



## Partnership Approval and Management Process

### Partnership Policy and Overview

This policy describes the University's approach to credit and award-bearing partnership provision including information on the criteria for considering partnership proposals, the process of approval and the responsibilities for the management and governance of partnership programmes.

[Link to Partnerships Policy](#)

## Approval Process

### Stage 0

Stage 0 is the initial approval stage for partnership programmes and is designed to enable an initial evaluation of a credit- or award-bearing Collaborative Provision proposal. It is undertaken at both School and institutional level prior to detailed discussions taking place with the proposed partner. Stage 0 focusses on the compatibility of the proposed partner with City, an initial outline of the proposal and any associated risks. The Stage 0 is considered and approved by the Deputy President (Education) and, in the case of international partnerships, the Vice President (International).

The Stage 0 Initial Evaluation form is normally completed by the School-nominated Academic Partnership Coordinator (usually the Programme Director), before being signed off by the Dean of School. Collaborative Provision proposals are forwarded to the Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development) in Student and Academic Services for review before going to the Deputy President (Education) and Vice President (International), if appropriate, for signature.

[Link to Partnership Proposal Initial Evaluation Forms \(Stage 0\)](#)

### Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

This is a written agreement between the City and the partner institution, formalising the institutions' intention to work together to develop the proposed partnership. It is not however a legally-binding agreement, and should not create any legal obligations between City and the partner institution. The MoU is developed after the Stage 0 Form has been approved. It is drafted by the Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development), in liaison with the Academic Partnership

Coordinator and the partner organisation. Once the text is finalised, two copies of the MoU are signed by the Deputy President and then the partner organisation.

### **Institutional Engagement Meeting and Due Diligence**

Once Stage 0 approval has been given, the University is required to carry out an Institutional Engagement Meeting and undertake Due Diligence checks on the partner institution. This is to enable the University to assure itself of the academic, financial and legal standing of the partner institution and the proposed partnership. We are also required to carry out Health and Safety checks to meet the requirements of our insurance. The Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development) will manage the Institutional Engagement Meeting and Due Diligence checks in liaison with the Academic Partnership Coordinator, the Finance Department and the partner institution, and will produce reports for the School and University approval panels.

[Link to Institutional Engagement Meeting and Due Diligence Report Forms](#)

### **School ExCo Approval**

Once the Institutional Engagement Meeting (IEM) and Due Diligence Reports have been completed, the Academic Partnership Coordinator should liaise with the School PARC Secretary and the School Management Accountant to develop a proposal to ExCo, using the 'costing new course proposals' template provided by Finance. ExCo will be required to review the financial proposal and the IEM and Due Diligence Reports and agree for the programme to be considered for approval through the University programme approval process.

### **School Stage 1 Approval**

After consideration by ExCo, the proposal is considered by School PARC for School Stage 1 approval. This is the same process as for an in-house programme. Academic Partnership Coordinators will complete the Stage 1 forms in liaison with the School PARC Secretary and School Head of Academic Services. Proposals for a new partnership should be considered by the full panel and not as Chair's Action. This helps to identify and address any potential issues before the proposal is reviewed by the University Stage 1 panel. More information on the University programme approval process is available in Section 3 of the Quality Manual.

[Link to Quality Manual Section 3: Programme Development, Approval and Amendment](#)

[Link to Programme Approval Stage 1 Form with guidance notes](#)

### **University Stage 1 Approval**

Once any conditions have been met and the proposal has sign off at School Stage 1, the proposal will be considered by the University Programme Approval Committee (UPAC) for Stage 1.

### **Post-Stage 1 Marketing and Recruitment Agreement**

After UPAC Stage 1 approval a new partnership programme can normally be marketed. A Preliminary Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) is drafted that sets out the terms and conditions for marketing the programme by City and the partner institution, prior to the programme receiving full University approval. The Preliminary MoA is drafted by the Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and

Academic Development) in liaison with the Academic Partnership Coordinator and the partner. Once the text is finalised, two copies of the agreement are signed by the Deputy President and then the partner institution. Marketing can begin once the agreement is signed in accordance with any terms within the agreement.

