

Quality Framework for Teaching Collaborations

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1. Overview

1.1 Preamble

1.1.1 Collaborative practice, both internally (between Schools and disciplines) and with external providers, can provide invaluable opportunities for the enhancement and enrichment of students' learning experiences. The development and delivery of collaborative programmes require careful consideration and oversight to ensure that:

- there is appropriate oversight of academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience;
- the expectations of students are met; and
- responsibilities are appropriately allocated.

1.1.2 This document is in place to provide a framework to enable programme developers and Schools to consider, develop and maintain high quality collaborations in learning and teaching which enhance student learning opportunities.

1.1.3 The scope of the Quality Framework for Teaching Collaborations covers international teaching collaborations, UK teaching collaborations and inter- and intra-School teaching collaborations. The scope of the Framework also includes research degrees and student placements and exchanges.

1.1.4 The Quality Framework for Teaching Collaborations represents University policy on each of the described areas. It is also supported by certain specific University policies on collaborative taught provision (e.g. for joint, double/multiple or dual awards and articulation arrangements) and the toolkit for international collaborations provided by the University's Educational Partnerships Development Unit (EPDU).

1.2 Teaching collaborations with external organisations

1.2.1 The University's Schools may consider entering into teaching collaborations with other FE and HE institutions and other partners in accord with the University's Vision and *Strategy to 2017*, and School strategic and operational plans.

1.2.2 External teaching collaborations can take several different forms including student placements and exchanges, articulation arrangements, joint, double/multiple and dual awards, validation, franchising and 'flying faculty' arrangements. Note that not all collaborative arrangements fall within these descriptors.

1.2.3 In order to maintain academic quality and to ensure consistency, all collaborations where the quality of provision is dependent on an external organisation must follow policy, guidelines and procedures laid down at University level. The University's EPDU provides support and resources for the development of international collaborative activity except for student placements and exchanges, which are dealt with by Admissions and Student Recruitment Services (ASRS).

1.2.4 Where student placement activity is part of taught provision such arrangements must be correctly set up, risks must be assessed and annual monitoring carried out following the University's [Student Placement policy](#) in this area.

1.2.5 The central locus for oversight of the registers of external teaching collaborations is the Directorate of Academic and Corporate Governance.

1.3 Research degree collaborations with external organisations

1.3.1 Although research degrees are not taught programmes as such, the University is responsible for the quality and academic standards of all qualifications awarded in its name.

Research degrees that are carried out in collaboration with an external organisation(s) therefore fall under the auspices of this Quality Framework for Teaching Collaborations.

1.4 Internal teaching collaborations

1.4.1 Jointly taught modules and/or programmes (e.g. single named awards that are jointly taught or joint awards comprising subject combinations) can provide more student choice as well as efficiencies of scale. The quality assurance arrangements must be clearly defined, and Section 3 of this document provides guidance on this area.

2. Policy and guidance on collaborative academic provision with external organisations

2.1 General principles

2.1.1 This policy statement deals with collaborative arrangements between the University and other external institutions and organisations (referred to as ‘collaborating organisations’) involving the provision of programmes of study (both taught and research, and including flexible and distance learning arrangements) and the granting of qualifications or academic credit towards a University qualification.

2.1.2 The University will undertake collaboration, which is congruent with its mission and compatible with its particular strengths in teaching and research, to the benefit of its students, itself and its partners.

2.1.3 The University will only consider developing collaborative arrangements with organisations of good reputation and standing and will pay particular attention to the national and legal context governing higher education in overseas countries where relevant.

2.1.4 The University will, before establishing any collaborative arrangement, familiarise itself, through appropriate investigations, with the proposed collaborating organisation and the background to the proposed collaborative activities. Appropriate records of such investigations will be maintained for reference and audit purposes.

2.1.5 Proposals for collaborative agreements must be endorsed by the relevant Dean(s) and Associate Dean(s) prior to consideration by the EPDU who will provide guidance on how to proceed. Separate arrangements are in place for student placements and exchange agreements, where guidance is provided by ASRS.

2.1.6 Proposals for collaborative agreements associated with academic awards will be subject to the approval of the relevant School Board(s) (or designated sub-committee(s)) and the Quality and Academic Standards Committee (QASC), prior to final approval by one of the University’s authorised signatories as described in the [Schedule of Delegation and Decision-Making Powers](#). The authorised signatories for international collaboration agreements are the Principal, the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching), the Vice-Principal (International) and the University Secretary. The authorised signatories for UK collaboration agreements are the Vice-Principals and the University Secretary.

