GUIDANCE NOTES FOR COLLABORATIVE PROPOSALS

1. COLLABORATIVE PROVISION AT QUEEN MARY UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

1.1 General remarks

QMUL has committed to engage in collaborative provision in its QMUL Strategy 2014 – the Next Five years and supporting International Strategy 2010- 2015 recognising the opportunities and benefits that collaborative arrangements can offer in order to enhance research, knowledge transfer and the student learning experience.

This vision will be achieved “through focused engagement with high-quality institutions with whom QMUL want to form long-term stable partnerships” in the areas of research and through teaching partnerships with high-quality international and UK institutions\(^1\).

This document sets out QMUL’s policy and procedures for the development and approval of proposals for academic collaboration between QMUL and other institutions, both UK and overseas.

To ensure the effective development, management and review of collaborative activities, staff are required to consult the guidelines and to complete the necessary documentation. All new collaborative proposals need the strategic approval of the Educational Partnerships Board (EPB).

The purpose of the Guidance is to support the development of collaborative provision with a view to enhancing the academic reputation of the College, assessing and managing potential risks while supporting the management of quality assurance arrangements.

This guidance draws on the precepts of the guidance contained in the QAA UK Quality Code Chapter B10: Management of Collaborative Arrangements.

The approval process for new collaborative provision has been revised and streamlined with the new arrangements for Programme and Module Approval. In addition, Queen Mary Collaborative Provision Framework has been updated to include the new collaborative arrangements.

1.2 Scope of procedures and guidance

The policy covers all partnerships that lead to an award of Queen Mary University of London, or an award made jointly with another institution, or to admission to one of the College’s programmes with advanced standing or involving the exchange of staff or students. It also includes partners that facilitate admission to programmes and/or have a role in determining entry standards.

The policy does not cover:

- Joint awards with overseas institutions: QMUL does not currently enter into joint award agreements with institutions outside the UK; it can enter into dual award arrangements in such cases;
- Franchise or validation arrangements;
- Individual research collaborations.

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\(^1\)Queen Mary International Strategy
QMUL does not enter into serial arrangements under any circumstances. A serial arrangement is where the partner institution delegates the responsibilities agreed with QMUL to another party through a separate arrangement.

1.3 Types and definitions of collaborative activities

Collaborative partnership provision is defined by the QAA in Chapter B10 as 'all learning opportunities leading or contributing to the award of academic credit or a qualification that are delivered, assessed or supported through an arrangement with one or more organisations other than the degree-awarding body.'

The following definitions are used to describe the collaborative activity covered by this policy:

- **Co-operation Agreement**: where QM agrees to promote co-operation, discussions and positive academic relations with another institution for their mutual benefit, without establishing any binding legal relationship between the two institutions. This can be finalised through a general Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to facilitate specific activities detailed in subsequent agreements;

- **Articulation agreement**: formal arrangements between QMUL and another HEI, normally overseas, whereby credit taken at the approved partner leads to advanced standing on a particular QMUL programme. Admission to an intermediate stage of a QMUL programme is on the basis of the recognition of completion of study at the partner institution to an agreed standard, which counts as advanced standing credit on the student’s academic record².

- **Collaborative programmes for undergraduate and taught postgraduate provision (single, joint³ or dual award)**:
  
  (a) **Single taught award**: (including Distance Learning, Placement and Work-based learning): an arrangement where QMUL and one or more partner institutions collaborate to provide elements of a joint programme that leads to a single award by QMUL.
  
  (b) **Joint taught award**: an arrangement where QMUL and one or more partner institutions together provide elements of a joint programme that leads to a single award made jointly by both, or all, participants;

  (c) **Taught dual award**: an arrangement where QMUL and a partner institution collaborate to provide elements of a joint programme leading to separate awards from each institution. Arrangements involving more than two partners would lead to multiple awards in the same way.

- **Programmes delivered by distance learning**: Distance Learning programmes are delivered and/or supported and/or assessed through means which generally do not require the student to attend QMUL. These programmes may operate via a collaborative arrangement where the partner institution is a host for assessment activities and may provide some aspects of learner support.

- **Placement learning**: Placement learning arrangements incorporate approved structured learning provision that typically takes place outside QMUL as an integral part of the QMUL programme. Placement activity will have clearly defined learning outcomes, appropriate for the academic level, that are essential to the programme of study. QMUL has agreed four main types of placement learning for internal purposes:

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²QMUL Academic Regulations 2014-15, 2.13-2.2.14
³QMUL is able to offer joint awards with other institutions in the UK, but is not currently permitted to offer a joint award with overseas institutions. QMUL is able to offer collaborative programmes with overseas institutions that lead to dual awards.
[a] **Work-based placements**: The student is a contracted employee and the emphasis of the placement is on gaining professional or technical employment experience. The student has the status, remuneration, and access to support structures commensurate with an employee of the organisation.

