



## Processes for the Approval and Management of Academic Collaborative Provision

## Processes for the Approval and Management of School Direct Partnerships

<b>POLICY SCHEDULE</b>	
Policy title	Processes for the Approval and Management of Collaborative Provision  Processes for the Approval and Management of School Direct Partnerships
Policy owner	Registry
Policy lead contact	Head of Collaborative Provision
Approving body	Academic Board
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Related Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process for Due Diligence of Collaborative Provision</li> <li>• Processes for the Approval and Management of Associate Partners</li> </ul>
Review interval	3 yearly

*NB. This policy is available on the University of Cumbria website and it should be noted that any printed copies are uncontrolled and cannot be guaranteed to constitute the current version of the policy.*

## **Introduction**

1. Section 1 of the University's Processes for the Approval and Management of Academic Collaborative Provision provide definitions of ACP. Section 2 described the processes for the approval and management of Associate Partners, other than School Direct. This document describes the University's processes for the consideration, approval and management of School Direct partnerships. This documents has two sections:
  - Part A – Processes for the approval of new School Direct partnerships
  - Part B – Processes for the management of School Direct partnerships.
2. School Direct partnerships are considered separately to other forms of Associate Partners because they are managed differently, reflecting the partnerships as a lower risk to the University.
3. These processes apply to prospective partnerships and new developments with existing Academic Collaborative Partners, with effect from 2021-2022.

## Part A: Approval of New Associate Partners (School Direct)

4. The approval and management of School Direct collaborative provision partnerships follows a different process to other Associate Partner arrangements. This reflects the lower risk attached to these partnerships through the ongoing involvement of University staff in the delivery of the PGCE programmes.
5. .
6. Led by the Head of Student Recruitment and Portfolio Development, the Institute of Education works with each organisation to identify an appropriate model of delivery (and partnership). A range of models exist but typically include:

Model	Process
To progress a new School Direct partnership.	Requires an approval process (see below).
To amalgamate a school's DfE numbers into an existing School Direct partnership	No approval process required. The formal partnership remains with the approved lead through whose alliance the larger number of students is recruited.
To progress an arrangement whereby a School's student numbers are subsumed into the University's core PGCE delivery.	No approval process required.

### Approval of a new Associate Partner (School Direct)

7. The following table summarises the standard division of roles and responsibilities associated with a School Direct partnership:

University	School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertakes admission and registration of students.</li> <li>• Delivers credit-bearing academic programme.</li> <li>• Ensures QA of professional judgements.</li> <li>• Recommends QTS.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Markets the programme and acts as route through which students apply.</li> <li>• Involved in the selection process.</li> <li>• Delivers professional component.</li> </ul>

### Process for approval of new Associate Partner (School Direct)

8. Once the Institute of Education has received formal notification (via DfE allocation) and has discussed the proposal with the school, the Head of Portfolio Development manages and oversees due diligence investigations as detailed below. This is followed by a formal proposal, reported to and considered for approval by Collaborative Provision Sub-Committee (CPSC).
9. Using the School Direct Due Diligence Investigations Report template, the Head of Student Recruitment and Portfolio Development oversees the collation of the following information:

- Confirmation of who the lead school (the formal partner) will be and clarity about the type of institution.
  - Confirmation of the name of the School Direct alliance.
  - A summary about how the lead school intends to manage its School Direct alliance.
  - Evidence of educational good standing (Ofsted).
  - Evidence of the lead school's financial sustainability (for example, gathered through an Ofsted report's evaluation of financial management)
  - Evidence of experience of working with an HEI on (at school and staff levels).
  - Confirmation that the University's standard School Direct financial model applies (or that a variation has been approved as appropriate).
  - Clarity about roles and responsibilities for marketing and publicity.
  - A risk assessment that outlines how the partnership would be managed in the event of the School Direct partner (the lead school) failing its Ofsted inspection.
10. There is no requirement for a formal site visit although it is expected that staff from the Institute of Education will have visited the school and met with relevant staff at some point during the approval process, to satisfy itself that the school's site is appropriate.
11. As part of ongoing discussions between the school and Institute of Education, and based on the University's standard School Direct financial model, the Head of Education (External) would discuss and agree the financial arrangements that would underpin the partnership.
12. The Head of Portfolio Development presents the proposal to a small panel (typically, the Director for Student Success or the Director of AQD and an AQD rep). The panel scrutinises the proposal against the Threshold Criteria for Institutional Approval (School Direct). The outcomes of this scrutiny presented to Collaborative Provision Sub-Committee (CPSC) with recommendation about approval.