2.1.7 Where a professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) has approved or recognised a programme that is the subject of a possible or actual collaborative arrangement, the School must inform the PSRB of its proposals and of any final agreements which involve the programme. A definitive ruling on the accreditation of a programme where collaborating organisations are involved must be secured by the relevant PSRB.

2.1.8 Collaborative arrangements will be defined in formal, written agreements which will conform to specific criteria defined by the University. Only the University’s authorised signatories may sign agreements on behalf of the University.

2.1.9 The financial arrangements associated with proposed collaborative activities must be clearly defined, and must be approved by the relevant Dean(s). Joint, double/multiple or dual awards are, by default, new programmes. The rationale and business case for such proposals must therefore be approved by the University’s Education Business Development Group¹ prior to the academic approval of the collaborative programme. Guidance and proposal templates for international arrangements will be provided by the EPDU. Proposals that fall outside of

¹ Led by the Director of the [Educational Partnerships Development Unit](#).

the scope of the EPDU should be taken forward in discussion with the Director of Quality and Academic Standards and the Director of Legal.

2.1.10 Financial transactions associated with collaborative activities will be accurately recorded by the appropriate School to satisfy internal and external audit requirements.

2.1.11 A Link Co-ordinator will be designated by the relevant Dean(s) and Associate Dean(s) for each collaborative agreement. This person will be the primary contact point for communication and management of the collaborative activities.

2.1.12 The Directorate of Academic and Corporate Governance is responsible for oversight of the maintenance of the registers of all collaborative agreements on behalf of the University. The registers of collaborative agreements must each include a note of the Link Coordinator for each agreement.

2.1.13 Collaborative arrangements will be reviewed annually by Schools.

2.1.14 Assessment of students carried out by a partner institution as part of a collaborative arrangement should follow the principles and precepts embodied in the University's Ordinances, Assessment Policy and Policy and Code of Practice on External Examining of Taught Programmes. In particular, the University must retain ultimate responsibility for the appointment and functions of external examiners.

2.1.15 Information provided to prospective students by either the University or its collaborating partner must include the programme specification, and information about the appropriate channels for particular concerns, complaints and appeals (including contact details for the relevant University units). Schools must monitor information provided to the public and prospective students by the collaborating organisation(s) and their agents. This should include review of the websites of the collaborating organisation(s) on a regular basis.

2.1.16 The University will seek to identify and promote best practice in collaborative activities and aims to align its practice with all relevant parts of the UK Quality Code.

2.2 Student placements and exchanges

2.2.1 Student placements and exchanges involve arrangements where any component of a taught or research programme is carried out at an external organisation. They include the Erasmus+ programme and other international exchange programmes with universities outside of the European Union. Exchange arrangements are approved by the relevant School Board or designated sub-committee and managed by the Global Programmes Office. The University's [Student Placement Policy](#) provides guidance on the development, management and review of student placements and exchanges.

2.3 Articulation arrangements

2.3.1 An Articulation arrangement is a formal credit-rating and transfer arrangement between two institutions, one of which agrees to recognise and grant specific credit and advanced standing to an applicant from a named programme of study pursued in the other who satisfies specified criteria.

2.3.2 Proposals for articulation arrangements with advanced standing will involve a formal credit-rating process based on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), which will allocate specific credit to attainment in the collaborating organisation in the context of the equivalent programme at the University. This process aims to ensure that students admitted to the University will be appropriately prepared to commence studies and have achieved learning outcomes which are broadly equivalent to those of the University modules for which credit is granted.

2.3.3 When an articulation arrangement includes provision for entry with advanced standing, the formal agreement will specify the extent of advanced standing in terms of specific credits to be granted to students on entry to the University.

2.3.4 Proposals for articulation arrangements will make clear the status of students admitted under the articulation arrangement regarding any PSRB accreditation or exemption associated with the programme(s).

2.3.5 Proposals for articulation arrangements will include identification of any specific bridging, academic and pastoral support requirements over and above that normally available.

2.3.6 Students admitted under articulation arrangements will be required to have achieved the University's normal English language entrance requirements.

2.3.7 A report on the progress and experience of each cohort of students admitted under each articulation arrangement will be made by the Link Coordinator through the annual review processes.