### **School Stage 2 Approval**

The Stage 2 process for partnership approval is the same for an in-house programme, with some additional areas to be considered which are tailored to the type of partnership provision.

The School is required to complete a 'Partnership Appendix' which gathers information relevant to the partnership and sets out how both parties will manage the programme. The information will be considered during Stage 2 of the approval process and will be used in the drafting of a Memorandum of Agreement. The Partnership Appendices for each type of partnership are available in the University Quality Manual.

A member of the partner institution may be required to attend the School Stage 2 PARC meeting, if appropriate to the nature of the partnership. Partner institution representation at the PARC meeting will be agreed in liaison with Student and Academic Services. More information on this is available in Section 3 of the Quality Manual.

[Link to Quality Manual Section 3: Programme Development, Approval and Amendment](#)

[Link to Stage 2 Programme Approval Form with guidance notes](#)

[Link to Stage 2 Partnership Appendices](#)

### **University Stage 2 Approval**

Once any conditions have been met and the proposal has sign-off at School Stage 2, it will proceed to University Stage 2. A member of the partner institution may be required to attend the University Stage 2 meeting, if appropriate to the nature of the partnership. Partner institution representation at the UPAC meeting will be agreed in liaison with Student and Academic Services.

### **Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)**

The MoA is a legally-binding document which sets out the terms and details of the partnership arrangement. The MoA will also contain an Operational Schedule which sets out, in detail, the framework within which the partnership shall be developed, delivered and monitored.

After approval through University Programme Approval Committee, the Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development) will liaise with the Academic Partnership Coordinator and the partner institution to draft the MoA, which is the contract between City and the partner institution that governs the partnership. Once all University Stage 2 conditions have been signed off, the MoA can be finalised and signed. Two copies will be signed by the Deputy President and then shared with the partner institution for final signing. A signed MoA must be in place prior to the programme starting.

## Management of Partnership Programmes through School Boards of Studies and the Executive Committees

### **School Board of Studies Management**

As stated in the Partnerships Policy, Deans of Schools have responsibility for partnership provision within each of their Schools; Boards of Studies oversee matters of quality and standards, and School Executive Committees advise on matters of strategy and resource. This includes, where appropriate and as designated by the Memorandum of Agreement, responsibilities for recruitment and admission, programme development and approval, student voice, assessment, external examining, programme evaluation and review, and termination.

A Programme Committee should be in place to oversee the partnership programme, which is responsible to the Board of Studies for managing the day-to-day academic quality and standards of provision and for ensuring effective engagement of students on programme-related matters. The specific arrangements for the Programme Committee for a partnership programme will be set out in the MoA for that partnership. This will include terms of reference and membership, including representation from the partner institution. Programmes leading to City award and having significant involvement from the partner in delivery – for example, joint programmes and franchised provision - will normally be required to hold dedicated Programme Committees. Other types of provision - such as articulation arrangements, access/feeder arrangements and off-site delivery - would normally be overseen by the existing Programme Committees of the City programmes with which they are associated.

### **Academic Partnership Coordinator and Lead Partnership Coordinator Roles after Approval**

The Academic Partnership Coordinator (APC), ultimately responsible to the Dean of School, will support the School in the management of quality and standards for the partnership programme. The role is intended to help cement the relationship between the partner and City, and will differ depending on the type of partnership being supported. Further details of the specific requirements of the role is provided in the APC role profile.

[Link to APC Role Profile](#)

Academic Partnership Coordinators are required to complete an annual report for each partnership they oversee. This APC report should be appended to the APE form for that programme for consideration by the School Board of Studies.

[Link to APC Annual Report Form](#)

The Lead Partnership Coordinator (LPC) for the School will be a senior member of academic or professional services staff who will be responsible to the Dean of School for effective oversight and integration or partnership provision within the School. The LPC will oversee the School APCs and will be a member of both Board of Studies and the Collaborative Provision Committee. Further details of the responsibilities of the LPC are provided in the role profile.

