

Extending provision within an Academic Partnership

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Extending provision within an Academic Partnership

This section of the Framework covers the extension of provision at existing academic partnerships in the UK and overseas.

Principles

- The process outlined below supports the University in extending partnerships that support the vision laid out in Strategy 2020 and add value to the University
- It ensures partners are able to offer awards at the appropriate standard and a high quality student experience
- The process is risk-based and proportionate, focusing effort where it is required

Step 1: Initial screening of prospective extensions to partnerships

Once an opportunity has been identified and contact has been made with the partner, an **Extension Proposal Form** must be completed by the partnership proposer from UWE, with input from the partner, and signed off by the relevant Faculty Executive Dean/s. This form is used to provide information to the Academic Partnerships Development Group and the Collaborative Provision Committee to make an informed decision on whether the extension of the partnership should proceed to the next stages. The faculty will be asked to risk rate the proposal in the Extension Proposal Form using the risk criteria. This risk rating will then be discussed and agreed by the Academic Partnerships Development Group and the Collaborative Provision Committee. Should the Academic Partnerships Development Group and Collaborative Provision Committee grant approval for further development of the proposal, steps 2 and 3 will take place concurrently.

Step 2: Due Diligence

Due diligence involves a detailed appraisal of the proposed partner's capacity and capability to deliver part or all of a University programme. This appraisal includes consideration of the proposed partner's existing;

- processes and procedures for quality assurance and enhancement
- monitoring and evaluation
- student voice and feedback mechanisms
- computing, library and learning resources facilities
- staffing

- vision and mission
- finances

Feedback on the strengths and any potential issues relating to the prospective extension to the partnership is invited from professional services and academic colleagues involved in the partnership on how the existing partnership has run and whether any developmental areas should be explored further as part of the approval process.

Step 3: Development of the proposal

Financial Model

As part of the due diligence process the financial arrangements which will support the proposed partnership, including student numbers and any agreed minimum annual charge, are agreed in consultation with the Faculty, Professional Services and the prospective partner.

Programme design

Proposals that involve a new programmes or programme title changes will require approval from the University Curriculum Panel (UCP). Roll-out of existing UWE programmes with no change to programme title will be noted at UCP.

Prior to approval the faculty will work with the proposed partner on the following;

- Developing the programme/s with the partner and preparing the *module and programme specifications* and completing the *Programme Design and Development Report*
- Ensuring the programme is appropriately staffed and resourced for delivery at the proposed partner. The partner must provide a *staffing plan* and *staff CVs*
- Assisting with the creation of an *operational calendar* (in conjunction with the Operations Manager from Student and Academic Services) which will highlight any additional academic or administrative support needed
- Providing information for the *Operations Manual* (in conjunction with the Operations Manager from Student and Academic Services) which will include the communications strategy for the partnership
- Updating the *risk register* for the partnership using the UWE template

Step 4: Approval

The approval process normally culminates in an evaluation of the proposal by a a Special University Validation Panel.

Should further documentation and/or discussions be required before a decision can be made, the Academic Partnership Development Team member and Link Tutor will be

responsible for working closely with the prospective partner until the issues outstanding have been resolved.

Step 5: Post approval

Once approval has been granted the Academic Partnership Development Team updates the formal agreement between the University and the partner, known as the Academic Agreement, which sets out the principles underpinning the partnership and the division of responsibilities.

The Academic Agreement forms a binding contract and is signed by both institutions. It is supported by a Responsibilities Schedule, a Finance Schedule and an Academic Schedule for each programme to be delivered by the partner. The Academic Agreement is normally made for a period of five years and includes provision for review of the agreement and mechanisms for its termination, subject to satisfactory provision being made for completion of programmes by existing students.

Should the award or awards to be delivered under the terms of the agreement be accredited by any Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) in the UK and/or agencies in the partner's country, Student and Academic Services will assist in coordinating the accreditation of the partnership or the awards.

Student and Academic Services will ensure that that the partnership approval outcome is communicated to stakeholders involved in the management and administration of the partnership as well as the wider University.