[b] **Internship placements**: It is unusual for the student to be contracted as an employee. They complete work under supervision but the emphasis of the placement is on learning opportunities and educational experience.

c] **Observer Placements**: The student is not an employee and does not undertake any work; the placement is focused on the provision of learning opportunities.

d] **Academic study placements** *(Study abroad and Exchange programmes)*: In Study Abroad and Exchange programmes the student is registered as a student at both the host partner institution and QMUL. The placement provides a period of academic study delivered by an overseas university, which is an integral credit-bearing part of a QMUL programme. Within the same scheme, visiting associate students study for one semester or a full year at QMUL. Erasmus exchanges are also included in this category.

General responsibilities and expectations of partners involved in the above placement activities are set out in the [Placement Learning Policy Matrix](#).

QMUL has clear procedures in place to ensure that the study abroad and exchange programmes meet programme and academic regulations. For compulsory placements these procedures are contained in the [School Year Abroad Handbook](#), for optional placements the procedures are contained in the Quality Handbook and the International Partnership Office web pages. For Academic study placements, please also refer to the [Procedure for international exchange programmes](#). Further details regarding the four types of placement learning arrangements can be found in the [QMUL Collaborative Provision Framework](#) (section vii).

- **Split-site research degree programmes** *(single, joint or dual award)*: QMUL policy on split-site research degrees is currently being revised.

- **Professional doctorates**: In development

- **Associate research students** *(visiting research students)*: A student from another institution (UK or overseas) who can be enrolled at the College to undertake a programme of research at postgraduate level for an agreed period of time.

- **Agency Agreements**: These are formal arrangements between QMUL and an organisation or individual who is employed by QMUL for marketing and recruitment of students, or related activity.

### 1.4 Principles

The following key principles will underpin all partnership activity:

- **Academic reputation**: Collaboration involving QMUL should be with institutions of good academic standing. Advice on the academic standing of a prospective partner is available from the International Partnerships Office for international partners and from ARCS for partners within the UK. Any new partnership should contribute to and enhance the reputation of the College as well as of the school/institute sponsoring it. Where there is a difference of view between a

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4 Currently, SLLF are the only School with a compulsory year abroad.

5 QMUL is able to offer collaborative programmes with overseas institutions that lead to dual awards.
school/institute and the College about the perceived reputational advantage of any proposed partnership, the College’s interest will take precedence.

- **Academic standards and awards**: QMUL retains responsibility for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name, and is responsible for ensuring that the academic standards of its awards meet the expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. The academic standards of awards developed and delivered through partnership arrangements will be equivalent to those delivered by the College and will be compatible with any relevant UK benchmarking information.

- **Quality assurance**: QMUL’s quality assurance procedures for collaborative activities follow the procedures set out in the QMUL QA Handbook. Any QA procedures specific to a given collaborative arrangement should be set out in the legal agreement and should be approved at the relevant stage in the procedure.

- **Assessment of risk**: Prior to submitting any new collaborative proposal, an assessment of possible risks should be undertaken in respect of both the partner and the proposed activity. This should be done using the Due Diligence Checklist (Annex C) in all cases and in some cases the Risk Assessment Form (Annex D). Issues to consider include:
  
  - Damage to QMUL reputation;
  - Financial risk;
  - Risks to QMUL academic standards and student experience;
  - Resource and capacity aspects.

- **Financial sustainability**: All partnership activities should be financially sustainable, and should be fully costed to give an indication of likely direct or indirect costs to the school/institute.

- **Consistency with QMUL Strategic Plan and International Strategy**: Schools/institutes are encouraged to develop international links and to undertake international collaborative work. Any agreement with an overseas partner institution should be coherent with, and support the aims set out in QMUL's International Strategy. It should also be coherent with the strategic plans of the academic units concerned.

- **Legal framework**: The responsibilities and obligations of QMUL and of the partner institutions will be set out in the Memoranda of Agreement which are legally binding documents.

- **Programme management**: For any partnership leading to an award, the QMUL’s management of the programme or module will operate in the same way as internal provision with formal approval and review through the College’s programme and module approval and review processes.

  - Admissions: The arrangements for admission to the collaborative programme are managed in accordance with QMUL’s normal recruitment and admissions policy. Any specific admissions requirements are set out in the collaborative agreement and are articulated to students as part of the admissions process.

