Guidance on the University’s procedures for the approval of new collaborative provision arrangements

Guidance on the approval of proposals for collaborative provision arrangements was agreed by the Taught Student Education Board in November 2012 and updated in October 2016. All queries about the information contained in this document should be addressed to n.g.tooher@leeds.ac.uk.

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Context and rationale

1. In order to fulfil its mission, the University encourages collaborations with partner organisations (including those overseas) to deliver University awards, provided this takes place within the defined framework.

2. The University expects proposals for new arrangements to originate from consideration of the student academic experience at the discipline level. The proposing School/Faculty is responsible for developing proposals for collaborative agreements, with support from the Quality Assurance Team, the International Office and the University Legal Advisor.

3. Collaborative provision presents valuable opportunities but can also have financial, academic, ethical and reputational risks. These types of arrangement pose additional challenges to the maintenance of academic standards and quality. Therefore, there are requirements for approval and review over and above those for non-collaborative programmes.

4. At institutional level the Collaborations and Partnerships Committee has oversight of the development of the University’s arrangements with collaborative provision partners and the review of agreed arrangements. Programme Approval Groups are responsible for the approval of any new arrangements and must include appropriate members of the Collaborations and Partnerships Committee.

5. The guidance document sets out the additional approval requirements for collaborative proposals. Guidance relating to the review of collaborative provision arrangements is provided in separate document.

6. Support and guidance for those wishing to propose new collaborations can be obtained from a variety of sources:
   
a. The School Director of Student Education and the Faculty Pro Dean for Student Education.

b. Approval process: Niamh Tooher, Quality Assurance Team (n.g.tooher@leeds.ac.uk).

c. For international collaborations:
   
i. The relevant Faculty International Leads.
   
ii. The International Office (support with arranging site visits, due diligence enquiries, specialist country advice on partners, marketing and promotion etc.): Susan Hunter and Amy Brookes, International Office ext.: 34080/31733.

d. Legal Agreements: Adrian Slater, University Legal Adviser.

e. Vice Chancellor’s Executive Group (VCEG) and Council approval: Melody Mellor, University Secretariat.
Definition and scope

7. The University endorses the Quality Assurance Agency's statement on 'Managing higher education provision with others' that encompasses:

"…management of 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." At Leeds, different types of collaboration are dealt with in different ways. This guidance refers to collaborative provision, which the University defines as:

A systematic collaborative arrangement for course provision with an external partner under which entry to, advanced standing on, or credit for a taught programme or award of the University of Leeds can be gained.

The definition of collaborative provision at Leeds excludes the following:

a. distance learning where the location of the learner is not specific;

b. outreach and off-campus delivery in the UK;

c. work and study placements;

d. study abroad arrangements;

e. arrangements which lead to awards/credit from other awarding bodies and not to awards/credit of the University of Leeds.

8. As the degree awarding body, the University of Leeds has ultimate responsibility for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name, wherever these take place and whoever provides them. The University also has responsibility for ensuring the quality of learning opportunities, primarily by making the expectations and respective roles and responsibilities clear. These procedures are designed to discharge these responsibilities.

9. The procedures are intended to meet the expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, in particular Chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others.

10. Quality assurance of study abroad arrangements and of work placements is not covered by this guidance. These are managed as separate processes. For Study Abroad, support is available from the Study Abroad Office. For work placements, there is a University policy describing quality assurance arrangements, and placements are largely managed within the teaching School. See http://www.leeds.ac.uk/aqst/approval/placements.html for more information.

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1 Chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others, the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, pg3
Categories of collaborative provision arrangements

11. The University uses the following categories to define each type of collaborative provision arrangement. The categories are presented in order from least complex to most complex. The type of arrangement defines the approval process that should be followed (see Approval process and forms).

12. Not all collaborative arrangements will fit the category descriptions exactly. If you are unsure which category your proposals would align with you should contact the Quality Assurance Team or International Market Development Team for advice.

Group A: Memoranda of understanding, admissions arrangements, low credit volume

13. Arrangements in this group represent ways of working with partners which are lower risk and do not generally fall within the University’s formal definition of ‘collaborative provision’.

   Type A1: Memoranda of understanding: an agreement to expand academic co-operation and friendship which may encompass research and/or student education, and may indicate agreement to pursue further proposals. However, a Memorandum of Understanding is insufficient for any arrangement that includes a formal commitment to deliver credit/awards.

   Type A2: Admissions arrangements: credit/awards from partner institutions are considered as part of the qualifications required for entry to Leeds. This may include fee discounts and alternatives to standard entry requirements. (If advanced standing is granted, see Group B).