2.3.8 The University's Policy and Guidance on Articulation Arrangements provides guidance on the development, management and review of articulation arrangements. All articulation arrangements that involve organisations outside of the UK must be developed, agreed and reviewed using the processes prescribed by the EPDU. EPDU members must be consulted at an early stage in the development and proposal of any international articulation arrangement.

2.4 Joint, double/multiple and dual awards

2.4.1 A **joint award** reflects an arrangement where two or more degree-awarding bodies jointly develop and deliver a single programme leading to a single qualification awarded jointly by all of the participating degree-awarding bodies. The degree-awarding bodies pool their degree-awarding powers to award one qualification together. Students graduate with a single degree certificate.

2.4.2 A **double/multiple award** reflects an arrangement where two or more degree-awarding bodies jointly develop and deliver a single programme leading to separate qualifications and certificates awarded by all of the participating degree-awarding body.

2.4.3 A **dual award** reflects an arrangement where two degree-awarding bodies offer a jointly conceived programme that is integrated but results in two independent qualifications. Dual awards may be designed with an interlocking component where curricula overlap, so that students receive two qualifications for a shorter period of study than if each qualification had been undertaken consecutively.

2.4.4 Proposals for joint, double/multiple or dual taught awards with collaborating organisations will only be considered on rare occasions, and only where the proposal is in the strategic interests of the University. The initial ideas and concepts should be discussed in the first instance with the Director of Academic and Corporate Governance and the Director of Quality and Academic Standards. Following advice from those individuals, an endorsement to proceed with the development of the proposal for the collaborative award must be sought from the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) prior to any detailed investigation or negotiation with collaborating organisations. The initial endorsement from the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) to proceed with the development of a proposed joint, double/multiple dual award arrangement must be formally recorded and conveyed to the relevant committees and groups involved with the development and approval of the collaborative programme(s).

2.4.5 Arrangements for joint, double/multiple or dual taught awards must comply with the University's Policy and Guidance on Taught Joint, Double/Multiple or Dual Qualifications.

2.4.6 The general principles described in Section 2.1 apply to proposals for **collaborative PhD arrangements**. Proposals for collaborative PhD agreements will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Director of Quality and Academic Standards and the Director of Legal. Such agreements also require the approval of the relevant Dean and Associate Dean(s) prior to submission to the relevant University authorised signatory for final consideration and signature. The EPDU will provide guidance and support for collaborations with international organisations. Any proposed collaboration should include a covering statement explaining the case for the collaboration. This should explain the added value to the student and to this University.

2.4.7 The University will only consider collaborative PhD arrangements with reputable organisations. Broadly this should be interpreted as:

- institutions that could provide a quality of experience and achieve the standards of a PhD award that are at least equivalent to this University; and
- institutions of an appropriate international/national standing.

2.4.8 Within any collaborative PhD agreement between the University and a collaborating organisation there must be clarity about examining and the conduct of the *viva voce* exam. The composition of the thesis examining committee will be subject to the approval of the relevant Dean, taking advice as appropriate. The approach to examination must be specified in the collaborative agreement, and prior to student enrolment. Potential students must be provided with information about the examination process prior to enrolment. *Viva voce* examinations using real time video technology may be considered under certain circumstances, particularly for an international collaboration.

2.4.9 The PhD thesis must be examinable in English, and a full, final version in English must be formally submitted. If translation is required, then costs and verification must be considered at the outset.

2.4.10 Development of detailed proposals for collaborative PhD agreements will need to be sensitive to administrative concerns including visa requirements and the language of administration. For international collaborations, these may pose particular challenges. ASRS and the Registry should be consulted for up-to date information and guidance.

2.5 Validation arrangements

2.5.1 Validation is the process by which an awarding institution judges that a programme developed and taught by another institution or organisation is of an appropriate quality and standard to lead to its award. A validated programme will normally be in a subject which the awarding institution itself offers. The awarding institution will determine the extent to which it exercises direct control over the quality assurance aspects of the programme's management.

2.5.2 The University will not consider entering into a validation arrangement unless there is a demonstrable strategic benefit to the University. In considering proposals for validation of external programmes (i.e. named awards by collaborating organisations) 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.

2.5.3 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);

- cognate with existing academic provision and capability within the University; and
- is wholly taught and assessed in the English language, unless expressly agreed by the Director of Academic and Corporate Governance and the Director of Quality and Academic Standards, following independent expert advice.