  - Assessment: Assessment processes and procedures of partner institutions should be consistent with the QMUL’s Academic Regulations and with the Queen Mary Academic Credit Framework. Special assessment arrangements will be specified in the Memorandum of Agreement.

2. DEVELOPING NEW COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

2.1 Process and procedures
Approval of any new collaborative provision is in one or two stages depending on the nature of the proposal as illustrated in the collaborative approval table. The table also indicates when the Due Diligence and Risk Assessment Forms should be completed. For ease of working through the process, please consult the flowchart. This also indicates which cases need also to pass through stage 2.

All new collaborative proposals need the strategic approval of the Educational Partnerships Board (EPB) and should pass through stage 1 for initial approval of the partnership. Stage 1 – Partnership Proposal: Educational Partnerships Board to approve the strategic concept of the proposed partnership, its aims and objectives and consider any financial implications and to assess in detail the good standing of the proposed partner institution through due diligence and risk assessment processes.

Stage 2 – Taught Programmes Board to grant Academic Approval in relevant cases. Stage 2 can only commence once stage 1 is completed. Consult the Academic Secretariat and/or the Partnership Office for further advice on this aspect.

Please note that Stage 1 approval must be obtained prior to schools/institutes committing to ANY form of agreement with an external party (including Memoranda of Understanding), or entering into any financial obligation related to the collaboration.

2.2 Initial development of proposals

Initiation may come from the school/institute, College or from the proposed partner. At the initial stage, a series of discussions will typically take place internally between school/institute staff, and between the school/institute and the potential partner in order to explore the possibility of any proposal. These discussions are an opportunity to ensure that the proposed partner is of an appropriate academic standing in relation to the College, to identify any possible risks as well as benefits. The Risk Assessment Form may be useful in this respect.

Schools and institutes are encouraged to discuss collaborative proposals with the Academic Secretariat and the International Partnerships Office (IPO) during the developmental phase. Please contact Harriet Howse in IPO in the first instance who can provide support and assistance with completion of approval forms and processes.

The Academic Secretariat can give advice on the approval process and can provide guidance on the documentation required and on quality assurance matters. For details of the general collaborative approval process and partnership approval, please contact Raluca Vasiliu-McIver. For further information on issues related to academic approval by the Taught Programmes Board, please contact the Academic Quality and Standards Officer specifically assigned to work with your Faculty.

For Professional Doctorates please contact Mary Childs, Assistant Academic Registrar, Standards & Quality.

2.3 Criteria for successful partnerships

The following reference points should be used when developing the proposal:

- UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Chapter 10: Management of collaborative arrangements (currently being consulted upon); ChapterB3: Learning and teaching and ChapterB4: Student support, learning resources and careers education, information and guidance.
- QMUL Academic Credit Framework;
- QMUL Strategic Plan
- QM International Strategy
- School/Institute plans (including international marketing plans)

Before any significant work is undertaken, staff should secure strategic approval from their Head of school/institute. Plans to develop new partnerships should usually be identified in the context of the Planning and Accountability Review (PAR).
3. **STAGE ONE APPROVAL OF A NEW PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY**

3.1 **Stage 1 Partnership Proposal Form**

This form should be used for the following types of collaborative activities:

- Co-operation agreement (MOU);
- Articulation agreement;
- Study Abroad and Exchange Agreement;
- Erasmus+ Agreement.

NB: For Taught Single, Joint and Dual awards, follow separate procedures as set out in 3.3 below.

The form requires schools/institutes to provide details of their proposed partner(s) and the programme(s) that they wish to develop. It should be completed by the school/institute submitting the proposal following discussion with the International Office for overseas proposals or the Education, Liaison and Access Office for UK-based proposals. Proposers should take account of International Office Marketing and Country Plans before embarking on any new partnership. Schools/institute should talk to appropriate staff in the Faculty and professional service departments, and should take into account the Queen Mary Academic Credit Framework policy and also the Academic Regulations and any relevant sections of the Quality Assurance Handbook. Stage 1 Partnership Proposals need Faculty Executive approval prior to submission to EPB.

The information about the proposed partnership arrangement is essential to enable EPB to determine whether the proposed partnership opportunity has sufficient merit and is in line with the QMUL Strategic Plan, School/Institute plans (including international marketing plans) and relevant to the QMUL International Strategy and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.

Particular issues to take into account when completing this form:

- **Associated deadlines**: Provide information on any other important timescales associated with the development of the activity, for example, timescales and committee dates set by the partner to approve the collaboration, or timescales for marketing the partnership activity.

- **Summary of the Proposed Collaboration**: The proposer should provide information about the nature of the collaborative activity and, if known, indicate the roles and contributions of the partner.