   Some entry agreements are structured in such a way that the partner will recognise the Leeds programme as an element contributing in part to its own separate award. This can allow students to complete the partner award over a shorter period of time than it would normally take but is not a reverse articulation. A typical example would be a 1+1 Masters Entry Agreement. Although this does not impact on the Leeds award, it does mean some extra approval information is needed. These are primarily arrangements used as market development tools and should not be confused with dual or joint definitions under Group D. If your arrangement might fall in to this category you should contact the International Market Development Team. They will support you in completing the additional approval information.

   Type A3: Reverse articulation arrangements: a partner institution grants advanced standing to applicants who have successfully completed a specific part or whole of a named Leeds programme.

   Type A4: Low credit volume: Arrangements which would otherwise fall into group B or C below, but only a single module is taught in collaboration and the total credit taught in collaboration does not exceed one fifth of the credit in any programme year viewed from the individual student perspective (usually 20 credits for an undergraduate programme and 30 credits for a taught postgraduate programme).

Group B: Articulation arrangements

14. In these arrangements applicants are granted advanced standing, but in every other respect the programme/award is identical to the standard Leeds programme/award.

   Type B: Articulation arrangements: The University grants advanced standing to applicants successfully completing a specific part or whole of a named course or programme of study at a partner institution.
Group C: Arrangements leading to University of Leeds awards

15. These are programmes where the award and all of the credits are awarded by the University of Leeds under the usual quality assurance arrangements, but where a partner makes a significant contribution in providing facilities and/or teaching.

**Type C1: ‘Flying faculty’**: arrangements for the delivery of University of Leeds programmes away from the main University campus, typically overseas, by University staff, who also carry out assessment. Support for students may be provided by local staff.

**Type C2: Programme approval**: a programme developed and delivered by a partner is of an appropriate quality and standard to lead to one of the University’s own awards. This category is reserved for selected local NHS units with a longstanding link with the University, and is distinct from a franchise in that students are registered at the University of Leeds and the University exercises direct control over quality assurance, including curriculum approval and review.

**Type C3: Collaborative programme delivery**: a collaboration with a partner institution without its own degree awarding powers that provides specialist input to a Leeds programme of study leading to a Leeds award.

Group D: Joint delivery, dual degrees, joint degrees

16. Arrangements in this group fall under two broad sub-headings: co-dependent qualifications and integrated but independent qualifications. They are the most complicated type of arrangement and advice should be sought from Quality Assurance Team or the International Marketing Team early in the development process.

17. Integrated but independent qualifications involve degree-awarding institutions working together to offer a jointly conceived programme. However, a student does not need to satisfy the requirements of all the partners to receive an award. In these cases, the programmes are designed to allow the students to achieve more than one distinct set of criteria. These are:

18. **Type D1: Joint programme delivery**: a collaboration with another degree-awarding institution where both institutions provide specialist teaching on the programme. Students qualify for the degree award of one or other of the institutions, usually on the basis of which institution provides lead supervision of their research project/dissertation.

19. **Type D2: Dual degree**: a collaboration with another degree-awarding institution, where both institutions are responsible for their own award but the two components form a single package, and the overall arrangement is a joint enterprise that requires elements of joint management and oversight. The overall study period/volume of learning is typically shorter than if two programmes were taken consecutively. Students receive a separate qualification from each participating institution recognising the same achievement.

20. Co-dependent, mutually contingent qualifications require students to fulfil the requirements of all the degree-awarding bodies involved. If more than one qualification is awarded they must be fundamentally linked. Commonly students must achieve a single, shared set of criteria.

21. **Type D3 Joint degree**: is a collaboration with another degree-awarding institution, where both institutions contribute equally to the programme design, development, delivery, assessment and decision making on student achievement. Students receive a single qualification awarded jointly by both participating institutions.

22. **Type D4: Joint College**: is a scheme that is branded as a joint venture with a partner(s), typically located overseas. The Joint College acts as a vehicle for delivering a related group of arrangements in other categories.

23. In all of the Group D arrangements, the regulatory and quality assurance arrangements that will apply should match the Leeds regulations/framework as closely as possible, but there can be some flexibility to accommodate the academic requirements of the partnership.
24. Additional information on these types of qualifications can be found in Quality Assurance Agency’s document ‘Characteristic Statement: Qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding body’ published in October 2015.

**Group E: Collaborative research degrees**

25. Oversight of collaborative research degrees is via the Graduate Board and its sub groups.

**Type E1:** Research degree collaboration: a collaboration where a partner institution provides specialist training, facilities and supervision for Postgraduate Research Students.

**Group F: Franchise, validation, accreditation**

26. As a matter of policy, the University does not at present consider proposals in this group, where the University of Leeds is not directly involved in the delivery of the programme. The University continues to have accreditation relationships with selected institutions which are being taught out (these are not covered by this guidance).