### **Process for Programme Approval**

13. The approval of the University's Primary and/or Secondary PGCE programme(s) to be delivered through the Associate Partner (School Direct) is undertaken through the University's standard validation process. It would be expected there would be representation from both the Associate Partner (School Direct) and Institute of Education at the validation.
14. Following successful validation, the CP Team in AQD draw up a single Partnership Agreement to be signed by both parties. The Financial Agreement (drawn up by the Partnership Manager) is appended to this.
15. The CP Team in AQD maintains an institutional oversight of Associate Partner (School Direct) partnerships as part of overseeing all collaborative provision activity. The University Partnership Office maintains an institutional oversight of individual School Direct alliances including schools within each alliance.

### **Approval of change in lead school for an approved School Direct partnership**

16. The lead school in a School Direct partnership is the formal partner with the University, the Associate Partner (School Direct).
17. There may be occasions where there is a request or need to change the lead school in a School Direct alliance. In these situations, the following processes are followed.

18. **Amalgamation of School Direct alliances.** Where two or more School Direct alliances seek to amalgamate (temporarily or permanently), this is supported so long as an approved Associate Partner (School Direct) remains the lead school (at the formal partner with the University). The School Direct alliances are expected to alert the University where such considerations are being made. Led by the Head of Portfolio Development, the Institute of Education supports the School Direct alliances as appropriate. The Associate Partner (School Direct) is responsible for updating its marketing material accordingly. The University Partnership Office updates its records to reflect the changes within the School Direct alliance and alerts the University Webteam to reflect this on the University website.
19. **Change in lead school.** There may be occasion where there is a request for a change in lead school of a School Direct partnership. Since the University has a formal partnership with the lead school (as the Associate Partner (School Direct)), this would effectively constitute a new partnership and would follow the process above for the approval of a new School Direct partnership. Through following this process, the role of the prospective lead school in current alliance (and relationship with the University) would be acknowledged and help facilitate that process as appropriate. Since the programme had already been approved for delivery through that School Direct alliance, there would be no requirement for a new validation but an updated Partnership Agreement would be drawn up by the CP Team in AQD following approval to reflect the new formal partnership (noting that the period of approval would remain the same as the original agreement). The new Associate Partner (School Direct) is responsible for updating its marketing material accordingly. The University Partnership Office updates its records to reflect the changes within the School Direct alliance and that alerts the University Webteam to ensure this is reflected on the University website.

## **Part B: Management of Associate Partner (School Direct)**

20. Unlike other forms of academic collaborative provision (where delivery, assessment and management of academic provision may be the responsibility of the Associate Partner), staff from the University input into the delivery and management of School Direct delivered provision. For this reason, there are different processes for managing these partnerships.
21. The management of School Direct partnerships is coordinated from within the Institute of Education. The Head of Portfolio Development works with the Director of the Institute of Education to ensure each partnership is assigned an academic to manage that relationship and support programme cohesion.

### **Marketing and Information**

22. The Head of Collaborative Provision routinely monitors the accuracy of information about the University's collaborative provision (as presented by both the University and Associate Partners).

### **Public Information**

23. The University publishes information on its website about its School Direct Partnerships and the programmes offered through these arrangements.

24. School Direct Partners are responsible for ensuring accurate information is published about its relationship with the University and the programmes offered through the partnership.
25. The University provides its School Direct Partners with a set of minimum expectations regarding information on websites. School Direct Partners are responsible for complying with any national requirements around publishing of information, such as the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).