- **Partnership rationale**: This section sets the proposal within the school/institute context and the wider context of QMUL. The key benefits of the partnership to the school/institute and the College should be highlighted here with reference to its ‘fit’ with the QMUL Strategic Plan and school/institute plans (including international marketing plans) and its relevance to the QM International and Learning and Teaching Strategies.

- **Resources**: Indication of any major resourcing implications of the proposed collaboration, such as requirements for significant or additional space, facilities, equipment and staffing should be noted in this section.

- **Signatures**: The proposal should be normally signed by the Head of school/institute and endorsed by the Faculty Vice-Principal. This will confirm that the School or Institute can fund the resources required in relation to the proposed activity.

3.2 **Split-site doctoral degrees: policy is currently under review**
3.3 Stage 1 Partnership and Programme Proposal (taught single/joint/dual programmes)

Form

This form combines the requirements for Stage 1 Partnership Proposal with Part 1 Programme Proposal and should be used for seeking approval of new taught joint/dual programmes to be delivered with a new external party.

Please note that in addition to providing the general partnership information, the following aspects should be considered with the appropriate professional service department regarding the proposed programme:

- the marketing strategy for the programme with Marketing and Communications
- the library resources required with Library Services
- proposed non-standard fees need to be approved by the Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions Group.

Ideally, the development process should start at least 12 months before the first delivery of a programme. Proposers should take due consideration of the timescales and deadlines for developing a new programme of study, which can be found on the Programme and Module development webpages.

Particular issues to take into account when completing this form:

- **Summary of the proposed collaboration**: The proposer needs to describe the nature of the proposed collaborative activity. If it is known, the anticipated level of contribution from the partners should be indicated here and if there will be a lead institution.

- **Partnership and Programme Rationale**: The proposal should set the Partnership and Programme rationale within the context of the school/institute as well as the wider QMUL context. It should say how the programme fits in with the academic plan and the Planning and Accountability Review as agreed between the school/institute and the relevant Faculty Vice-Principal and Executive Dean. Programme proposers should address the following issues when putting forward a new programme of study:
  - the partnership’s ‘fit’ with the QMUL Strategic Plan and School/Institute plans (including international marketing plans) and its relevance to the QM International and Learning and Teaching Strategies
  - the programme’s ‘fit’ within existing provision in the School/Institute and, if appropriate, in relation to that of other areas of the College;
  - evidence of student demand and how the programme might broaden the recruitment base of the school;
  - how existing programmes would benefit from its introduction;
  - its position in relation to national and international trends in the area of study;
  - prospects for graduate employment and/or postgraduate study;
  - the relationship to the QAA subject benchmark statement and the National Qualifications Framework;
  - how the programme might enhance the research base of the school.

- **Programme Description**: The proposer is required to provide a programme description for the proposed programme (this will appear in marketing materials). This should include information that may be helpful for marketing the programme, e.g. distinctive strength in the School.

- **Marketing Information**: Programme proposers should provide evidence that there is a demand in the market for the new provision. Advice may be sought from Marketing and Communications and the International Office in identifying this information. The International Office Marketing and Country Plans should also be consulted. This section might include:
  - A level trends and UCAS or HESA data;
  - UK, EU and international economic data and regional, national or sector-specific data;
• Consideration of whether the market is UK-only, EU or international (the International Office should be consulted);
• Feedback from prospective, current and former students – via questionnaire or focus groups;
• Employer feedback and feedback from Professional or Statutory Regulatory Bodies (the Careers Service should be consulted).

• Competitor Provision: The proposer is required to provide a brief summary including the programme titles and length of time these have been offered and to include the number of applicants and registered students.

• Entry Requirements: The proposer will provide the entry requirements for the proposed programme, e.g. A-levels or other relevant qualification, first degree, IELTS/TOEFEL score, etc. Additional guidance on entry requirements can be obtained from the Admissions and Recruitment Office. For International students details of recognised international qualifications can be provided here. The International Office can provide country specific information on recognised international qualifications.

• Indicative Curriculum: The indicative curriculum for the proposed programme in terms of proposed modules to be studied in each academic year of study will be provided under this section. In marketing material this will appear ‘subject to approval’.

• Professional Accreditation: The proposer will specify if there are any Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) in relation to the programme as some professional bodies have particular rules regarding the overseas provision.

• Resources: The proposed resourcing arrangements for the partnership should be summarised in this section. In order for QM to be satisfied that the proposed partner can meet its obligations under the proposed agreement, it is the usual expectation that the due diligence process will include a visit to the partner institution. This visit should identify any specific or additional human and physical resourcing requirements. The proposal will be accompanied by detailed costing information/business plan for the programme. A costing model template for UG and PGT programmes has been developed and is available on the Finance web pages along with information on support for completing the template.