**Type F1:** Franchise: a partner institution is subcontracted to deliver the whole or part of an approved programme which is also delivered internally.

**Type F2:** Validation: a programme developed and delivered by a partner institution leads to a University of Leeds award.

**Type F3:** Accreditation: devolution of arrangements for quality and standards to a partner institution allowing students registered with the partner institution to graduate with a University of Leeds award.

**Unusual arrangements**

27. The categories and guidance are indicative and explain the principles and processes that underpin approval. However, each proposal tends to have unique features and the guidance cannot address every possibility. Staff are advised to discuss proposals with the Quality Assurance Team at an early stage to determine the most appropriate category and the approval requirements. Where proposals fall outside the defined categories or are otherwise unusual, the Collaborations and Partnerships Committee will take a view on any extensions or waivers of the requirements.

**Serial arrangements**

28. Serial arrangements, whereby a partner organisation (through an arrangement of its own) assigns responsibilities delegated to it by us to a third partner, are not permitted at the University of Leeds.
**Guidance on planning collaborations**

**Language of instruction/assessment**

29. The University does not consider arrangements in which the language of instruction and assessment for credit of the University of Leeds is not English. However articulation arrangements may involve imported credit for study undertaken in another language. Study abroad and placement arrangements for language students are dealt with under separate policies.

**Entry requirements**

30. Admissions arrangements and articulation arrangements can involve alternative entry requirements to those normally accepted. The Faculty Recruitment Committee is responsible for ensuring that any alternative entry requirements are academically appropriate. English language requirements must meet standard University criteria; advice can be obtained from the Language Centre and/or Student Education Service leads for admissions. Any alternative arrangements for English language requirements must be in line with Home Office guidelines.

**United Kingdom Visa and Immigration (UKVI) requirements**

31. The University is required to notify UKVI of teaching partnerships, teaching sites and “exceptional arrangements” under the guidance on “Sites and teaching partnerships” in Document 1 here: [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sponsor-a-tier-4-student-guidance-for-educators](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sponsor-a-tier-4-student-guidance-for-educators)

32. The nature of some collaborative provision arrangements fall under these requirements and this must be accounted for during the approval process. UKVI requirements currently only affect arrangements that are open to international student applications, where teaching activity is undertaken at a teaching site away from campus, or by a partner institution and where the site or partner organisation is based in the UK. Where these conditions apply to a collaborative arrangement the University of Leeds must add the partner institution details to the sponsor licence issued by the government. If this does not happen the University could lose its sponsor licence and would not be able to teach or recruit any international students.

33. If you are developing a collaborative arrangement that you think may be subject to a UKVI declaration you must discuss this with QAT prior to submitting any forms for approval. QAT will work with each School to ensure the appropriate UKVI declaration is made and suitable supporting documentation provided. Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs) with taught elements are likely to fall within the scope of the UKVI requirements. If you are proposing a new CDT collaboration you must contact Postgraduate Research and Operations (PGR & Ops) prior to making your funding application and before submitting any documents for collaborative approval. Please note that some arrangements are subject to approval by UKVI, so extra time must be allocated.

34. No offers should be made to for a new programme of this type until the new arrangement has been approved by the Sites and Partnerships team at UKVI.

**Mobility paths and exit awards**

35. Attention should be paid to exit awards for students who are unable to complete the full programme. Depending on the mobility routes through a programme, exit awards may be awards of the University of Leeds or of the partner, or jointly awarded. The details will vary depending on the structure of the programme. It can be helpful to provide a map of the routes a student can take through the programme and the exit awards that can be granted at each stage.

**Timescales**

36. The timescale for approval of a new collaborative arrangement is influenced by the need to be responsive to the market and agile in working with partners, and on the other hand by the time needed to develop the details and agree terms. There is no minimum timescale although Schools/Faculties should consider the marketing and recruitment implications of proposed start dates and should seek advice from the Quality Assurance Team on the relevant committee cycles.
The least complex collaborations can usually be approved in a matter of weeks but the most complex arrangements can take up to two years to be fully developed and approved.

37. Where proposals arise outside of the usual cycle and there is a strategic reason to expedite the request, the Chair(s) and/or Sub Group(s) may act on behalf of the relevant Committee(s) to grant approval.

Professional, statutory or regulatory bodies (PSRBs)

38. If the programme involved in a collaboration is recognised by or subject to any special requirements of a PSRB, care is needed to ascertain the impact of the collaboration. Evidence of discussion with and authorisation by the PSRB will be requested during the approval process.

