

# Part 11

## Collaboration with Other Institutions

### 1. Introduction

1.1. UEL is involved in a range of collaborative academic partnership relationships, each relationship is categorised as one of the following models of collaboration:

- 1.1.1. **Franchise:** UEL may license whole courses, or stages of courses, designed by UEL and delivered on campus at UEL, to be delivered by a partner institution at their premises. Core modules will be as set out in the UEL course specification for the course, save that differences in curriculum content in core modules may be permitted to reflect cultural and regional differences as long as learning outcomes remain consistent. The partner institution may be permitted to develop a different set of optional modules, as long as they enable the course learning outcomes to be met. Additional optional modules would need to be approved through the UEL approval procedures. Where there is justification for doing so, and in-country regulations do not prohibit, it is possible for franchise courses to have a different course title to the on-campus UEL course. UEL retains ultimate responsibility for updating course content and course content will be reviewed as part of the Departmental academic review;
- 1.1.2. **Validation:** UEL may accredit a course developed by another institution as equivalent to a UEL award, or leading to the award of a specific number of credits. The partner institution has responsibility for updating course content and course content will be reviewed as part of the partner institution's collaborative review;
- 1.1.3. **Joint:** A course delivered jointly by UEL and at least one other institution. Delivery of the course may take place at UEL, the partner institution's premises, both at UEL and the partner institution's premises or by distance learning. Responsibility for updating course content is shared and course content will be reviewed as part of the Departmental academic review;
- 1.1.4. **Distributed Delivery:** (*also known as 'flying faculty'*) A course of study whereby course delivery and assessment is undertaken by UEL staff at the partner institution site. The partner institution may provide certain specialist resources, as approved by the University. UEL retains ultimate responsibility for updating course content and course content will be reviewed as part of the Departmental academic review.

- 1.2. Partnerships categorised as either franchise, validation or joint will adhere to one of the following methods of course delivery:
  - 1.2.1. **Partner On Campus:** The course is delivered on site at the partner institution, or through blended delivery, the partner institution is responsible for the management of teaching and assessment;
  - 1.2.2. **Joint:** Course delivery is split between UEL and the site of the partner institution. Responsibility for teaching and assessment is split between UEL and the partner institution, normally each institution takes responsibility for elements of the course which are delivered at its teaching site. The split in responsibility for delivery of the course will be agreed at validation;
  - 1.2.3. **Distance learning:** A course of study whereby a student would not normally attend a UEL campus or that of a partner institution. Attendance may be required for residential sessions, for study support or for assessment purposes. The partner institution may manage elements of delivery, support and/or assessment, as agreed at validation.
- 1.3. Each course delivered in collaboration with a partner institution will lead to one of the following award types:
  - 1.3.1. **Single award:** A course of study leading to the award of a UEL qualification. UEL have sole responsibility for the issuing of the award certificate;
  - 1.3.2. **Double award:** A course of study leading to the award of both a UEL qualification and that of a partner institution. Each institution shall be responsible for the issuing of the award certificate of that institution;
  - 1.3.3. **Joint award:** A course of study leading to the award of a single certificate awarded jointly by UEL and another partner institution. Responsibility for the issuing of the award certificate shall be agreed between the two institutions prior to the commencement of the course.
- 1.4. The academic framework, assessment and feedback policy apply to the various models as follows:
  - 1.4.1. For **franchise and distributed delivery** agreements, all will apply;
  - 1.4.2. For **joint and validation** agreements, the assessment and feedback policy applies. The academic framework would normally be expected to apply with scope for negotiation. Deviations from the academic framework and/or the assessment and feedback policy must be approved by the Education and Experience Committee of UEL.
- 1.5. UEL's academic framework requires that course teams incorporate our principles of Mental Wealth (<https://www.uel.ac.uk/about/about-uel/mental-wealth>). All undergraduate courses delivered in collaboration with a partner institution are, unless granted an exemption, required to incorporate the principles of Mental

Wealth within their curriculum. Mental Wealth is not a requirement of postgraduate courses delivered in collaboration with a partner institution and the partner institution will be given the option of whether or not they wish to adopt UEL's Mental Wealth principles.

- 1.6 UEL has ultimate responsibility for the quality of all courses leading to a UEL award. Where a course leads to a double or joint award responsibility for quality may be shared with each institution having ultimate responsibility for the quality of its own award.
- 1.7 In some circumstances UEL staff are contracted to teach on courses designed, validated and delivered at another institution. In this context it is usually the partner institution that takes responsibility for the quality of the course offered and UEL's quality assurance procedures do not apply.
- 1.8 In the context of this section of the Quality Manual, the term 'institution' is used to describe any educational establishment (e.g. college of further education, college of higher education, university) within the UK or overseas. It also embraces industrial, commercial or public sector organisations that wish to offer courses in collaboration with UEL or purchase a course from it.

## 2. Summary of the Approval Process

- 2.1. Before UEL can offer courses in collaboration with a partner institution, an institutional approval and course approval process must be completed (see Process Flow Appendix A). The criteria for approval are as follows:
  - 2.1.1. The arrangement is consistent with the UEL vision and strategy and policy on collaboration;
  - 2.1.2. There is evidence to suggest that there will be adequate resources available to support the collaborative arrangements proposed;
  - 2.1.3. The proposal has academic benefit for UEL and is financially viable;
  - 2.1.4. The partner institution is of appropriate standing and is capable of providing a suitable learning environment for the delivery of courses of study leading to UEL awards;
  - 2.1.5. There is confirmation from official sources that official recognition will be granted, or of the limitation or conditions applying in respect of recognition (overseas courses only);
  - 2.1.6. There is no evidence to suggest that the partner institution will be prepared to place quality and standards at risk for financial gain.
- 2.2. All course proposals, irrespective of the model of collaboration, must be accorded partnership proposal and business case approval (managed by AEPO via the Academic Partnerships Oversight Group). QAE will then manage the **initial approval process**. Once this is granted, development teams can proceed with the detail of the development, and a validation event can be arranged.

- 2.3. For institutions with which UEL has not worked before, **institutional approval** is required. This includes proposals where partner institutions assist in, or facilitate the delivery of a UEL course by distance learning.
- 2.4. Discussions will also take place with the partner institution with regard to the **memorandum of co-operation**, to agree the commercial and financial terms, the operation of an academic calendar, the allocation of responsibilities between UEL and the partner institution and the implementation of UEL policies and procedures (see 10 below). No course can run without a signed memorandum of co-operation being in effect.
- 2.5. The **course approval** process comprises a planning meeting, at which an initial review of documentation takes place, and if a decision is made to proceed, is followed by the validation event, normally involving a site visit. Following the event, the proposal will be approved, approved subject to conditions, or not approved. Where conditions are set a deadline will be imposed. Peer Review, acting on behalf of Academic Board, will formally validate the proposal, having considered the report of the approval panel. The course may not run until all conditions are met and validation has been completed.
- 2.6. Any deviation from the usual process flow for collaborative approvals detailed at Appendix A must be approved by the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement and by the Academic Partnerships Oversight Group.

### **3. Initial Approval**

- 3.1. Before a new collaborative course is developed, initial approval must be obtained. The aim of initial approval is to ensure that time is spent productively on developing proposals that are viable, accord with the UEL vision and strategic plans and are likely to succeed at approval and validation. No proposal may proceed to validation unless initial approval has been obtained.
- 3.2. The following timelines should usually be adhered to when applications for initial approval are being made:
  - 3.2.1. For courses where it is proposed that **delivery will begin in September**, initial approval should be obtained from the Academic Partnerships Oversight Group, chaired by the PVC Careers and Enterprise, no later than February;
  - 3.2.2. For courses where it is proposed that **delivery will begin in February**, initial approval should be obtained from the Academic Partnerships Oversight Group, chaired by the PVC Careers and Enterprise, no later than July.
  - 3.2.3. Any proposal that sits outside the timelines set out in 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 cannot be progressed without the approval of both the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement and the Academic Partnerships Oversight Group.