• Signatures: The proposal should be normally signed by the Head of School/Institute and endorsed by the Faculty Vice-Principal. This will confirm that the school or institute can fund the resources required in relation to the proposed activity.

3.4 Key points to consider

The taught joint award programme is generally the most complex form of collaborative provision. The following elements need to be taken into consideration:

• QMUL is responsible for evaluating the provision and quality assurance arrangements at the partner institution (including, inter alia, curriculum monitoring, external examining, double marking);
• Marks and academic credit achieved at the partner institution will normally contribute to the algorithm for the QMUL award. QMUL is therefore responsible for ensuring the equivalence of marks and credit that will be taken into account;
• Joint programme regulations are often required;
• A joint degree certificate will be issued;
• The quality assurance processes to be followed will be articulated in the Memorandum of Agreement;
• The partner institution must be able to pool their degree awarding powers to award a joint degree.

In the case of dual award programmes, separate degree certificates are normally issued from each institution. Further advice should be sought from the Academic Secretariat. Please note that QMUL
does not currently enter into joint award initiatives with institutions outside the UK. QMUL is able to engage in collaborative programmes with overseas institutions that lead to dual awards only.

3.5 Due Diligence Checklist and Risk Assessment Form

Both Stage 1 Partnership Proposal and Stage 1 Partnership and Programme Proposal forms must be accompanied by supplementary information on the proposed partner(s) using the Due Diligence Checklist and a Risk Assessment Form where required.

In the case of a high risk result, schools/institutes should seek further advice from the International Office and ARCS and provide any relevant supplementary documentation to strengthen the case.

Both the Due Diligence Checklist and the Risk Assessment Form will be scrutinised by the Educational Partnerships Board who will assess if the prospective partner is of good standing and has the capacity to fulfil its designated role in the arrangement.

The purpose of ‘due diligence’ is to attempt to manage any risk that might arise in relation to working in collaboration with another institution. A starting point will be an examination of the legal status of the prospective partner, which is relevant to the party’s capacity to enter into a contract.

Because of the added complexity involved in some collaborative arrangements derived from working with partners in distant locations and with different cultural approaches, the potential risks need to be carefully assessed.

The questions in the Due Diligence Check-list and the Risk Assessment Form are intended to provide the EPB with the necessary information to determine what risks if any are associated with a proposal and the type of mitigation that may be required to address them.

A “high risk” assessment for a proposed collaboration does not necessarily indicate prohibition. However, it would indicate that a more extensive examination would be required of the collaborative proposal and the potential partner.

For students who are travelling abroad for their placement there should be a risk assessment (the International Office can help with this), and the Memorandum of Agreement should specify any health and safety and insurance requirements.

3.6 Submission of Stage 1 Proposals

The completed Stage 1 Partnership Proposal or Stage 1 Partnership and Programme Proposal forms together with the Due Diligence Check-list and Risk Assessment should be submitted to the Academic Secretariat who will scrutinise the documentation and will arrange for consideration by Educational Partnerships Board (EPB). Stage 1 Partnership and Programme Proposals need Faculty Executive approval prior to submission to EPB.

Following EPB approval, a general Memorandum of Understanding between the two partners can be drafted and sent to ARCS who will arrange for signature by the Principal.

Once a programme has passed Stage 1 partnership and programme approval the Educational Partnerships Board (EPB) will indicate when it can marketed. In order to publicise a new programme the School/Institute administering the programme (through the programme proposer) should liaise directly with Marketing and Communications to ensure that all the necessary information required to market the programme is provided.

Where the proposal does not need to go through a second approval stage (normally non-award initiatives), the Memorandum of Agreement with detailed arrangements must still be prepared with advice from the Academic Secretariat and International Partnerships Office before the collaborative activity can proceed. The Agreement needs to be approved by EPB.
A member of academic staff should normally take the lead in the preparation and submission process. S/he will be the main point of contact for follow-up. The Academic Secretariat will notify the proposal lead of the outcome of EPB consideration.

If the information is not considered sufficient, EPB may ask for supplementary details about the partner or the partnership proposal.

For Educational Partnerships Board meeting dates, please consult the EPB webpage.

4. STAGE TWO APPROVAL (WHERE APPLICABLE)

4.1 Stage 2 academic approval

For Taught Single, Joint or Dual award agreements the relevant Part 2 Programme proposal documentation should be submitted to the Taught Programmes Board (TPB). Please seek advice from the Academic Secretariat on how to prepare the submission. You can find all the details regarding academic approval arrangements on the Programme Development webpage.