### **Approval of Publicity Information**

26. Where a School Direct Partner is producing its own publicity material, it is expected that appropriate reference to the partnership with the University is made.
27. The Collaborative Provision Team in AQD liaises with the University's Marketing department and relevant academic Departments as appropriate to ensure publicity material aligns to the University's Branding Guidelines and provides accurate information about the programme and the nature of the partnership with the University.

### **Programme-level Documentation**

28. A set of programme-level documentation is produced and approved through the validation process (school Alliance Programme Handbook). Following validation, Module-level information is produced as necessary to support each module delivery.

### **Admissions and Registration Arrangements with Associate Partners**

29. The following provides information about the management of admissions and registration arrangements. Where variations are agreed, these should be detailed in accompanying partnership agreements. All students being admitted to a programme leading to a University award must satisfy the University's general entry requirements appropriate to that level.

### **School Direct**

30. Students apply to School Direct delivered programmes through UCAS. The University Admissions review applications against the University's standard entry requirements. Those applications that meet the University's entry requirements are passed to the School Direct partners to progress.
31. The School Direct partner manages the interview process and collects relevant documentary paperwork to meet Ofsted requirements (in terms of admissions). Academic staff from the University may also be involved in the selection process. The University is responsible for making the formal offer to applicants. The University and School Direct partner work together to ensure any offer conditions are met.
32. All information passed between the School Direct partner and the University does so in accordance with the Data Protection Act and in line with Information Sharing Protocol statements that form part of partnership agreements.

### **Student Returns**

33. For School Direct partnerships, the University is responsible for making student returns to HESA.

## **Associate Partner Staff Approval and Staff Development**

34. University staff are involved in the delivery of the academic programme. The University Programme Leader (UPL) assigned to each School Direct partnership works in partnership to ensure that appropriate staff are delivering the professional component of the programme.
35. The Institute of Education runs School Direct Development Days throughout the year. These provide support and guidance to new and existing School Direct partners and their alliances in the development and ongoing delivery of programmes. School Direct partners are expected to attend these.
36. For School Direct partnerships, the UPL works with relevant Professional Mentors to deliver mentor training to mentors in schools.

## **Programme Delivery and Assessment**

### **Programme Delivery Planning**

#### **School Direct**

37. Programmes delivered through School Direct partnerships follow the University's core delivery schedule. The UPL works with individual schools to approve overall delivery plans and their alignment to core delivery.
38. Programme delivery planning will take place between Academic Links and PPLs and other relevant members of staff. Typically this includes meetings but the nature and complexity of the partnership may result in different approaches being taken. Programme delivery planning ensures an alignment of Associate Partner programme delivery to the University's assessment calendar and other academic processes to ensure the successful operation of the programme.

#### **Assessment**

39. The programme assessment strategy and methods of assessment are approved through the validation process and published in the Programme Specification and Module Descriptors (MDFs).
40. The University retains responsibility for assessment of the academic component.
41. The school partner is responsible for assessment of professional practice. For School Direct partners, individual UPLs undertake a QA role, looking at the moderation across an alliance.

#### **External Examiner Arrangements**

42. External Examiners for programmes leading to a University award are appointed by the University as External Examiners of the University. The arrangements for External Examining shall be as set out in the University's [Academic Regulations](#) and the [Academic Procedures and Processes](#). For School Direct partnerships, the University-appointed External Examiner is appointed to the academic and professional components and will operate across alliances. .

#### **Assessment Boards**

43. University academics involved in the delivery of credit-bearing modules attend relevant Module and University Assessment Boards.

44. Assessment Boards operate in accordance with the Academic Regulations and the Academic Procedures and Processes ([The Conduct and Operation of Assessment Boards](#)). Any variations to this (such as for qualifications awarded by more than one degree-awarding body) will require approval from Academic Board prior to implementation and will be articulated in supporting agreements.

45. Following confirmation of marks at UABs, the University release individual students' confirmed module results as a Statement of Results.

### **Academic Appeals**

46. School Direct students wishing to submit an Academic Appeal will follow with the University's [Academic Appeals Procedures](#). The Associate Partner provide students with information about this process.