- 3.3. Applications for initial approval for proposals relating to collaborative partnerships are completed using the collaborative initial approval form.
- 3.4. Where a proposal is for a new collaborative partnership, the course proposer should contact the Academic Partnerships' Business Development Manager the earliest opportunity for advice in completing the form.
- 3.5. Where a proposal is for an existing collaborative partnership, the course proposer should contact their Academic Partnerships' Account Manager at the earliest opportunity for advice in completing the form.
- 3.6. Once completed, the collaborative initial approval form will be submitted to Quality Assurance and Enhancement.
- 3.7. Quality Assurance and Enhancement will post the form online for a 10 day consultation period with the following stakeholders:
  - The proposing School;
  - Facilities Services;
  - Academic Registry;
  - Strategic Planning;
  - Quality Assurance and Enhancement
  - Library and Learning Services.

If major concerns are raised as part of the consultation process, Quality Assurance and Enhancement will put the proposal on hold and seek a resolution.

- 3.8. At the end of the ten-day consultation period Quality Assurance and Enhancement will consolidate the feedback from the relevant stakeholders and forward the proposal to the Academic Partnerships Oversight Group, chaired by the PVC Careers and Enterprise, for consideration and final approval.
- 3.9. Once initial approval has been granted, the proposal is added to the validation and review schedule and progress in terms of course approval is monitored by Quality Assurance and Enhancement. The College Quality Officer associated with the School(s) will be available to provide advice and guidance and assist in the development of the proposal.

#### **4. Institutional Approval**

- 4.1. Where a proposal is to work with an institution with whom UEL do not have existing collaborative provision, then it will be necessary to undertake institutional approval.
- 4.2. The purpose of institutional approval is to:
  - 4.2.1. Confirm there is strategic alignment and consistency with the UEL vision;
  - 4.2.2. Ensure that the collaborative arrangement is financially viable;
  - 4.2.3. Ensure that the partner institution is financially stable;

- 4.2.4. Ensure that the partner institution has appropriate mechanisms for governance;
  - 4.2.5. Ensure that the partner institution is of appropriate standing and unlikely to put standards and quality at risk;
  - 4.2.6. Ensure that the partner institution has effective quality assurance mechanisms;
  - 4.2.7. Ensure that the partner institution has appropriate resources and policies for student support;
  - 4.2.8. Ensure that where government approval is required, this has been obtained or is likely to be obtained.
- 4.3. The level of scrutiny required will be determined on the basis of the complexity and volume of provision as well as perceived risk. Nevertheless, initial enquiries will cover the following areas:
- Public and legal standing of the prospective partner institution in their own country and in the case of a partner institution in the UK, via reports of public bodies;
  - Standing of prospective partner institution in the light of experience of other UK institutions;
  - The financial stability of the prospective partner institution;
  - The ability of the prospective partner institution to provide the human and physical resources to operate the provision successfully;
  - The ability of the prospective partner institution to provide an appropriate and safe working environment for students;
  - The ownership of the prospective partner institution, its governance and management structures, its range of business interests and links, and its appropriateness to support the proposed arrangement;
  - The ability of the prospective partner institution to manage processes for quality assurance and to meet the expectations of the UK Quality Code.
- 4.4. As part of the institutional approval process Quality Assurance and Enhancement will undertake due diligence checks in liaison with UEL's Governance and Legal and Finance teams.
- 4.5. UEL reserves the right to withdraw Institutional Approval, the withdrawal of Institutional Approval would result in the immediate termination of the partnership.

### **Due Diligence**

- 4.6. Quality Assurance and Enhancement will work with the prospective partner institution to gather relevant information. Normally, the following information will be gathered for a UK based institution which is a publicly funded body:
- 4.6.1. A brief history of the institution including details of its ownership.
- 4.6.2. Documents which help to determine the nature of the institution:
- mission statement;
  - strategic plan;
  - prospectus.
- 4.6.3. Details of the institution's governance and management structure including membership and terms of reference of its governing body and important internal committees, including a diagrammatic representation of the organisational and internal structure.
- 4.6.4. Relevant financial information:
- budget statements;
  - management accounts;
  - audited published financial statements including income and expenditure account, balance sheet, cash flow statement and notes to the accounts.
- 4.6.5. A detailed description of the academic and administrative resources available at the institution to support the collaborative arrangements proposed (to include provision for welfare, support services and pastoral care available to students).
- 4.6.6. Evidence about the quality of provision at the institution:
- reports from funding bodies;
  - reports from external quality assurance bodies;
  - details of any other UK HEI or educational bodies with which the institution has, or has previously had, collaborative arrangements, if applicable.
- 4.6.7. Staff development policy and details for monitoring the performance of teaching staff.
- 4.7. If the proposed collaboration is with an organisation which is privately funded, or of charitable status, the following documentation will be required in addition to those listed in 4.5 above:
- 4.7.1. The constitution of the institution which gives it legal status, e.g. Articles of Association, Trust deed, Act of Parliament;
- 4.7.2. Audited accounts (including director's notes) for the preceding 3 financial years;

- 4.7.3. Corporate plan/business plan/financial forecasts;
  - 4.7.4. A list of names under which the organisation/institution trades;
  - 4.7.5. Litigation and disputes, i.e. details of any proceedings (civil, criminal or arbitration), dispute or complaint, any order or judgement, if relevant;
  - 4.7.6. A written statement from prospective institution confirming the organisation's/institution's ability to enter into contract with UEL;
  - 4.7.7. Liability insurance e.g. copies of valid insurance certificates;
  - 4.7.8. Health and safety policy;
  - 4.7.9. Equality and diversity policy, including policy on disabled students;
  - 4.7.10. Employment policies and profile (to include details of staff numbers broken down separately for academic and administrative staff);
  - 4.7.11. Policy on modern slavery;
  - 4.7.12. Safeguarding policy;
  - 4.7.13. Policy on the admission of students and a profile of the student body;
  - 4.7.14. Quality assurance arrangements currently in place for: curriculum development, approval, monitoring and review of courses, collection and evaluation of student feedback, management and administration of assessment processes, feedback to students on assessed work, tracking students' progression and achievement, student consultation and representation systems;
  - 4.7.15. Independent evidence of the institution's reputation and standing, including checking any previous association of the institution with another UK higher education institution;
  - 4.7.16. Documentation about any legal or regulatory requirements (including the institution's legal capacity to award 'Joint' or 'Double' awards, if relevant) to which the institution must conform.
- 4.8. For UK based institutions intending to recruit international students, an accreditation report from one of the approved accreditation bodies and evidence of sponsor status from the UKVI will be required.
- 4.9. If the collaboration is with an overseas institution the following information will be required in addition to that identified in 4.5 and 4.6 above:
- 4.9.1. Details of government approval/accreditation/recognition of the institution (copies of approval letters or certificates issued by the local ministry of education, the national quality assurance agency, etc);



- 4.9.2. Academic Partnerships will obtain any information on the institution or on the cultural, legal, financial and political environment of the country in which the institution is based, which might impact on UEL's ability to exercise its responsibilities, particularly in relation to academic standards and quality, available from government offices or agencies in that country or the British Council;
- 4.9.3. An evaluation of the implications of any language issues provided by the course proposer.
- 4.10. Quality Assurance and Enhancement will present financial information from the prospective partner institution to the Assistant Director of Financial Management for an assessment of the financial stability of the institution and an overview of the financial costs/benefits to UEL. The Assistant Director of Financial Management or delegated member of staff will prepare a written report providing the necessary assurance to the University as to the financial standing of the institution.
- 4.11. Quality Assurance and Enhancement will present documentation relating to the governance and legal standing of the prospective partner institution to the Assistant Director for Governance and Legal for an assessment of the governance and legal standing of the institution. The Assistant Director of Governance and Legal or delegated member of staff will prepare a written report providing the necessary assurance to the University as to the governance and legal standing of the institution.
- 4.12. A member of academic staff from the School with whom it is proposed that the prospective partner institution will collaborate, or a member of Academic Employer Partnerships, will conduct a visit of the premises at the institution and complete a site visit report to include a recommendation as to the suitability of the facilities for delivery of the proposed course(s). Where the member of staff conducting the site visit does not have specialist knowledge in the relevant subject area(s) they will ensure that they are provided with a comprehensive list of necessary facilities for delivery the proposed course(s) in order that they can confirm whether the institution has the necessary facilities.
- 4.13. A member of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement team responsible for collaborations will review the reports detailed at 4.10 to 4.12 and make an assessment of the likely risk posed to UEL should it enter into partnership with the institution. They shall oversee the production of an institutional approval report for submission to the Academic Partnerships Oversight Group making a recommendation as to whether institutional approval should be granted.
- 4.14. Academic Partnerships Oversight Group has ultimate responsibility for granting institutional approval.