Once a programme has passed Part 2 approval offers to applicants cannot be made until the Memorandum of Agreement has been approved by the Educational Partnerships Board (EPB). The Academic Secretariat will arrange for consideration of the Memorandum of Agreement by EPB.

4.2 Stage 2 Academic Proposal Form (Articulation Agreements). This is used to seek academic approval to establish an articulation agreement with an external partner. Prior to submitting Stage 2 proposals, plans to introduce articulation agreements with new partners should be identified in the context of the Planning and Accountability Review (PAR).

Evidence of mapping the Partner’s programme to the corresponding QMUL programme(s) should be submitted in a separate annex.

In the case of articulation agreements it is important to undertake rigorous academic scrutiny of the partners’ programme because students are using advanced standing to count towards the QMUL award. The curriculum mapping exercise should include the following:

- information on the College course to which students will articulate and the stage at which students will be entering the course;
- the course at the partner institution and relevant course and/or module outline;
- information on the comparability of the curriculum including a mapping of learning outcomes, learning and teaching methods, acquisition of skills relevant to future study
- evidence that students have attained the same standards as students studying the award at the College.

Particular issues to take into account when completing this form:

Section One

- **Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs):** If applicable, specify the professional/accrediting body for the programme and the nature of the accreditation. Consider whether there are any accreditation implications for students arriving on the programme through a progression/articulation route.

- **Partnership Liaison and Transition:** The arrangements for liaising with the team at the partner institution regarding student numbers, admissions, and any additional support (induction, pastoral) that may be required for transition to the QM programme need to be described in this section.
Section Two (articulation agreements)

• **Point of Entry to QMUL:** The proposer is required to indicate the point of entry on the QMUL programme that students will articulate onto. For a three year programme this is usually the second year, as QMUL does not currently enter into articulation agreements where students articulate onto the final year of the degree programme. Entry onto the first year of the programme would constitute a progression arrangement, and should be specified in section 2 above. Admission to an intermediate stage of a QMUL degree programme is on the basis of the recognition of completion of study at the partner institution to an agreed standard, which counts as advanced credit on the student’s academic record. For further information on advanced standing the Academic Regulations (2.13 – 2.19) should be consulted.

• **Articulation and Admission Criteria:** For each award, the proposer needs to specify the level of achievement that must be reached at the partner institution e.g. students must complete years 1 and 2, or the numbers of credits and level. Provide details of any progression requirements and average marks that students must achieve to articulate to the point of entry at QMUL. Consideration should be taken on whether students will need to fulfil any QMUL programme prerequisites and whether they will have to attend a selection interview. Articulation arrangements must be compliant with the QM Academic Credit Framework.

• **Curriculum and Learning Outcomes:** This should explain how the Partner’s curriculum and intended learning outcomes are comparable with the level of the relevant modules at QMUL. Useful materials to scrutinise in this process include information that would be contained in programme and module specifications such as syllabi, learning outcomes, information on learning and teaching strategies, contact hours etc.

• **Quality Assurance Arrangements (including assessment):** There should be a process to scrutinise for comparability the assessment regime in place for the partner’s identified programme. This may include the arrangements for setting and marking assessment, the assessment type profile (coursework and formal examination split) and regulations for resits. Useful materials to scrutinise in this process include samples of past examination papers, samples of coursework, and information on the module marking scheme.

• **Monitoring and Review:** In order for QMUL to discharge its responsibilities appropriately with respect to the Annual Review of Programmes (APR), medium and large-scale collaborative programmes undergo programme-based annual monitoring.

• **Signatures:** The proposal should be normally signed by the Head(s) of School(s)/Institute which will be taken as confirmation of the funding for the required resources.

4.3 Submission of stage 2 proposals

The completed form and the following accompanying documents should be submitted to Academic Secretariat who will arrange for the consideration of the proposal at Taught Programmes Board (TPB):

- a draft Memorandum of Agreement
- evidence of mapping the partner’s programme to the corresponding QMUL programme(s).

Confirmation of approval by the Taught Programmes Board will be denoted by the signature of the TPB Chair. Where additional information or minor revisions to Stage 2 Proposals for Articulation Agreements are required, these should be submitted within a two-week deadline from the date of the TPB meeting.

Following approval by the TPB, the Academic Secretariat will inform the school/institute and will submit the draft Memorandum of Agreement to EPB for approval. The Academic Secretariat will then organise for the document to be signed by the relevant parties.