Distinction between dual degree and admissions arrangements

39. A dual degree provides two distinct awards, one from the University of Leeds and one from the partner institution, which recognise the same achievement. A key feature of dual degrees is that both institutions work together to offer a jointly conceived programme that requires elements of joint management and oversight. Programmes are designed to allow students to achieve more than one distinct set of criteria.

40. Sometimes, admissions arrangements involve the partner institution waiting to award their own degree until students have finished a Leeds degree. This can allow students to complete the partner award over a shorter period of time than it would normally take but is not a reverse articulation, nor a dual degree. Although this does not impact on the Leeds award, it does mean some extra approval information is needed such as due diligence. These arrangements should not be confused with dual or joint definitions under Group D. If your arrangement might fall in to this category you should contact the Quality Assurance Team or International Marketing Team. They will support you in completing the additional approval information.

Distinction between dual degree and reverse articulation

41. Where a partner is granting an award on the basis of the same study/credit as a Leeds award, this is usually categorised as a Dual Degree. Where a partner is using some study/credit from the University of Leeds but students are required to take additional study/credit with the partner, this is usually categorised as a Reverse Articulation Arrangement.

Group D proposals (Joint programme delivery, dual degree, joint degree)

42. Proposals in Group D (Joint programme delivery, dual degree, and joint degree) are the most complex arrangements. Some elements are of particular importance. These include:

   a. The academic standing of the proposed partner;
   b. The experience of the proposed partner in offering awards at this level;
   c. The track-record of the proposed partner in operating successful collaborative agreements with other higher education institutions;
   d. The awareness of the partner of the expectations of UK higher education, with particular reference to quality assurance and external examining;
   e. Any variations to the University of Leeds regulatory and quality assurance framework required to accommodate the academic requirements of the partnership. These must be made explicit at the proposal stage and cannot be negotiated afterwards;
   f. Endorsement of the proposal by the relevant authorities of the partner institution in parallel with the University of Leeds approval process;
   g. The ability of the proposed partner(s) legally to offer the relevant awards, taking into account any applicable legislation in the UK or in the partner jurisdiction.

43. In these types of arrangement, some elements of the University’s quality assurance and regulatory framework can be negotiated according to the academic requirements of the
partnership. For example credit that is awarded by a partner institution and which falls under the partner's quality assurance arrangements can be used towards a University of Leeds award. However, the following aspects are not negotiable:

- Curriculum specification (programme/module specifications) based on learning outcomes and including full details of teaching and learning, and assessment methods;
- Scrutiny of the proposal by academic peers in the STSEC with oversight from Programme Approval Group;
- A clear and thorough agreed statement of the minimum academic entry requirements, including language proficiency;
- Strong and scrupulous use of external examiners, including approval of appointments by the Leeds FTSEC and receipt of reports meeting minimum requirements by the Quality Assurance Team. This applies also to any examiners appointed jointly.

44. Each proposal will be considered on its individual merits, but as a guideline, the minimum credit contributed by Leeds should be one third of the usual minimum for that award (i.e. a minimum of 120 credits in a three-year undergraduate programme or a minimum of 60 credits in a one-year taught postgraduate programme). The Programme Specification should explain the volume of credit contributed by each partner. Modules can be delivered in partnership but credit should not be awarded by multiple partners for the same pieces of work.

45. Not all higher education institutions have degree awarding powers. The authority to award degrees may rest with a validation partner, or a regional or national body. Those that do have degree awarding powers may lack authority to make awards jointly with another institution. In some jurisdictions, government approval is required to offer these types of award. This will be checked in the relevant constitutional documents of the partner(s) as part of the due diligence process.

**Dual degrees**

46. For dual degrees, programmes will lead to a Leeds award offered on the basis of the normal regulatory and quality assurance framework for the University of Leeds alongside an award(s) from the partner(s) offered on the basis of the regulatory and quality assurance framework of the partner(s). The programme and the candidature will be integrated but the final awards are separate. Hence a student may, on completion of the programme, qualify for an award of the University of Leeds and vice versa, since the regulations may be different.

47. In a dual degree, some credit will be delivered by Leeds (either in Leeds or at another location) and some by the partner(s). As with all arrangements the programme specification will explain the credit delivered by the different partners.

48. In the interests of transparency, the certificate and transcript issued by Leeds will explain that the programme leads to dual degree and more than one certificate. To avoid the risk of confusion, for taught programmes, a programme offered as part of a dual degree should not have the same award title as a standard Leeds programme.

**Joint degrees**

49. Arrangements in other categories lead to awards of the University of Leeds, and hence our own regulatory framework applies. Joint Degrees, however, require negotiation of a single agreed framework with the partner(s), with the University of Leeds remaining fully responsible for quality and standards. As such, this is the most complex type of collaboration. Particular care should be paid to negotiating the regulatory and quality assurance arrangements which will apply. These must be negotiated with the partner whilst satisfying our own requirements.