## **5. Course Approval**

- 5.1. Once institutional approval and initial approval has been granted, a proposal may proceed to course approval. All collaborative courses will be evaluated through a process that will normally include an approval event, usually at the location of delivery, before they are offered to students. The purpose of the approval event is to confirm that:

- 5.1.1. The partner institution is able to provide a suitable learning environment for the delivery of courses of study leading to UEL awards;
  - 5.1.2. Adequate resources are available to meet both the academic and support needs of the students;
  - 5.1.3. The arrangements for collaboration set down in the memorandum of co-operation are appropriate, understood and accepted by all parties.
- 5.2. The following timelines should be adhered to when undertaking course approval:
- 5.2.1. For courses where it is proposed that delivery **will begin in September**, the course approval event should have taken place no later than May;
  - 5.2.2. For courses where it is proposed that **delivery will begin in February**, the course approval event should have taken place no later than October.
  - 5.2.3. Any proposal that sits outside the timelines above 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 cannot be progressed without the approval of both the Head of Quality Assurance Enhancement and the Academic Partnerships Oversight Group.
- 5.3. Where a new course is proposed for an existing partner institution which has undergone a successful collaborative review a decision will be made by UEL's Quality Assurance and Enhancement team as to whether it is necessary for the approval event to take place at the site of delivery. In making this decision the following shall be taken into consideration:
- 5.3.1. The model of collaboration (validated courses will normally require the approval event to take place at the partner institution);
  - 5.3.2. The partner institution's track record in quality assurance (including completion of UEL's annual Collaborative Annual Monitoring process);
  - 5.3.3. Whether the proposed course is in a cognate subject area to those already approved for delivery at the partner institution;
  - 5.3.4. How recently the partner institution has been visited by UEL as part of a course approval event.
- The Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement is responsible for making the final decision as to the location of the approval event. Where it is agreed that the approval event is not required to take place at the site of delivery alternative arrangements will be made for the validation panel to meet with the course team, this may include the use of video conference facilities.
- 5.4. The approval (validation) panel will be constituted to include a range of expertise enabling it to evaluate institutional issues as well as those that are course-specific. It will be responsible for reviewing:

- Academic infrastructures;
  - Academic and professional achievements and aspirations;
  - Quality of teaching staff;
  - Learning experience of students;
  - Availability and use of resources (including teaching accommodation, computing, laboratory, library and media facilities);
  - Procedures for assuring quality and arrangements for collaboration.
- 5.5. Where a proposal involves new courses with more than one UEL School in the same academic year, a joint event will be considered. Advice will be sought from the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement regarding the maximum number of courses to be considered at a single event and in one day.
- 5.6. Where the provision to be approved is offered at multiple locations, the Chair and servicing officer will take advice from the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement on the process to be followed. Site visits to all sites will be required prior to the panel approval event, and a report of these visits presented to the approval panel. The approval panel will need to see the CVs of all staff involved in delivery at all locations, and will review the likely consistency of the student experience at different locations as part of its remit.
- 5.7. Where a course that has, or requires, recognition by a professional, statutory or regulatory body, is the subject of the approval, the professional, statutory or regulatory body will be informed of the proposals at the earliest opportunity and the validation panel will set a condition that the course team obtain approval from the professional, statutory or regulatory body to deliver such courses. Where appropriate, depending on the approval requirements of that body, a representative will be invited to attend the panel event.

### **Documentation Requirements**

- 5.8. The following documentation (using standard UEL templates, available at <https://uelac.sharepoint.com/sites/QualityAssuranceandEnhancement/SitePages/Forms-and-Guidance.aspx> and from Quality Assurance and Enhancement) are required for both the planning meeting and the approval event for a collaborative course:
- 5.8.1. Course specification (for a franchised course the most up-to-date version of the course specification is required);
- 5.8.2. Validation document, to include:
- The context of the proposed course: the way in which the proposal meets the objectives of UEL's strategic plan and the School plan; the academic profile of the School and an assessment of the impact of

the proposal on that profile; and any relationship of the proposal to courses run by other Schools within UEL;

- Information about the partner institution, including their previous experience in the subject area, their areas of experience/expertise and the way in which the collaboration with UEL will further their strategic objectives;
  - The rationale for the proposal: to include evidence of the regional demand for the proposal; details of consultation with relevant employers and relevant professional bodies; the relationship of the proposal to similar provision offered elsewhere; the target student group/expected student profile;
  - A curriculum vitae for each member of staff; key management staff and staff teaching on the proposed course(s);
  - Statement of Resources: the physical resources that are available to support the course (e.g. library, computer hardware and software, specialist accommodation, other specialist equipment, course management and administrative resources) and , where applicable, how any blended learning approach is delivered and how distance learning students will access the resources;
  - The academic and administrative staff support infrastructure for distance learning students;
  - For validated courses only, a statement detailing the course team's evaluation of their proposal with regard to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s) (where applicable), the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, and any professional accreditation requirements (i.e. how have they been used in the development of the course).
- 5.8.3. For collaborative distance learning provision, a detailed schedule for completion of all distance or blended learning materials for the course;
- 5.8.4. A draft student handbook, using the latest UEL template, which at a minimum must include the following information:
- Course structure diagram;
  - Module specifications (using the standard UEL template);
  - Arrangements for the supervision and assessment of any placement element;
  - Local academic and other counselling and support arrangements for students.
- 5.8.5. For approval events that are not taking place at the site of delivery, the approval panel will be provided with a comprehensive report of physical resources available at the partner institution. Additional photographic or video evidence of resources may also be required.

5.9. In addition, the approval panel will be provided with a copy of the following information to assist with their deliberations:

- The UEL Quality Criteria;
- The relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s);
- An extract from Part 1 of the Manual of General Regulations, providing the full description of the award to which the proposed course will lead;
- A copy of relevant sections of the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education (i.e. Partnerships Section);
- Relevant documentation articulating professional body accreditation requirements;
- Any other information relevant to the proposal.

### **Criteria for Validation of Franchise, Joint and Validated Courses**

5.10. The purpose of the approval process for franchise, joint and validated courses is to ensure that the quality of the student experience will be comparable to that offered by UEL for the same or similar course. The approval panel must ensure that:

5.10.1. There are adequate physical resources available to support the course;

5.10.2. There are adequate human resources available to support the course;

5.10.3. The proposed course team has a clear understanding of, and commitment to, the aims and objectives of the course and an implementation plan for delivery;

5.10.4. There are adequate arrangements for student support and pastoral care;

5.10.5. There are adequate course management and administrative arrangements in place to support the course;

5.10.6. There is a clearly defined memorandum of co-operation between UEL and the partner institution.

5.10.7. In the case of franchise courses, the aims and objectives, structure, content and assessment of the course will have already been validated, and thus these will not normally form a line of enquiry during the approval of the franchise arrangement.

5.11. In the case of joint courses, where it is determined that UEL will have ultimate responsibility for the quality of the course, the approval event will also be responsible for the approval of the course. The course will be evaluated against the Quality Criteria to ensure that the academic standard is commensurate with the proposed award and that the quality of the student experience is likely to be appropriate.

5.12. If the partner institution has authority to award its own degrees, the two institutions may decide to take joint responsibility for the quality of the course. In these circumstances a joint validation process may be negotiated provided that the

principles underlying the UEL's quality assurance procedures are observed and the process ensures that the UEL's Quality Criteria for courses are met. A memorandum of co-operation between the two institutions will be required.

