic review at an institutional level are less clear and are not covered for example by the International Ventures Group (see RA Chapter 5).</p> <p>Review of the role of IVG and institutional oversight remains a priority for the Global Partnerships team, but there is no specific timeline on this.</p>
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