50. Proposals for joint awards should adhere as closely as possible to the normal framework for the University of Leeds, differing only where it is necessary to accommodate academic requirements of the partnership. Any such differences should be made explicit in the approval
process and detailed within the programme specification. Differences should not be negotiated later, as the statement of the joint regulations forms the basis on which approval is based.

Joint College
51. A Joint College is a major venture with legal, marketing and reputational issues to be considered. As such a proposal must have the support of the University Executive Group (UEG) at both Outline Planning Approval stage and Full Approval stage.

52. A Joint College acts as a vehicle for delivering programmes that sit elsewhere within the categories of collaborative provision arrangements. Quality assurance for a Joint College therefore rests in following the agreed procedures for the programmes/awards that will be offered through the College.
Approval process and forms

53. Approval is a two-stage process incorporating different parts depending on the category of collaborative arrangement.
   
i. Stage one is outline planning approval. This signals institutional commitment to provide the resources needed to fully develop the proposal.
   
   ii. Stage two is full approval. This requires collation of the academic, legal and financial details for final agreement.

Tailoring the process

54. The sections of the approval process that apply, and the approval forms, differ according to the type of arrangement:

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<th>Proposal type based on category:</th>
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<th>Group B</th>
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<td>Outline planning approval</td>
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55. **Group A:** Arrangements in this group can be approved by the relevant School and Faculty Executives. If there are implications for student education (e.g. admissions arrangements) these should also be submitted for approval to the relevant School and Faculty Taught Student Education Committees. Where there are financial considerations (e.g. a discount on fees) this should be overseen by the Faculty Finance Manager. For proposals with an international dimension advice should be sought from the International Office who can provide guidance, templates, and support. Legal agreements will be overseen by the Legal Adviser and require the correct legal signatory (usually the University Secretary). A template for Memoranda of Understanding is available from the International Office.

56. For reverse articulation arrangements, the onus is on the awarding body/bodies to approve the arrangement (although the arrangements for specification and approval of the Leeds modules/credits must be approved in the usual way). The awarding body/bodies will have their own documentation and approval requirements.

57. * Part 1a should be completed for any admissions arrangements where extra approval information is needed as described under 13 and 40. If your arrangement falls within this category you should contact the International Market Development Team. They will support you in completing the additional approval information.
58. Arrangements in **Group B, C, D and E** must:
   a. be approved centrally by the University following the process explained in this guidance material;
   b. be governed by a legally binding agreement;
   c. be listed on the University’s central register of collaborative provision; and,
   d. be subject to periodic Collaborative Provision Review following the University’s agreed procedures.

59. Oversight of arrangements in Groups A, B, C and D is the responsibility of the Collaborations and Partnerships Committee, acting on behalf of the Taught Student Education Board. The Collaborations and Partnerships Committee comprises academic representatives from each Faculty with expertise in this type of provision. Approval of these arrangements takes place at the relevant Programme Approval Group with representation from the Collaborations and Partnerships Committee.

60. **Group E**: Proposals for collaborations leading to a research award follow a similar process but oversight is via the Graduate Board and its sub groups. Advice can be sought from Postgraduate Research and Operations. The Collaborations and Partnerships Committee has an advisory role in relation to these proposals.

61. Integrated awards (i.e. research awards with a taught element) should follow both routes in parallel, leading to approval of the taught element by the Programme Approval Group/TSEB and approval of the research award by the Graduate Board.

**Part 1: Outline planning approval**

62. Outline planning approval secures endorsement of the relevant Head of School and Dean of Faculty for a proposal, and a senior officer of the University authorises the proposal as being within the University’s strategic interest. For taught award collaborations, the senior officer is the Deputy Vice Chancellor Student Education. For research award collaborations, the senior officer is the Dean of Postgraduate Research Studies. For research awards with a taught element, both must endorse the proposal. For a Joint College, Part 1 (or a summary of it) must also receive endorsement from the University Executive Group. Any additional documentation requested by the signatories (e.g. an outline business plan or market analysis) should be appended.

63. The endorsement of Part 1 signifies commitment from the School, Faculty and University to provide the necessary resources to develop the full proposal. This may include a site visit, the costs of which are borne by the proposing School.

64. Once Part 1 has been completed and signed at the School and Faculty level, it should be forwarded to the Quality Assurance Team who will arrange for the signature of the relevant senior officer. Once this signature has been obtained proposals can move forward to the next stage of the approval process.