It is recommended that the provision is approved at least 6 months in advance of the admission of students to the programme.
4.4 Research agreements

Research agreements with external partners which might arise from strategic alliances with other universities and research organisations, both home and overseas, will follow the following approval process:

- Review and sign-off by the relevant Head of School and by the Faculty Dean for Research
- Review of the agreement documents by Academic Registry and Council Secretariat (ARCS)/International Partnership Office;
- Institutional strategic approval of the proposed partnership and partner approval (EPB);
- Review by the Joint Research Management Office (JRMO) and Queen Mary Innovation (QMI) for IP issues where necessary

5. AGREEMENT DOCUMENTS

5.1 Memorandum of Understanding

Typically, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be signed with the partner institution after Stage 1 approval for the development of the partnership has been granted. The College has a standard MOU template used to confirm the relationship between QMUL and the partner at the highest level, to provide an umbrella agreement under which more specific agreements may be developed. It is strongly recommended that an MOU is signed where there is a likelihood of a mutually beneficial form of cooperation. The MOU is not legally binding; it is a statement of intent which sets forth the general basis upon which the Parties wish to proceed. Not all collaborative arrangements are required to develop MOUs.

5.2 Memorandum of Agreement

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or a Contract will be signed following approval of the developed provision. This agreement will detail the respective responsibilities, roles and obligations of the parties. The expectation is that a Memorandum of Agreement is fully signed before the collaborative programme commences. The Contract is a legally binding document setting out the rights and obligations of the parties and detailing the collaborative arrangements which will normally vary depending on the type of arrangement. Typically a Memorandum of Agreement or a Contract are valid for 5 years.

The detailed Memorandum of Agreement or the Contract are considered by EPB following approval of the Part 2 Programme Proposal by Taught Programmes Board. Legal advice may sought in relation to particular contracts.

5.3 QMUL Policy for Signatories of Collaborative Documents

Following discussion between ARCS and the Principal's office the following Protocol for signing collaborative documents has been agreed:

- all collaborative agreements must be checked by ARCS prior to submission to the relevant parties for signature. ARCS is responsible for the Register of Collaborative Provision and will check all documentation for accuracy and compliance with internal and external regulations;
- all Memoranda of Understanding which are at College level must be signed by the Principal;
- any other subsequent Memoranda of Agreement at School/Faculty level with an external institution should be signed by the Principal, though he may delegate authority to the relevant VP to sign on his behalf;
- however, where Memoranda of Agreement involve a possible commitment of resources outside of the remit of the relevant VP, then the Principal should always sign.
5.4 Templates for Agreement Documents

Sample Agreements are currently provided on the Collaborative provision web pages. When drafting Memoranda of Understanding and Memoranda of Agreement, please consult the International Partnerships Office and Academic Secretariat who can advise on the right agreement model to be used.

6. MANAGEMENT OF COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMMES

All credit bearing collaborative programmes are subject to QMUL's quality framework: programme development and approval; external examining; annual programme review; periodic review; student module evaluation; student representation and feedback through Student Staff Liaison Committees. Quality assurance arrangements specific to an agreement will be stipulated in the Memorandum of Agreement.

6.1 External Examiners

To ensure continuity, the same external examiner will be appointed to programmes that are delivered both internally and externally where this applies. For overseas partnerships QMUL will have extensive discussions with the partner about the central role of the external examiner in British Higher Education in monitoring and securing standards. External examiners will be appointed by QMUL where QMUL is the awarding institution.

Where a programme leads to a joint award, partners must also appoint an external examiner, so the appointment must satisfy the criteria of both institutions. Where a programme leads to a dual award QMUL will appoint an external examiner(s) for the QMUL award. The partner may, or may not appoint an external examiner depending on the regulations for their award. However, it is strongly recommended that where this is the case, partners are encouraged to adopt a similar external approach to ensuring standards and that this is reflected in the Memorandum of Agreement.

External examiners will be briefed by the school/institute about the collaborative or FDL nature of the programme.

6.2 Programme publicity

All publicity for the proposed programme should be agreed with QMUL prior to publication. In particular the use of the QMUL logo must be agreed as specified in the Memorandum of Agreement.

6.3 Student handbook

The student handbook will ensure that the requirements of the programme are clear to students including transparent information concerning the respective responsibilities of QMUL and the partner. Students will also have clear information about the nature of the College’s relationship with the partner institution, and which institution is responsible for the delivery of particular learning outcomes. The complaints and appeals procedure and the responsibilities of each partner in them will be clearly delineated.

The student handbook will be reviewed annually by the school/institute who will also lodge a copy with the ARCS, translated as necessary. The handbook and other information to students will be included in internal review.