- 5.13. Where an approval event incorporates the approval of new courses, they will be evaluated against the Quality Criteria to ensure that the academic standard is commensurate with the proposed award and that the quality of the student experience is likely to be appropriate.

### **Requirements for the Approval of Distance Learning Provision**

- 5.14. An approval event by panel will take place where a partner institution undertakes elements of the following:
- Course and module design;
  - Learning materials design and production;
  - Content delivery and delivery support;
  - Assessment.
- 5.15. The approval event will consider, in addition:
- The schedule of availability and readiness of any print or online learning materials;
  - The system of delivery of the course;
  - Support infrastructure, roles and responsibilities of academic and support staff;
  - Student access to UEL systems, support and guidance services.
- 5.16. The approval panel will make recommendations relating to the timing of the review and updating of the academic content of courses offered by distance learning, given the implications and costs of updating.

### **Panel Composition**

- 5.17. Quality Assurance and Enhancement will assign a Chair to the approval event. The Chair will normally be a member of staff with significant experience in quality assurance, who has undertaken Chair's training and who is independent of the School(s) proposing the course. Any exceptions will be agreed by the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement .
- 5.18. Prior to the planning meeting, the course proposer will nominate appropriate external subject advisers to participate, normally by attendance, in the approval event. At least one external adviser is required but this number can be increased, as appropriate, at the discretion of the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement. Where approval of collaborative distance learning courses is included, at least one external adviser should have experience of distance learning provision.
- 5.19. The suitability of the external advisers will be determined by the Chair of the approval panel subject to the following criteria:
- 5.19.1. The depth and relevance of subject knowledge;

- 5.19.2. Experience in the management of collaborative activity;
  - 5.19.3. Prior experience of teaching on courses at the same level or above. At least one external panel member must have current experience of working in UK Higher Education;
  - 5.19.4. Impartiality (the nominee should not have any formal links with UEL or the partner institution during the last five years as a former member of staff or student and the last three years as an external examiner);
  - 5.19.5. Professional expertise (for vocational courses, at least one of the advisers should be a 'practitioner' drawn from a relevant business or professional background).
- 5.20. In making judgments about the suitability of the proposed external subject advisers, the Chair will need to take into account the overall balance of expertise presented by the external advisers. The Chair may reject a nominee or require the course proposer to nominate additional external subject advisers in order to ensure a balance of expert advice.
- 5.21. Where more than one course is being considered for approval, the membership of the approval panel will be constituted to ensure that the full range of issues can be adequately appraised.
- 5.22. For the approval of professional doctorate and Doctor of Philosophy PhD courses, a Research Degree Leader from another School will also be invited to attend the approval event.

### **Planning Meeting**

- 5.23. Prior to the approval event, a preliminary planning meeting will take place between the Chair of the panel, a member of Quality Assurance and Enhancement staff (acting as the servicing officer), key members of the partner institution (this normally includes the proposed course leader, the partner institution's Head of Quality and other key stakeholders) and key staff members from the School proposing the collaborative course (this normally includes the Department Head, Collaborative Leader and other key stakeholders). The School Collaborative Leader and a representative from Academic Partnerships shall be invited to attend the meeting, and in the case of professional doctorate and Doctor of Philosophy PhD validations, the School Research Degree Leader also. The purpose of the preliminary planning meeting is to:
- Identify and consider any outstanding issues relating to institutional approval;
  - Identify any outstanding resourcing issues that may need to be resolved before the approval event proceeds;
  - Identify major issues for consideration during the approval event;
  - Consider the adequacy of the documentation;
  - Discuss the course for the approval event;

- Ensure that there is agreement to the financial and commercial terms of the memorandum of co-operation;
  - Discuss the membership of the approval panel.
- 5.24. A course proposal will not proceed to validation until the Chair is satisfied that the documentation is adequate. If the documentation presented at the planning meeting is inadequate, or there are outstanding resourcing issues that need to be resolved prior to validation, the Chair of the panel may convene subsequent planning meetings before the approval event.
- 5.25. A short report providing the outcomes of the planning meeting and the proposed course for the approval event shall be prepared and circulated to panel members and other relevant staff by Quality Assurance and Enhancement.

### **Approval Event**

- 5.26. Quality Assurance and Enhancement will be responsible for convening the approval panel, sending out documentation to panel members and servicing the approval event (including the provision of regulatory advice etc.). In addition, the servicing officer will arrange for overnight accommodation for external members (where applicable), room bookings, catering arrangements and any arrangements for remote access to the panel meeting.
- 5.27. The course proposer is responsible for:
- Providing the agreed documentation by the deadline;
  - Arranging for the attendance of staff at relevant parts of the event;
  - Arranging for the attendance of any agreed external people, such as potential students and potential employers;
  - Ensuring that everyone involved is well briefed about the proposal.
- 5.28. The programme for the approval event will depend on the outcomes of the preliminary planning meeting but would typically include, where appropriate:
- Rationale for the proposal;
  - Aims and objectives of the course;
  - Admissions policy
  - Course content and structure;
  - Teaching and learning;
  - Assessment;
  - Student support and guidance;
  - Administrative arrangements for the registration and assessment of students;
  - Management of the collaborative partnership including the consideration of written agreements (e.g. memorandum of co-operation).
- 5.29. There will normally be a private meeting of the panel at the beginning of the approval event to enable members of the panel to raise issues that they would like to cover during the event and to enable the Chair to plan how and when various



issues will be raised. There will also be a private meeting of the panel at the end of the approval event at which the outcome of the event will be determined.

- 5.30. It is likely that the panel will wish to hold meetings with staff involved in the course (staff from both UEL and the partner institution) and potential students, where applicable. A tour of resources available to support the course is also likely.

### **Outcomes of the Approval Event**

- 5.31. At the end of the approval event the panel will reach a decision about the course. The panel may reject the course, approve the course without conditions, or set conditions of approval. Approval is valid for a period of five years, but if the course has not commenced within three years of the date of approval, re-approval will be required before the course can commence.
- 5.32. Where conditions of approval are set, the deadline for submission of responses to approval conditions shall be determined by the panel. Courses may not be offered until all conditions of validation have been satisfied. The Education and Experience Committee has agreed the following standard conditions for panels:
- **External Examiner Nominations** - that the course proposer should take action to ensure an external examiner is nominated and approved to cover delivery of the approved course(s) (see the Quality Manual Part 9);
  - **Academic Calendar** - that the proposed academic calendar aligns with UEL's calendar of assessment board dates and has been agreed with UEL's Academic Partnerships;
  - **Access to UEL's Online Resources** – the provider work with the School(s) to identify key e-journals and e-books, that are necessary for the students on the course(s) to access, and ensure that they are available either via the provider's own resources or UEL's Library and Learning Services;
  - **Establishment of Partnership Monitoring Committee** for the partnership, comprising representation from all UEL Schools/course teams and partner institution representatives; (for use where more than one School is involved with the partner institution. Where a committee already exists, the requirement will be to update the constitution to incorporate the additional course/School);
  - **Staff Development** –that a programme of staff development to be offered to partner institution staff in the first year of delivery is presented by the School (for use when validating a course with a new partner institution);
  - **Local laws and regulations** – that the partner institution presents verifiable evidence to confirm that government approval to deliver the course(s) has been obtained; (for use when validating a course with a partner institution outside of the UK where applicable);

## and either

- **Memorandum of Co-operation** - that the final memorandum of co-operation is agreed and signed by the parties; (for use when validating a new partner institution which does not have a pre-existing memorandum of co-operation);

## Or

- **Course Schedule** – that an updated Course Schedule is agreed and signed by both parties including the addition of any new courses and/or locations of delivery.

Such standard conditions will be set along with any other outstanding matters that course teams need to address prior to commencement of the course(s).