65. The completed Part 1 is reported to the Collaborations and Partnerships Committee, who may provide feedback to assist in the development of the full proposal.

66. For collaborations involving new programmes of study, the new programme should be considered in parallel with the new collaboration. Alongside Part 1: Outline planning approval, the proposed new programme should be submitted for ‘information. The School/Programme Approval Group will carry out their usual academic oversight with respect to the programme approval, including oversight of elements contributed by partners. Provision for filling any identified gaps in the partner’s curriculum should be identified and agreed.

**Part 2: Articulation approval**

67. Articulation arrangements are broadly of lower financial and academic risk than other types. Full approval is achieved via a light-tough form and process called Part 2. A separate business plan
and risk assessment management plan is not required. However, an independent site visit, Part 6, is still required.

**Part 3: Legal and financial**

68. Part 3 comprises a checklist for confirmation/signature against a number of elements covering the financial and legal framework. Whilst it is inevitable that proposers will be involved in developing the details of these documents, the form/attachments should be endorsed by the independent University officers listed on the form. This is to ensure independent professional oversight of financial and legal matters that protects the institutional interest and safeguards against potential conflicts of interest or competing priorities.

69. Part 3 should be completed with required endorsements and collated before submission. The academic committees that consider approval do not have particular financial and legal expertise. They take endorsements from the relevant University officers in good faith, but will check that all sections have been completed and endorsed before considering proposals for approval.

70. **Part 3(i): Due diligence enquires**: The University must assure itself that prospective partners have sufficient resources and legal status to enter into a contractual arrangement. The proposers should liaise with the partner(s) and the University Legal Adviser to complete a due diligence questionnaire. A similar questionnaire is sent by us to the partner to advise them of our legal and financial standing (‘reverse due diligence’). For international arrangements, the International Office can support this process.

71. The requirements for due diligence can vary by the type of partner and can sometimes be waived where the University already has arrangements with a particular partner. Contact the Legal Adviser for advice.

72. The endorsement of the Legal Adviser is required on this section of the form. Any issues arising from the due diligence which are relevant to academic approval will be noted for consideration by the relevant committees. Sample due diligence questionnaires for different types of arrangement are available on the Quality Assurance Team website.

73. **Part 3(ii): Business plan**: A business plan should be developed by the proposing School/Faculty and attached to Part 3. The Faculty Finance Director can advise on an appropriate format and requirements. As a minimum the business plan should:

   a. include a projected income and expenditure account;
   b. include market research to make accurate forecasts of the likely student demand;
   c. identify all costs to be included in the budget;
   d. include a sensitivity analysis on changes in the key variables;
   e. indicate the costs of termination and contingency, including the costs of teaching out the programme if the arrangement fails;
   f. include ongoing costs in relation to the oversight of the provision, including the role of the link tutor and requirements for periodic review of collaborative provision;
   g. be prepared on a full cost basis (as opposed to marginal costs), including taking account of opportunity costs;
   h. take account of statuary financial obligations including in partner(s) jurisdictions, including any UK or local VAT and tax costs (although education is exempt from VAT and corporation tax in the UK, this is not always the case in other countries);

74. **Part 3(iii) Risk assessment management plan**: A risk assessment management plan should be completed and attached to Part 3. This should include mitigation for circumstances that create additional risk, health and safety issues or requirements for additional resource. For example, the geographical and political climate of some overseas locations may pose additional risk that should
be factored in. There may need to be contingency plans to address circumstances when staff and/or students are unable to travel for health and safety reasons.

75. The risk assessment management plan should specifically address:

   a. arrangements for teaching out if one or both parties withdraw from the agreement;
   b. risks associated with changes to any relevant immigration and visa requirements (for students and staff);
   c. risks associated with the geographical climate;
   d. risks associated with the political climate;
   e. risks associated with the economic climate;
   f. risks associated with laboratory work, fieldwork or other practical work;
   g. risks associated with values and attitudes in other cultures, including discrimination and equality issues.

Part 4: Academic management for taught awards

76. This section requires details about the academic management of the collaboration, including the arrangements for teaching/learning, support, and learning resources to be provided by Leeds and by the partner. This provides the academic information on which approval is based. It also provides information which informs drafting of the legal agreement.

77. This section of the form should be accompanied by supporting documentation as relevant to the proposal which will normally include:

   a. Draft legal agreement. Template agreements are available from the Quality Assurance Team. These usually require substantial revision to tailor them to each specific arrangement. (See also ¶89).
   b. Details of staff who will teach on the programme along with accompanying CVs for those partner institution staff who will be delivering teaching on the programme.
   c. Draft student handbook. A checklist for the information to be contained in student handbooks for collaborative provision arrangements can be obtained from the Quality Assurance Team.
   d. Programme approval documentation: if the collaboration involves a new programme, the full programme documentation as approved by the Faculty Taught Student Education Committee.
   e. Link tutor role description. The role description for the link tutor as approved by the relevant School/Faculty. Part 5: Academic management for research awards

78. This section is similar to Part 4 but is tailored for research awards. Guidance and advice for completing the form can be obtained from Postgraduate Research and Operations or the Quality Assurance Team.