6.4 Student Staff Liaison Committees

ARCS compile an annual summary of issues raised at SSLCs for Senate. The annual summary report will include a separate section looking at the minutes of collaborative programmes.

6.5 Review and renewal of existing Agreements
During the academic year prior to the expiry of the collaborative agreement, there will be a review of the collaborative arrangement that will lead to a decision on whether to re-approve the arrangement for a further term, or to withdraw from the provision. The Academic Secretariat will contact the QMUL Academic Lead of the collaboration to initiate the review process. ARCS will coordinate a meeting of key stakeholders to decide on the process for renewal, which will consider such things as a review of the provision, a due diligence report and a potential panel visit to the partner institution.

The academic co-ordinator of the collaborative arrangement will complete a Template for Review of Activity six months before the Memorandum of Understanding and related agreements are due to expire.

The renewal will be submitted to EPB for approval and will have to be agreed by the Faculty VP.

6.6 Annual monitoring

The effective monitoring and review of collaborative arrangements are central to QMUL’s assurance of the academic standards of its collaborative provision. The School/Institute/Faculty monitors the quality and standards of provision in accordance with the procedures set out in the QMUL Quality Handbook. The QMUL Senate has an institutional overview of the monitoring processes.

In order that QMUL is able to discharge its responsibilities appropriately with respect to Annual Programme Review (APR), medium and large-scale collaborative programmes - defined as programmes with twenty or more registered students - undergo programme based annual monitoring. These programmes complete a Taught Programmes Action Plan (TPAP) in line with QMUL’s APR procedure, which should be updated on an on-going basis and inform discussion at an annual APR meeting. This shall be linked to the relevant school/institute TPAP. All other types of collaborative provision, including small-scale programmes, exchanges, articulations, visiting associate students, and placement learning are monitored through the schools'/institutes’ TPAPs.

6.7 Periodic Review

The Periodic Review process encompasses small-scale collaborative provision during the review of all aspects of an academic unit. Therefore, the majority of collaborative programmes are considered within the overall provision for a given academic school/institute at QMUL. In recognition of the potential increased levels of risk to academic standards and quality, medium and large-scale collaborative programmes (as defined above) and programmes distinct from other school/institute structures will undergo a discrete programme, or group of programmes, Periodic Review process in line with the cycle of reviews (every six years).

There is provision for additional support and review if problems are highlighted through the Annual Programme Review or Periodic Review. If there is cause for concern or special review, a review 'panel' may be convened to consider areas of concern and monitor their resolution.

6.8 Withdrawal from collaborative arrangements

The Academic Secretariat must be notified immediately of any intention to withdraw from a collaborative arrangement, or of the receipt of a termination notice from a partner institution. The Queen Mary Senior Executive and Senate (or delegated authorities) will be notified at this stage.

A decision to withdraw from, or not renew, a collaborative arrangement must be communicated promptly between QMUL and the partner institution, to allow sufficient time for termination arrangements to be discussed and agreed in an exit agreement. QMUL reserves the right to terminate a collaborative arrangement if it considers that there are risks to its academic standards and quality.

The exit agreement will set out the respective responsibilities of QMUL and the partner institution(s) for the period of time that will allow all eligible students to complete the collaborative programme. During the termination period, the interests of these students are paramount.

Careful management of the termination process is necessary to protect the academic standards and quality of the collaborative provision during the termination period and also mitigate reputational risks.
to QMUL. In all cases, there will be due consideration of the quality of student experience and learning opportunities.

7. Register of Collaborative Provision

The QMUL Register of Collaborative Provision is updated following the approval and signature of the written agreement. The Register of Collaborative Provision is an up-to-date and authoritative record of QMUL’s collaborative partnerships, and a listing of the collaborative programmes operating through those partnerships that lead to a QMUL award.

The information published on the Register includes:

- The type of collaborative activity;
- The name of the partner institution;
- Outline details of the collaborative programme;
- Number of students;
- Lead school.

Schools/institutes at QMUL are required to notify the Academic Secretariat of any change, or intended change, to the details held on the QMUL Register of Collaborative Provision at the earliest possible opportunity.

7. QUICK LINKS TO TEMPLATES AND FORMS

- Collaborative approval table
- Process Flowchart

The forms and templates can be found on the Collaborative Provision web pages:

- Due Diligence Checklist
- Risk Assessment Form
- Template for Review of Activity prior to renewing or extending agreement
- Stage 1 Partnership Proposal Form
- Stage 1 Partnership & Programme Proposal Form (taught single/joint/dual programmes)
- Stage 1 Partnership & Programme Proposal Form (SMD)
- Stage 2 Academic Proposal Form (Articulation and Agreements)
- MOU Template