- 5.33. If conditions are imposed, it is the responsibility of the course proposer to ensure that the conditions are satisfied within the time scale specified.
- 5.34. The response to conditions of approval should be submitted to Quality Assurance and Enhancement who will arrange for it to be considered.
- 5.35. The Chair of the event will be responsible for formally determining that the conditions of approval event have been satisfied.
- 5.36. Following the approval event, the Course Proposer, the Dean/Head of School and a representative of the partner institution will receive a draft report for comment to check factual accuracy. The report is also circulated to members of the approval panel for comment. The confirmed report will then be produced and circulated.
- 5.37. The report and course specification will be submitted to Peer Review so that the decision can be endorsed and the course can be offered.
- 5.38. For new partner institutions, or partner institutions where significant new development has taken place, a Partner Enhancement Meeting will take place after one year of operation to ensure that that systems are operating effectively and to address any misunderstandings or concerns developing with the partner institution in the first year. This meeting will be led by a member of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement team and involve key staff from the relevant Schools and the partner institution.

## 6. Validation of the Delivery of a Course at an Alternative or Additional Location

- 6.1. The purpose of the validation process will be to ensure:
  - 6.1.1. That the physical resources/accommodation at the alternative institutional location are satisfactory;
  - 6.1.2. That the arrangements for the pastoral care and support services available to students are satisfactory;

- 6.1.3. That the arrangements for co-operation between all institutions involved, including UEL, are clearly articulated in a memorandum of co-operation.

## 6.2. Due Diligence

- 6.2.1. Quality Assurance and Enhancement will undertake the due diligence process and request the following supporting documentation (as a minimum) from the partner is provided prior to the event taking place:

- List of Resources
- Buildings Insurance
- Employers Liability Insurance
- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Arrangements
- Any additional documentation deemed necessary for Approval as requested by Quality Assurance and Enhancement

- 6.3. The site visit will take place at the proposed site of delivery. The panel will use the information provided prior to the event to feedback comments prior to the visit. The following will be reviewed at the site visit:

- First Aid arrangements
- Fire Safety Arrangements
- Personal and Protective Clothing (where applicable)
- Teaching, Accommodation and Learning Resources
- Access Arrangements
- Security of Assessment Arrangements
- Any additional requirements as deemed necessary by Quality Assurance and Enhancement

- 6.4. **Site Visit Type A** – A site visit type A will be conducted under the following circumstances:

- Approval of delivery of a UEL course by UEL staff at new premises where UEL staff are responsible for all the academic elements of delivery (including admission, teaching and assessment). This type of arrangement is commonly referred to as distributed delivery;
- Approval of a change of premises for delivery of an approved course by a partner institution;
- Approval of new premises for the delivery of an element of an approved course by a partner institution.

- 6.5. The site visit will usually be conducted by a servicing officer appointed by Quality Assurance and Enhancement and a representative of the responsible School. The purpose of the site visit will be to ensure the suitability of the academic environment in which the course will be offered. Approval of any changes in staffing will be the

responsibility of the UEL academic School, in line with the process for approving changes in staffing at partner institutions. A report will be presented to Peer Review. Where required, an external adviser will be invited to join the visiting panel.

6.6. **Site visit type B** – A site visit type B will be conducted under the following circumstances:

- A validation event is being conducted to consider the approval of a course for delivery at multiple locations and it is not logistically possible to visit all locations at the event. In such instances the site visit will be conducted prior to the validation event and a report from the visit will be presented to the validation panel;
- Approval of an additional new premises for the delivery of an approved course by a partner institution, where the new premises will be used for the standalone delivery of the course; approval for the delivery of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and/or Master of Philosophy (MPhil) provision by a partner institution.

6.7. The process will require initial approval, followed by a planning meeting and a site visit. Documentation will comprise a validation document, a course specification (where relevant) and a draft student handbook.

6.8. The site visit will usually be conducted by a Chair, external adviser, and servicing officer appointed by Quality Assurance and Enhancement. The number of external panel members can be adjusted, as appropriate, at the discretion of the Chair of the approval panel. Representatives of the responsible School may be required to attend at the discretion of the Chair. The purpose of the site visit will be to ensure the suitability of the academic environment in which the course will be offered, including the staff team, academic resources, pastoral care and support services. A site visit report will be presented to the Peer Review.

## 7. **Approval of Revalidated Franchised Courses**

7.1. Where a partner institution has approval to deliver a franchised course and the School subsequently revalidate the on-campus version of the course it is necessary that the School ensure that the partner institution is capable of delivering the revalidated version of the course. Partner institutions have up to one year from the date of the first delivery of the revalidated on-campus course to implement the new course and if approval is not obtained within this timeframe then recruitment to the franchised course will be placed on hold until this approval has been obtained.

7.2. In order to approve the partner institution to deliver the revalidated course the following documentation should be presented to the School Quality Committee for approval:

- 7.2.1. A statement or report on proposed arrangements to support delivery of the revalidated course, this statement should include:

- Confirmation that existing physical resources (previously approved) adequately support delivery of the new course;
  - Evidence of staff expertise to deliver the new course – staff CVs should be appended to the statement or report;
  - A brief statement relating to the assessment strategy, particularly around the use of formative assessment;
  - Proposals for dealing with ethical approval for dissertation, where relevant;
  - details of assessment board arrangements (linked to the number of intakes) and how they will align to the UEL calendar of assessment boards;
  - Details of transitional arrangements, where relevant;
  - A schedule of staff development to be offered to the partner institution in relation to delivery of the new course.
- 7.2.2. A draft student handbook - to include at a minimum the new module structure, module specifications (clearly listing Module Leaders/Tutors) and the academic calendar;
- 7.2.3. A revised course specification - listing the partner information;
- 7.2.4. For courses delivered in a language other than English, the module specifications presented for approval should be in the language of delivery and include the updated reading list. Evidence of external examiner approval of the updated reading list should also be included.
- 7.3. Should the School Quality Committee approve the partner institution to deliver the revalidated version of the course the following documentation should be presented to Peer Review for consideration:
- 7.3.1. Minutes of the School Quality Committee where the proposal was considered;
- 7.3.2. The revised course specification;
- 7.3.3. External examiner comments regarding reading lists (if applicable).
- 7.4. Approval by Peer Review is confirmation that the partner institution may deliver the revalidated version of the course.

## **8. Repeat Due Diligence**

- 8.1. All collaborative arrangements are subject to a financial review by the Assistant Director of Financial Management or delegated member of staff (a financial review of new collaborative arrangements would normally be undertaken as part of institutional approval, see 4 above). The financial review allocates a risk rating to each partner institution of Low, Low/Medium, Medium/High or High and due diligence checks will be repeated for the ratings as follows:
- Low – further periodic monitoring every three years;

- Low/Medium – further periodic review every two years;
- Medium/High – further periodic review every year;
- High – adequate risk mitigations to be put in place or this could lead to a decision to terminate or not proceed with the proposed collaboration.

Exceptions (extensions) to the above schedule may be considered but only with the advice of Assistant Director of Financial Management.

- 8.2. Where possible, the Financial Management team will undertake an investigation by obtaining information direct from a Credit Reference Agency e.g. Dun and Bradstreet. Quality Assurance and Enhancement will contact partner institutions as necessary to obtain a latest set of audited accounts.
- 8.3. Where a partner institution does not provide their audited accounts to UEL on request they will automatically be rated as a financial high-risk and Quality Assurance and Enhancement will notify Academic Partnerships who will update the risk register accordingly and initiate the Special Measures Process if relevant.

## **9. Special Measures Process**

- 9.1. Where the relationship with a partner institution has been identified as constituting a significant risk, Quality Assurance and Enhancement will inform Academic Partnerships who will update the risk register accordingly and initiate the Special Measures Process if relevant. Academic Partnerships shall keep and update the risk register detailing any actions agreed at the Academic Partnerships Oversight Group and report back with progress made against these conditions.
- 9.2. UEL stakeholders can identify a collaborative partner institution as a risk from the following criteria, including, but not limited to:
- Financial Due Diligence;
  - External Examiner Reports;
  - Collaborative Annual Monitoring Process.
- 9.3. Where a partner institution has been identified as a risk by a stakeholder, Quality Assurance and Enhancement will notify Academic Partnerships. The relevant Academic Partnerships Account Manager will update the risk register accordingly. If this results in the partner institution becoming a high-risk partnership, then the Special Measures Process (see process flow Appendix C) will be initiated.