Part 6: Independent site visit

79. For this section, a site visit is undertaken by a suitably qualified member of University staff with a degree of independence from the proposal. The nomination of a suitable member of staff to undertake the site visit should be endorsed by the Chair of the Collaborations and Partnerships Committee.

80. A template for the site visit report is available on the Quality Assurance Team website. The site visit report details the prospective partner’s physical resources and infrastructure and the adequacy of these to support the arrangement. For international arrangements, the International Office can provide assistance in arranging site visits. The costs of the site visit fall to the proposing School/Faculty.
81. The Chair of the Collaborations and Partnerships Committee may waive the requirement for a site visit if the proposal is for collaboration with an existing partner organisation. Contact the Quality Assurance Team for advice.
Process for full approval

School/Faculty Level

82. Each proposal should be considered by the relevant School/Faculty Taught Student Education Committee(s) who are responsible for evaluating the academic case and strategic fit with the vision and strategy for the School/Faculty. They also evaluate, in academic terms, whether there is an acceptable balance of risk and opportunity.

83. If the proposal involves a new programme of study, the programme full approval documentation must also be endorsed by the School Taught Student Education Committee and Programme Approval Group in the normal way. The STSEC carries out its normal academic oversight responsibility with respect to the whole programme, including elements contributed by partners. The Programme Approval Group must include members of the Collaborations and Partnerships Committee with expertise in collaborative provision. This allows the Programme Approval Group to formally approve the full collaborative arrangement.

84. If a proposal is particularly complex a separate Programme Approval Group may be arranged to approve the arrangement. This will comprise school, faculty and Collaborations and Partnerships Committee representatives, as with a normal Programme Approval Group. However, the Group will be overseen by the Chair of the Collaborations and Partnerships Committee. The Quality Assurance Team will advise you if this type of Programme Approval Group is required for your proposal.

Collaborations and Partnerships Committee

85. All categories of proposals are reported to the Collaborations and Partnerships Committee. The Committee has a broad institutional role that includes, overseeing and evolving the University’s policy and procedures in relation to the approval, review and ongoing quality assurance of collaborations and partnerships to ensure arrangements continue to be fit for purpose and reflect best sector practice. The Quality Assurance Team can provide further information on the role and responsibilities of this Committee.

Taught Student Education Board

86. If the proposal is endorsed by the Programme Approval Group, it is forwarded as a recommendation for approval to the Taught Student Education Board. The recommendation of the Programme Approval Group may have conditions attached, for example, any matters that were raised by the Group and remain outstanding at the time the recommendation is presented to the Board.

Approval of Council

87. All collaborations involving teaching on a University of Leeds award overseas (apart from articulation arrangements) must also be approved by the University’s Council. Similarly, all contractual agreements involving monies in excess of £3 million (regardless of location) and any Joint College (regardless of location) require the approval of Council.

88. Business to be presented to Council will first be considered by the University Executive Group (UEG). The paper presented to UEG/Council should follow a prescribed format. The Secretariat will provide advice on presentation of the documentation for Council, which will be based on the information provided during the approval process.

Contract Negotiation

89. Although it can be helpful to begin the process of drafting terms at an early stage, Schools/Faculties are not permitted to make binding contractual agreements with proposed partners. Contracts are signed at the institutional level, and this usually only takes place on completion of the approval process.
90. The contract will be finalised in partnership between the proposing School/Faculty, the Quality Assurance Team, and the Legal Adviser. Contracts are signed by the University Secretary and no other person should sign such agreements on behalf of the University.

91. Schools/Faculties should not enter bids for funding, government recognition, Heads of Terms etc. relating to collaborative provision until the bid/agreement has been endorsed by the Collaborations and Partnerships Committee. Where proposals arise outside of the usual cycle of committees the Chair and/or a Sub Group may provide the endorsement to ensure that the University can be agile in responding to opportunities. Endorsement of a bid/agreement in advance of full approval does not absolve the proposing School/Faculty from completing the full approval process in a timely fashion.

92. Signed legal agreements are stored within the Quality Assurance Team as part of the institutional Register of Collaborative Provision. Students cannot be enrolled on any collaborative arrangement until the full approval is complete and the contract is signed.
Annex A: Checklist for consideration of collaborative proposals

Having regard to the QAA Quality Code, the Programme Approval Groups should give consideration to whether arrangements described in each proposal are adequate. The following checklist provides a guide to the key issues to be considered.