[Link to LPC Role Profile](#)

### **School Collaborative Provision Registers**

The School Collaborative Provision Register serves as a record of the number of students for a particular institution, the name of the Academic Partnership Coordinator, the expiry date of the current agreement, the date of the last approval and whether the programme is required to produce a stand-alone Annual Programme Evaluation (APE). Each year Student and Academic Services will produce School Collaborative Provision Registers and it is expected that these will be received and discussed as a standing item on the Board of Studies agenda. When available, Schools will be required to provide updates to the registers. This includes the number of students enrolled on or through partnership programmes each year and the name of the Academic Partnership Coordinator. The updates should be shared with the Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development) and will be used to update the University Collaborative Provision Register, which is received at Senate on an annual basis. Schools will also be expected to refer to the register to ensure APE and APC reports are completed in accordance with the requirements.

### **Annual Programme Evaluation (APE) and Periodic Programme Review (PPR)**

Partnership programmes are normally evaluated in the same way as any School-managed programme. Specific arrangements for APEs and PPRs for partnership provision, including how the partner institution will be involved in these processes, will be set out in the relevant MoA.

APE: Some partnership programmes, a joint degree for example, will be expected to complete a separate APE, whereas the evaluation of other arrangements, articulation for example, will be subsumed into the evaluation of the associated School programme. Details of whether separate APEs should be produced are recorded on the School Collaborative Provision Register, and guidance is provided within the APE form regarding the consideration of information for partnership programmes. In some cases, the partner institution will be involved in the development of the APE form; details of this requirement will be provided in the MoA. In all cases, the APE should be shared with the partner organisation, normally through the Programme Committee. All APEs should be received at Programme Committee for sign-off before being provided to the Board of Studies for consideration.

PPR: A PPR should include the consideration of partnership programmes that are associated with the programme grouping being reviewed. Inclusion of consideration of partnership arrangements will be agreed through the PPR development process and in liaison with Student and Academic Services, and will be detailed in the MoA. Further details can be found in Section 8 of the Quality Manual.

[Link to Quality Manual Section 8: Programme Evaluation and Review](#)

**Renewal of Partnership Agreements**

Each School Collaborative Provision Register records when agreements for partnership arrangements expire. Toward the end of the academic year, the Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development) will meet with the Lead Partnership Coordinator and Board of Studies Secretary to discuss the School Collaborative Provision Register and identify programmes which are nearing the final year of their agreement and discuss whether the School will decide to renew or terminate the arrangement.

Should the School decide to renew the arrangement, the Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development) will undertake the due diligence checks required to renew an agreement, based on the type of arrangement being renewed, and will produce a report. This will need to be considered through School ExCo, along with a financial proposal, which will be developed in liaison with the School Management Accountant. Once ExCo approval has been granted, the renewal should be considered through School PARC. If approval is granted, the School should inform the Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development) who will draft a new agreement in liaison with the Academic Partnership Coordinator and the partner organisation.

**Termination of Partnership Agreements**

Should the School wish to terminate a partnership, the School should complete a Programme Termination Form for consideration and approval through School PARC and ExCo. When this has been approved, Student and Academic Services will liaise with the Deputy President to gain full approval.

With the approval of the Deputy President, Student and Academic Services will liaise with Information Services and the Academic Partnership Coordinator on the next steps. Decisions to terminate programmes should be recorded on the student records system and programme information system as soon as approved by the Deputy President. This will support the provision of information about the University's educational offer to prospective students and applicants.

Each partnership agreement (MoA) contains as an appendix an Exit Plan setting out the framework for the management of the exit, including communication with students. The Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development) will liaise with the APC and partner institution to agree the specific roles and responsibilities to manage the termination as set out in the Exit Plan.

In addition, the Assistant Registrar (Partnerships and Academic Development) will liaise with the APC to draft a termination letter to be signed by the Deputy President and sent to the partner institution.

[Link to Programme Terminations & Suspensions Policy](#)

[Link to Programme Termination Form](#)