2.5.4 The processes associated with the validation of external provision will be broadly similar to those applicable to academic activities within the University—e.g. module and programme approval, review, monitoring, external examining etc.

2.5.5 The process of validation will be managed by the relevant University School in accordance with its normal academic procedures which include reporting to the QASC.

2.5.6 The Link Co-ordinator's annual report should include reference to any changes that are planned or have occurred in the external provision and the ways in which these may impact on validation for the Dundee award. In cases where teaching does not occur wholly in English, the Link Co-ordinator should ensure that relevant information is translated.

2.5.7 The University will impose charges for undertaking validation of external provision which reflect the University's full costs.

2.6 Franchise arrangements

2.6.1 Franchising is the process by which an awarding institution agrees to authorise the provision of the whole or part of one or more of its own approved programmes, by a partner organisation. In doing so, the awarding institution retains overall responsibility for the programme's content, delivery, assessment and quality assurance arrangements.

2.6.2 The University will not normally consider entering into any franchising arrangement. Any intention to enter into a franchising agreement should be discussed in the first instance with the Director of Academic and Corporate Governance and the Director of Quality and Academic Standards. The detailed procedures to be applied will be determined on an individual basis.

2.6.3 Any proposals for franchising will require preliminary approval by the Principal and the University Court prior to detailed investigation and/or negotiation with collaborating organisations.

2.6.4 Arrangements for franchises will comply with the University's general principles applicable to all collaborative academic provision (see Section 2.1).

2.6.5 University programmes delivered by external organisations will be subject to procedures for the monitoring of academic standards and quality that are comparable to those directly offered by the University including the arrangements for external examining.

2.6.6 Programmes provided externally which lead to an award which can also be undertaken in the University will follow the same curriculum and be subject to the same monitoring procedures in both locations to ensure comparability of standards and quality.

2.7 Flying faculty arrangements

2.7.1 A '**Flying faculty**' arrangement involves the delivery of a programme(s) (or parts of programmes) by staff from the degree-awarding body at an external organisation. This type of arrangement is considered under the Quality Framework for Teaching Collaborations where the success and quality of the programme is dependent on the resources provided by the external organisation.

2.7.2 'Flying faculty' arrangements require appropriate due diligence about the quality of the learning and teaching environment where the delivery is to take place. Overseas 'flying faculty' arrangements tend to present greater challenges and risks than UK arrangements. Overseas arrangements can be challenging to the University staff involved, require careful

management and can be resource intensive. Due consideration must be given by the School(s) to the following areas (noting that the list is not exhaustive):

- the political stability of the region where the programme(s) is to be delivered;
- cultural differences and the potential impact on University staff;
- the willingness of University staff to engage with 'flying faculty' delivery;
- the health and safety of University staff, including accommodation, travel, and the impact of long haul flights and long hours of intensive teaching;
- the relationship between the 'flying faculty' and their students and how that is managed;
- the relationship between the 'flying faculty' and any local tutors;
- oversight of the quality of local tutors;
- teaching students where English is not their first language;
- any risks to quality and academic standards;
- the quality of the physical infrastructure (including IT) where the teaching will take place; and
- data transfer requirements.

2.7.3 Proposals to develop 'flying faculty' delivery models should be discussed in the first instance with members of the EPDU and be agreed by the Dean(s) and relevant Associate Dean(s). All 'flying faculty' arrangements must be developed, agreed and reviewed using the processes prescribed by the EPDU.

2.8 Collaborative agreements

2.8.1 All collaborations with external organisations must be accompanied by a legally-binding agreement signed by the authorised signatories from each of the collaborating organisations before students are admitted on to the collaborative programme.

2.8.2 A preliminary agreement (or memorandum of understanding, MOU) may be used to express an intention to cooperate with another organisation with a view to considering the potential for a future collaboration associated with academic provision.

2.8.3 All collaborative agreements relating to learning and teaching, including MOUs, must be developed in consultation with members of the EPDU who will take advice on legal and quality matters from the respective Directors as required. The only exception to this is the Erasmus+ programme, where agreements are managed by the Global Programmes Office.

2.8.4 QAA guidance on matters relating to quality and academic standards that may be addressed when drafting a collaborative agreement is provided as Appendix 1.