## **10. Memorandum of Understanding**

- 10.1. A memorandum of understanding notifies a non-committal intention to collaborate, and it will normally be prepared using the standard UEL memorandum of understanding template. Academic Partnerships will work with the relevant parties to obtain information required to draft the memorandum of understanding. For prospective overseas partner institutions a memorandum of understanding will

normally be signed during the early discussions with the prospective partner institution and is particularly useful in setting out the timeframes and proposal for collaboration. Details may vary but can include the particular fields of study and methods of delivery e.g. distance learning, which might be the subject of the collaboration. It is signed by the Vice-Chancellor or a named representative. The formal written agreement, following validation, will be the signed memorandum of co-operation.

## **11. Memorandum of Cooperation**

11.1. All forms of collaboration require a written agreement (usually known as memorandum of co-operation) setting out the responsibilities of each contributing institution. Normally, a single memorandum of co-operation exists for one partner institution, covering a number of courses, although there may be circumstances where different written agreements between the same partner institution are required to reflect the provision.

11.2. The purpose of the memorandum of co-operation is to:

11.2.1. Define the means by which the quality of the student experience will be assured, and the academic standards of the course maintained;

11.2.2. Ensure that collaborative arrangements are clearly set out and operate smoothly, and that clear channels of authority, accountability and executive action are identified.

11.3. The memorandum of co-operation will normally address the following issues:

- The names of the institutions or bodies which are parties to the agreed memorandum;
- The allocation of responsibility for the oversight and maintenance of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, and procedures for resolving any differences which might arise in respect of the course between the institutions;
- Procedures and responsibilities for the initial validation, approval and subsequent periodic review of the course, including provision for the implementation of changes to the course required by validation, periodic review and annual monitoring in the partner institution;
- Procedures and responsibilities in respect of course management and monitoring. If these are to be divided between institutions, the arrangements will need to be specified;
- Learning, teaching, assessment and examination arrangements, and the responsibilities of parties involved;
- Recruitment, selection and admissions;
- Selection, appointment and development of staff;
- Provision of an appropriate learning environment including all necessary physical resources;
- Provision for student support and guidance;
- Responsibilities in respect of all administrative arrangements, such as student registration, notification of decisions relating to student

- progression and assessment and the nomination, appointment and remuneration of external examiners;
  - Provision for student appeals and complaints;
  - Arrangements for marketing and publicity;
  - Confidentiality, indemnity and liability;
  - Details of the financial and payment arrangements;
  - Duration and termination of the memorandum of co-operation.
- 11.4. Academic Partnerships will draft the memorandum of co-operation in close association with all relevant parties. The financial details of the collaborations will be developed by the Assistant Director of Financial Management in negotiation with the Academic Partnerships and Dean/Head of School.
- 11.5. The Head of Academic Partnerships (or nominee) in liaison with the UEL School, will introduce the financial details to the partner institution, and lead on the discussions on the financial terms of the agreement. The proposed final version should be circulated to Quality Assurance and Enhancement and Legal and Governance to confirm. There must be written agreement between all parties on at least the financial and commercial terms within the memorandum of co-operation prior to any course approval event and, following course approval, the memorandum of co-operation must be signed before delivery of the course(s) may commence.
- 11.6. Once the memorandum of co-operation has been finalised and the course approval event has been undertaken, Academic Partnerships will arrange for signatures by all contributing parties. The memorandum of co-operation will normally be signed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Careers and Enterprise) on behalf of UEL.
- 11.7. Memoranda of Co-operation are reviewed a minimum of every five years by Academic Partnerships, in line with UEL's Collaborative Framework. Course Schedules may be reviewed more frequently i.e. every year.
- 11.8. The Dean/Head of School has executive authority for the effective delivery of collaborative arrangements within the School. They must ensure that monitoring and quality assurance arrangements are operating effectively.

## **12. Language of Instruction**

- 12.1. In normal circumstances the language of instruction for a UEL award shall be English. Exceptionally, and only where there is good reason, an award offered in collaboration with another institution may be taught and assessed in a language other than English.
- 12.2. In these circumstances, both teaching and assessment must take place in the same language.
- 12.3. The course approval panel will review the proposal to teach and assess in a language other than English. The panel should include a minimum of one external fluent in the proposed language of delivery and assessment. The course approval panel will consider the following:



- How individuals with the necessary expertise in the appropriate language, subject knowledge and assessment methods will be identified and employed;
- How suitable external examiners fluent in both English and the relevant language, will be identified and involved in the assessment process;
- How communication between the UEL and overseas course team and academic staff will be facilitated;
- How the quality and accuracy of student materials – e.g., assessment or teaching materials, policies and regulations - translated into the native language will be assured; and how updated versions of such will be made available;
- How material required for UEL quality assurance and enhancement processes (e.g. CAM reports, course committee minutes, external examiner reports) will be made available to both local staff and students and UEL authorities and committees;
- If translation is used, how the reliability and validity of the assessment judgments arising from the marking of translated assessments will be assured;
- If translation is used, an assurance that students at the partner institution will not be used as translators of examination scripts or coursework.

12.4. For the guidance of course teams developing provision and for validation panels, the additional detail of the arrangements that will apply is set out in the ‘code of practice for the validation and delivery of taught courses in a language other than English’.

### **13. Modifications to Collaborative Courses**

13.1. The School Quality Committee is responsible for approving modifications to collaborative courses involving change to 25% or less of the course, using the procedures set out in Part 6 ‘Course Modifications’ of this Quality Manual.

13.2. Arrangements for the process of modifications that constitute more than 25% of a collaborative course will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **14. Withdrawal of Franchised Courses On-Campus**

14.1. There may be occasions where Schools have established relationships with partner institutions for the delivery of franchised courses but wish to withdraw the on-campus version of the course. Such scenarios can result in the following issues:

- 14.1.1. The in-country regulatory requirements of the provider may not allow for the partner institution to deliver a franchised course that is not delivered at the home institution;
- 14.1.2. Over a period of time the course content may become outdated;

- 14.1.3. Course content would not automatically be considered under the remit of collaborative review but would also not be considered as part of the Departmental academic review.
- 14.2. Where the on-campus version of the course is being revalidated it would be appropriate for the School to liaise with the partner institution to consider whether they might adopt the revised version of the course.
- 14.3. When completing the course withdrawal form, the School will be required to comment on the implications that the withdrawal of the on-campus version of the course will have on each partner institution, including any in-country regulatory requirements. The School should contact Quality Assurance and Enhancement for guidance if they are unsure how to complete this section of the form.
- 14.4. When withdrawing on-campus versions of franchised courses Schools must make one of the following proposals for how to proceed with each franchised version of the course delivered by a partner institution:
  - 14.4.1. The partner institution will take over responsibility for ensuring currency of course content and the course will be redefined as validated on the collaborative register;
  - 14.4.2. The course will be withdrawn at the partner institution.
- 14.5. Where the School wishes to transfer responsibility for the course content to the partner institution it must, through the School Quality Committee, assure itself of the suitability of the course team at the partner institution to maintain the currency of the course. In order to approve the course team at the partner institution to undertake this role the School Quality Committee should receive the following:
  - 14.5.1. The CVs of the course team at the partner institution;
  - 14.5.2. Written confirmation from the partner institution that they have agreed to the proposed change to the course status;
  - 14.5.3. A statement from the UEL Department Head confirming the suitability of the course team at the partner institution to undertake this role.
- 14.6. Following confirmation of the suitability of the course leader at the partner institution, Quality Assurance and Enhancement will update the collaborative register to redefine the course delivered by the partner institution as validated.

## **15. Partnership Monitoring Committees**

- 15.1. A Partnership Monitoring Committee will be established where a partnership involves more than one UEL School. The purpose of the committee is to ensure a consistent approach to the academic and administrative support and management of the partnership and establish communication mechanisms across all parties and levels of the partnership. The role of the committee will include discussion of a common approach to partnership management activities, agreed approaches to assessment and moderation, the monitoring of external examiner reports and

CAM action plans, marketing materials, the application of policy updates, and a course of staff development.