- Does the programme delivered under the collaborative arrangement maintain equivalent academic standards to a programme delivered at the University?
- Does the proposal fit within the University’s mission and strategy? Does it fit with the University’s own policy and procedures?
- Does the rationale for the Collaboration fit with the School’s portfolio of programmes and the School’s mission?
- Are the arrangements for the monitoring of publicity effective?
- Are the admissions procedures satisfactory?
- Are the arrangements for the monitoring of entry qualifications satisfactory?
- Where will the students be registered?
- Will the students have appropriate access to resources and facilities?
- How will the programme be managed?
- How will students be supported?
- Is the Group confident that the proposed partner has robust and reliable procedures for the following:
  a. Quality Assurance procedures at all levels including administrative staff (Who is responsible for module and programme review? How is student feedback collected? Who considers this?)
  b. Providing learning support and an infrastructure at a level to meet the requirements of the University
  c. Appropriate provision for staff development and induction
- Is there a programme committee? Is the constitution and terms of reference effective and appropriate?
- Which School Committee will have responsibility for the Collaboration? Is this appropriate?
- How often will University staff visit the proposed partner? Are the arrangements appropriate?
- Is the Group confident that the proposed partner is fully committed to the collaboration at all levels, is there evidence of this?
- Does the proposed partner meet the regulatory requirements of the University?
- Are the arrangements for the assessment of students appropriate? Do they meet the requirements of the University?
- Are the arrangements for the import / moderation of marks appropriate?
- Are the External Examining arrangements appropriate for the proposed collaboration?
- Is the information provided to students clear and unambiguous? Is more detail required?
- Which category of the register does this programme fall under? Are the arrangements for this programme standard for this category?
Annex B: Checklist for legal agreements

The University Legal Advisor is responsible for agreeing the final wording of legal agreements. The following checklist provides proposers and the Quality Assurance Team with a guide to the issues that should be covered by the legal agreement.

**Financial**
1. The division of the monies paid to the partners /consortia
2. Different approaches to the charging of fees (not allowed by law in some countries)
3. Fee levels and transfer arrangements
4. Exchange rates and currency

**Quality Assurance**
5. The respective responsibilities and obligations of each of the parties
6. Appointment criteria for external examiners and mechanisms for their reporting and payment. External examiners must be approved by the University of Leeds and their reports received by the Quality Assurance Team.

**Academic review**
7. Annual monitoring. How will the programme be monitored and how will the output feed into school monitoring structures?
8. The duration of the agreement and options for renewal, taking into account academic review arrangements
9. Reporting and communication requirements, including feedback from the University to the partner(s)
10. Obligations on the partner(s) to provide to the University, on request, appropriate information about the conduct of the programme including staff and student matters

**Student Administration**
11. The admissions process, including responsibilities for making decisions on individual applicants
12. Responsibilities for the enrolment and registration of students;
13. Who the student’s contract is with (the consortium, the ‘home’ institution, that in which they initially register, contractual responsibility when an institution does not teach a particular student?).
14. How is registration and enrolment organised?
15. Student discipline, complaints and appeals
16. Issue and secure control of award certificates and transcripts
17. For joint awards, how will certificates be awarded? By which partner(s)? Will all the parties names/logos need to go on it? Wording of the certificate needs to be given consideration.
18. Responsibilities for graduation
19. Maintenance of student and other designated records by partners, including following the termination of the agreement, and in the event that the partner(s) cease to exist

20. Minimum and maximum number of students

21. Issues linked to the duty of care

**Safeguards**

22. Provision of regular and sufficient information to enable the University to be confident that the responsibilities of the parties are being met

23. Details of how the agreement can be terminated

24. Provisions to enable the University to suspend or withdraw from the agreement if the partner(s) fails to fulfil its obligations

25. Residual obligations to students on termination of the agreement

26. Avoid unreasonable confidentiality provisions which would preclude the University from sharing with other Universities any concerns which led to its withdrawal from the agreement

27. Dispute resolution procedure

**Information**

28. Intellectual property considerations (including that generated by students and staff during the course of the collaboration)

29. Publicity and promotional material

30. Data protection

**Assessment**

31. Assessment of students

32. Marking scale(s) including clear agreement on conversion of marks between the partner systems

33. Classification procedure

**International**

34. The languages of assessment and instruction;

35. Responsibilities for the authoritative translation of documents into appropriate languages including the quality assurance of translations.

**Legal**

36. The legal jurisdiction under which disputes will be resolved;

37. Governing law of the formal legal agreement