3. Policy and guidance on quality assurance for joint degrees and jointly taught programmes and modules within the University

3.1 Scope

3.1.1 This Policy and Guidance covers three types of jointly taught provision, as follows:

- A named degree or module that is jointly taught—where a named degree is built from modules taught by more than one School, or a module is taught by staff from more than one School.
- Mixed subject (e.g. joint honours) degrees built from modules taught by a single School which are also components of a range of single degree programmes.
- Mixed subject degrees (e.g. joint honours) built from modules taught by multiple Schools which are also components of a range of single degree programmes.

3.2 General points

3.2.1 Students reading for joint degrees and jointly taught programmes and modules must be provided with appropriate documentation (e.g. the student handbook) stating clearly where responsibility for administering their programme lies and the arrangements for [student representation](#).

3.2.2 A single programme specification should apply to each possible degree route (as recorded by the Registry). The School or Schools involved may decide whether to produce a programme specification for each joint degree or a generic programme specification for a group or groups of joint degrees or degree routes. The programme specification(s) will be used both for quality assurance purposes and for the provision of the European Diploma Supplement for graduates. The relationships between Schools, degree routes and programme specifications must be made clear to the Registry for the purposes of administration (i.e. as part of the programme specification).

3.2.3 In the case of Boards of Examiners for joint honours programmes, the final decision on Honours degree classifications must be agreed by the external examiners of each contributing discipline following procedures agreed by the School or between the Schools.

3.2.4 Schools should identify and record the FTE split in relation to joint taught provision as part of their initial agreement to cooperate.

3.3 A named degree or module that is jointly taught

3.3.1 Where a named degree is built from modules taught in more than one School, or a module is taught by staff from more than one School, a Lead School must be identified. This would normally be decided on the basis of the teaching and assessment loads.

3.3.2 Membership of relevant Boards of Examiners and Programme Boards or equivalents involved in administering the taught provision should include representatives of all partners.

3.3.3 The Lead School should organise, administer and report on all quality assurance and academic standards activities, including:

- [programme and module approval](#);
- [programme and module annual review](#);
- [procedures for changes to modules and programmes](#); and
- [periodic programme review](#).

3.3.4 The Lead School should involve all partners in drafting and reporting quality assurance documentation and, specifically, should create a joint group to oversee programme review.

3.3.5 Each of the Schools involved should consider jointly taught programmes in the context of their annual learning and teaching enhancement reports.

3.3.6 Where there is a specific external examiner for joint provision, the external examiner(s) should be selected by the Deans or Associate Deans (Quality and Academic Standards) of the partner Schools on the basis of the prospective examiner's or examiners' breadth of expertise across the relevant disciplines.

3.4 Joint degree—single School

3.4.1 Where a joint degree is built from modules taught by a single School, that School will consider the joint degree alongside the other degrees it teaches (and module components thereof) when carrying out quality assurance procedures. Specifically:

- The joint degree would normally be considered alongside the other cognate degrees during their periodic programme review and in the formulation of the School's annual learning and teaching enhancement report.
- The School is responsible for identifying and implementing an appropriate mechanism for annual programme review of its joint honours degrees.
- During annual module review, the needs of joint honours students should specifically be taken into account.

3.5 Joint degree—multiple Schools

3.5.1 Where a joint honours degree is built from modules taught by multiple Schools, the Schools involved should agree which is the Lead School and together decide the appropriate arrangements for quality assurance of the programme:

- These must include arrangements for annual and periodic programme review, and consideration of the joint degree within the Schools' annual learning and teaching enhancement reports.
- Annual module monitoring will remain the responsibility of the Lead School for the module, but arrangements should explicitly identify and manage the needs of joint degree students.
- For new taught provision, these arrangements must be documented and approved by the Quality and Academic Standards Committee as part of the programme approval process.

Approved by the Learning and Teaching Committee May 2016
Dr Lesley McLellan
Director of Quality and Academic Standards

Extract from the QAA UK Quality Code, Chapter B10, Indicator 7, on guidance relating to quality and academic standards aspects for the content of legal agreements

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).
- Definition 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 academic frameworks and 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 academic appeals and student complaints.
- 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, 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 professional statutory regulatory bodies, 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 arrangement, including the obligations of the degree-awarding body to enable students to complete their studies leading to the award of credit or a qualification in its name.
- Procedures for amending the agreement and/or for agreeing additional appendices.
- Date and mechanism for review of the agreement.