## **16. Termination of Collaborative Partnerships**

16.1. In the event that either party wishes to terminate the collaborative partnership the following steps will be undertaken:

16.1.1. **Step 1:** Where a decision is made to terminate a collaborative partnership, or a communication is received from a partner institution advising of their intention to terminate the partnership, the Quality Manager (Collaborations) should be advised of this as soon as possible. Academic Partnerships will liaise with Governance and Legal to ensure that the memorandum of co-operation is formally and correctly terminated.

16.1.2. **Step 2:** The Quality Manager (Collaborations) or nominee will arrange a Termination Meeting with key stakeholders from the managing School(s) to discuss arrangements for the termination. The minutes of the Termination Meeting will record the exit strategy for the phasing out of the collaborative course(s). The exit strategy will be submitted to the Education and Experience Committee for monitoring.

16.1.3. **Step 3:** Academic Partnerships will coordinate a communication to be sent to existing students studying on UEL course(s) at the partner institution informing them of the termination of the collaborative partnership.

16.1.4. **Step 4:** Academic Partnership Oversight Group and the Education and Experience Committee will continue to receive updates on the numbers of students remaining on course(s) at the partner institution. When all students at the partner institution have completed or run out of opportunities to complete their course of study it will be noted at Academic Partnerships Oversight Group and the School Quality Committee and the partner institution will be removed from the Collaborative Database.

16.2. Arrangements for withdrawal or suspension of courses offered in collaboration are as detailed in Part 6 'Course Modifications' of this Quality Manual.

## **17. Collaborative Review**

17.1. Collaborative Review of the partnership and the courses offered by the partner institution is undertaken every five years. However, in exceptional circumstances Education & Experience Committee may request a review of collaborative arrangements at an earlier date (exceptional review) should evidence come to light that quality and/or standards may be at risk in a collaborative arrangement or should a review panel indicate that they believe a follow up review is necessary. The review normally takes place at the location of delivery of courses. Collaborative review meetings may take place remotely under exceptional circumstances.

- 17.2. Where a partner institution is in termination and is due to undergo a collaborative review in the final year of operation of the course, the review will normally be brought forward by one year. This will allow the panel to make conditions and recommendations in relation to the teaching out of the courses and the management of student experience through the period of transition.
- 17.3. The purpose of the collaborative review is to:
- Undertake an academic review of the courses offered by the partner institution (franchised courses are subject to academic review at UEL and therefore course content would not be reviewed as part of the collaborative review process);
  - Provide an opportunity to review the nature of the collaborative relationship, and resolve any problems that might exist;
  - Review the academic and administrative infrastructure of the partner institution to ensure that it continues to be able to offer a suitable learning environment for students;
  - Review student achievement to ensure that the quality of student experience continues to be adequate;
  - Encourage the further development of the partner institution's own quality assurance procedures.
- 17.4. The scope of the collaborative review will to some extent be determined by the nature of the collaboration; for franchise courses the focus will be on achievement of academic standards and delivery of the approved course, the quality of the student experience and activities to assure and enhance standards and quality; for validated courses a review of the course specification and course content will be included.
- 17.5. During the year prior to the collaborative review event, an informal preparatory meeting with the partner institution, academic link tutors and other key stakeholders from the School, Academic Partnerships and the partner institution will take place. Discussion will be led by Quality Assurance and Enhancement and include the purposes of the review, requirements of the partner institution and Schools in the review, and identification of issues that may impact on the review.
- 17.6. As part of the event planning, a planning meeting will take place between the Chair of the review, a member of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (acting as the servicing officer), the academic link tutors and administrative link persons at UEL and the partner institution. The School Collaborative Leader will be invited to attend the meeting.

### **Panel Composition**

- 17.7. The size of a Collaborative Review Panel will depend on the size of the partner and breadth of courses offered.

- 17.8. A member of staff with significant experience in quality assurance, and who is independent of the collaborative partner and school under review is appointed as Chair of the panel.
- 17.9. A current UEL student or an officer from the Students Union will normally form part of the panel.
- 17.10. Early in the process, the Dean/Head of School (or designated coordinator) nominates appropriate external subject advisers to take part in the review. The external subject advisers must be from different institutions. The suitability of the external nominees is determined by the Chair of the event. The following criteria are taken into account:
- 17.10.1. The depth of subject knowledge;
  - 17.10.2. The relevance of subject knowledge;
  - 17.10.3. Prior experience of teaching on courses at the same level or above;
  - 17.10.4. Impartiality (the nominee should not have any formal links with UEL during the last five years as a former member of staff or the last three years as an external examiner);
  - 17.10.5. Professional Expertise;
  - 17.10.6. Prior experience as a QAA reviewer or Audit with collaborative arrangements
- 17.11. It is unlikely that any single nominee will meet all the requirements. In making judgments about the suitability of the proposed external subject advisers the Chair takes into account the overall balance of expertise presented by the external advisers. The Chair may reject a nominee or require the Dean/Head of School (or designated coordinator) to propose additional external subject advisers in order to ensure the balance of the panel.
- 17.12. It is the responsibility of the collaborating institution to confirm that they are satisfied that there are no conflicts of interest with regards external subject advisors.

### **Documentation**

- 17.13. The self-evaluation document is the key document for the collaborative review process and will be the basis for the panel's enquiries. This document should be produced jointly by the relevant School(s) and the partner institution. The self-evaluation document is essentially a self-study by both parties of the means used to assure quality and standards in that collaborative link, and the effectiveness of those means. It describes and reviews organisational changes since institutional approval and evaluates the operation of the course(s) since the last approval/review and identifies the future direction of the partnership. The self-evaluation document should:

- Describe the collaborative link including a summary and explanation of the development of the link over the period under review;
- Analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the link;
- Summarise any issues raised about the quality and operation of the link during the period being reviewed and how these have been addressed;
- Provide a view of the effectiveness of the means by which the UEL Schools assure themselves of the quality of the learning opportunities and student support offered through the link;
- Provide a view of the effectiveness of the means by which the UEL Schools assure themselves of the standards of credits and/or awards gained through the link;
- Identify any other issues which the course team's own evaluation of the link has raised and how these are to be addressed;
- Address any external developments which have affected, or will affect, the link;
- Provide an index of the evidence that it cites and that will be available to the review team.

17.14. The supporting documentation listed below must be made available to the panel during the review:

- Student handbook(s);
- Course specification;
- Report from the previous validation/review event;
- Collaborative Annual Monitoring Process reports and action plans for the three previous years;
- External examiner's reports for the three previous years;
- Report on the observation of learning and teaching;
- A staff development statement (covering both subject development and pedagogical development);
- Reports by professional bodies (where appropriate);
- Student intake and progression data covering the last three intakes;
- A description of student support/welfare services, plus any recent analysis of student use, subject to normal constraints of confidentiality in respect of counselling and similar activities;
- Examples of students' work to reflect the range of levels and attainment – including examination papers/scripts, coursework, project/lab reports scripts, project reports and dissertation;
- Marking and feedback sheets and assessment criteria;
- Relevant extracts from the memorandum of co-operation;
- Any other documentation referenced in the self-evaluation document.

### **Programme for the Collaborative Review**

17.15. The collaborative review process is normally conducted over a period of one to two days, depending on the scale of the provision that is to be considered as part of the review.

- 17.16. The programme for the review is agreed during the preliminary planning meeting and includes a meeting with students, a tour of the physical resources available to support the link and meetings with staff from both UEL and the partner institution to discuss the various aspects of the link.
- 17.17. The meeting with students should include existing students and where possible, former students.
- 17.18. Where the course is delivered by distance learning, or in exceptional circumstances, student feedback can be gathered via a confidential and anonymous online survey. This method of collecting feedback must be approved by the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement.

### **Outcomes of the Collaborative Review**

- 17.19. A review panel may either:
- 17.19.1. Approve the continuing collaborative delivery of the course(s) without conditions;
  - 17.19.2. Approve the continuing collaborative delivery of the course(s) with conditions and/or recommendations;
  - 17.19.3. Withhold approval.
- 17.20. A review panel may decide that they would like to approve the continuing collaborative delivery of the course(s) but have significant concerns which they do not feel can be entirely resolved through the setting of conditions. In such instances the review team may decide to approve the continuing delivery of the course(s) for a shorter period of time (usually one year). Following such an outcome a further review will be arranged within the stipulated timeframe.
- 17.21. Following the review, a report will be produced which will be submitted to the Education and Experience Committee, so that the decision of the review panel can be endorsed. Partner institutions will then work with Schools to prepare an action plan based on the outcomes of the review process. The status of the action plan is monitored until completion by the relevant School Quality Committee.
- 17.22. Following consideration of the collaborative review report the Quality Manager (Collaborations) will write to the partner institution, copied to the School, confirming the outcome of the collaborative review and to confirm the period for which the courses will be reapproved (normally five years).

## **18. Financial Arrangements**

- 18.1. The Assistant Director of Financial Management and the relevant Dean/Head of School shall be responsible for ensuring that the financial arrangements are appropriate. Prospective partner institutions will normally bear all costs incurred for course approval and collaborative review events. This includes travel costs, accommodation costs and external adviser honorariums.

- 18.2. The financial agreement made with the partner institution will provide safeguards against financial temptations on the part of the partner institution to compromise academic standards, or to register more students than can properly be accommodated.
- 18.3. Any fees paid by the partner institution must be sufficient to cover the full costs of assuring the quality and the standards of the course(s).

## **19. Certification**

- 19.1. Certification and/or records of achievement for all UEL courses delivered under a collaborative arrangement shall make clear the place of registration and the language of instruction where this is not English.
- 19.2. In all circumstances where a partner institution is active in the delivery of a UEL award, certification and/or records of achievement will make reference to all active partner institutions.
- 19.3. If the record of achievement is the only document to provide details of the partner institution, the place of registration and/or the language of instruction and assessment, then the award certificate must make reference to the existence of the record of achievement.

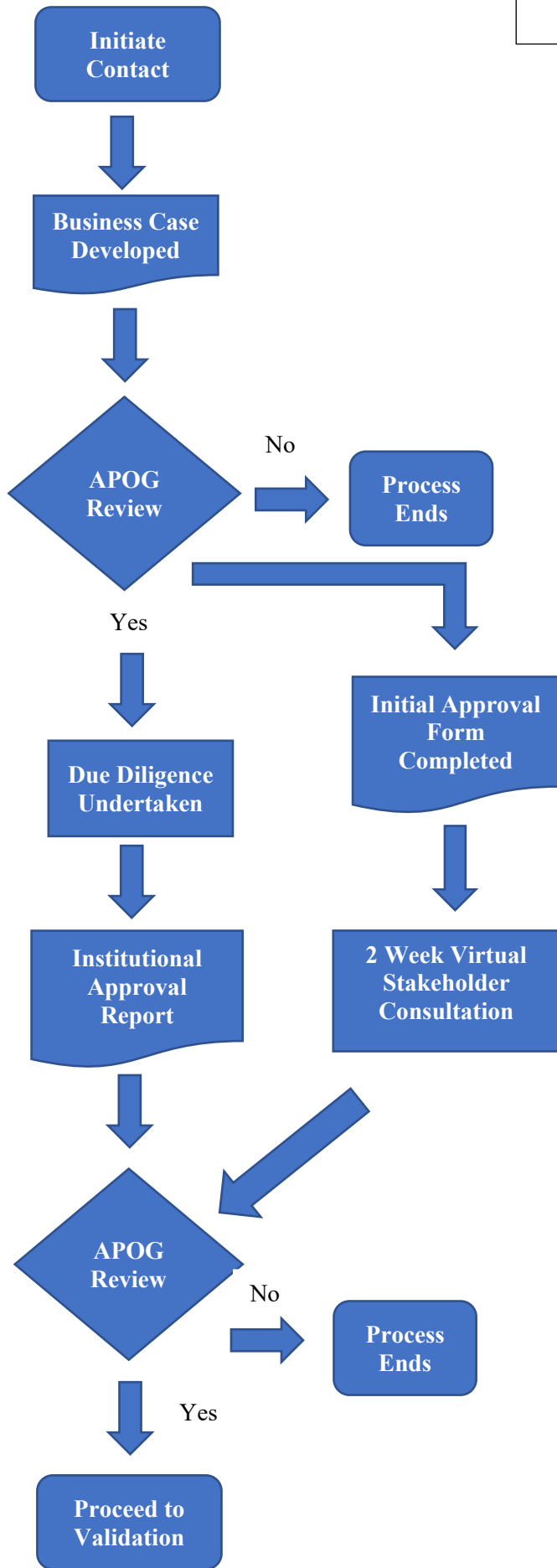


**Manuals, Forms and Guidance notes relevant to Part 11**

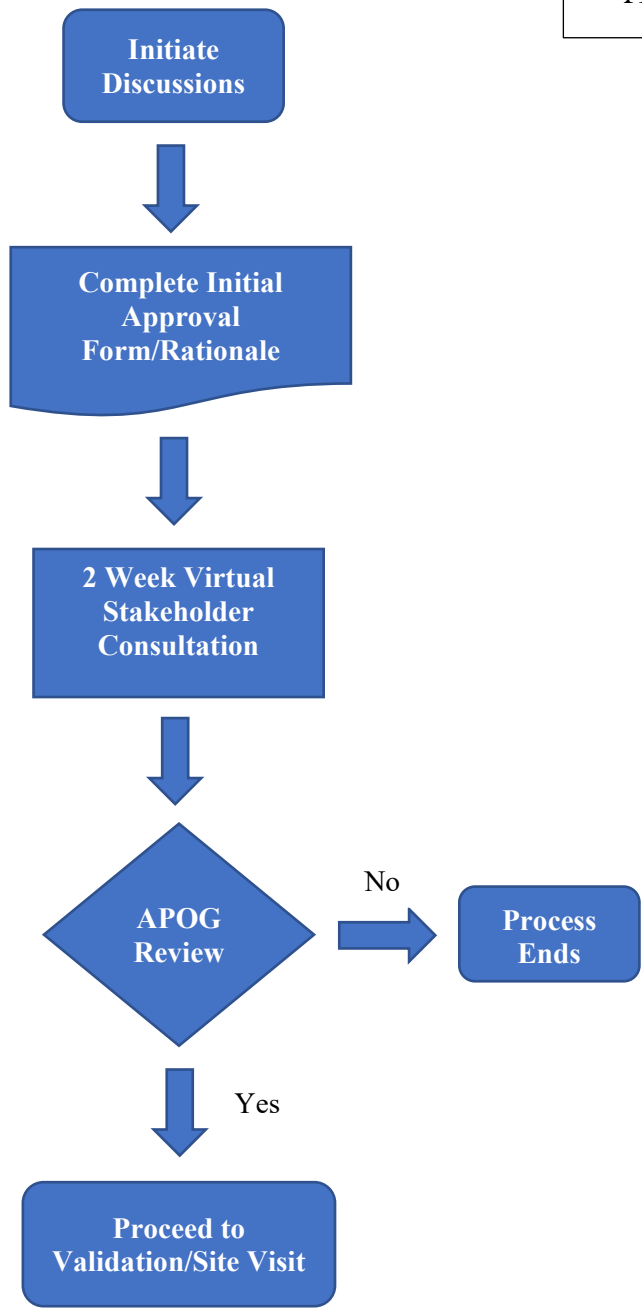
<https://uelac.sharepoint.com/sites/QualityAssuranceandEnhancement/SitePages/Forms-and-Guidance.aspx>

- Code of Practice for delivery in languages other than English
- Collaborative Initial Approval Form
- Collaborative Self Evaluation Document (SED) Guidance and Template
- Collaborative Student Handbook
- Collaborative Validation Document
- Course Withdrawal Form
- Guidance Notes on Course Specification
- Module Specification Template
- Nomination of an External Adviser for a validation/review event
- Partnership Monitoring Committee Terms of Reference and outline agenda
- Professional Doctorate Course Specification Template
- Site Visit Site Visit Report Form
- Undergraduate/Postgraduate Course Specification Template

**New Partnerships  
Approval Process**



**Existing Partnerships  
Approval Process**



**Special Measures  
Process**