47. The University's Assessment, Awards and Compliance Team is responsible for administration of this process.

### **Academic Malpractice**

48. Where a School Direct student is suspected of academic malpractice, the University's processes for Academic Malpractice will be followed. This is detailed in the University's [Policy and Procedures Governing Academic Malpractice](#).

49. The University's Assessment, Awards and Compliance Team is responsible for administration of this process.

### **Student Complaints**

50. School Direct students will normally follow the University Student Complaints processes.

51. School Direct Partners are expected to clear information to students about the ways in which a complaint might be made.

## **Certificates and Graduation**

### **Production of Certificates**

52. The University retains responsibility for awarding certificates granted in its name. The publication of results and production of certificates will be undertaken by the University in accordance with standard University procedures.

53. The name of the School Direct partner is recorded on students' certificates.

54. Certificates and transcripts are normally sent to students' home addresses as detailed on the University records. Any variation to this must be discussed and agreed with the Assessment and Awards Team.

### **Graduation Ceremony**

55. Students are entitled to attend the University's Graduation Ceremony.

56. The University's Ceremonies Team will invite students and relevant Associate Partner staff to the appropriate Graduation Ceremony.



## **Student Support**

### **Personal Tutor**

57. Staff from the School Direct partnerships will provide Personal Tutoring arrangements of a nature comparable to the University's [Personal Tutoring Policy](#) and of a manner that reflects the nature of the Associate Partner delivery.

### **Extenuating Circumstances**

58. A student wishing to make a claim for Extenuating Circumstances will follow the University's procedures (except where specific Academic Regulations are approved to manage Joint Awards). The claim is considered in accordance with the University's procedures. This is detailed in the University's [Procedures for Extenuating Circumstances](#).

59. The University's Assessment, Awards and Compliance Team is responsible for administration of this process.

### **Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)**

60. Students who are 'non-salaried' School Direct are entitled to seek Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) through the University. Students who are 'salaried' School Direct or who are with a SCITT are not entitled to seek DSA through the University.

61. The University's Disability Manager is responsible for DSA administration.

### **Safeguarding and Prevent**

62. As a part of the approval process, the University will assure itself of the appropriateness of the School Direct and SCITT partners' arrangements for managing safeguarding and Prevent.

## **Student Representation and Feedback**

63. Student representation and feedback is sought through the University's standard processes.

### **Annual Monitoring (AM)**

64. The regular monitoring, review and enhancement of University provision delivered by Associate Partners follows the University's standard processes through production of an Annual Monitoring report (AM) with University School Direct leads ensuring School Direct partners feed into this process as necessary.

### **Ofsted**

65. For School Direct partnerships, the University is responsible for Ofsted in relation to ITT. In the event of an Ofsted inspection, the University will liaise with its School Direct partners as necessary in support of this.

66. In the event of a School Direct partner failing its own Ofsted inspection, the University will work with the partner to ensure appropriate steps are put in place to safeguard the students.

67. The University Placement Office maintains University records for each partnership and associated student placements.

### **Partnership Review and Renewal**

68. The Head of Portfolio Development oversees regular reviews of School Direct partnerships. This is linked to the annual cycle of bidding and allocation of student numbers through the Department of Education. This may lead to discussion with School Direct partners about future shape of individual partnerships in line with the Institute of Education's Business Plan.

69. An annual report on School Direct and SCITT activity is presented to CPSC.

70. School Direct partnerships are monitored as part of the University's standard monitoring activity. In addition to this, the Collaborative Provision Team in AQD undertake regular reviews of website information published by School Direct partnerships. For School Direct partnerships, the CP Team in AQD collates all the monitoring activity and works with individual partners and UPLs as necessary to resolve issues raised.

71. During the penultimate year of a partnership, as part of the DfE cycle, the will meet with the Head of Collaborative Provision and other staff from the Institute of Education as appropriate. The purpose of this meeting is to review the operation of the partnership to date and agree whether to continue the partnership. This will reflect on the findings of the ongoing monitoring and audit activity together with consideration of the partnership from a business point of view.

72. The Head of Student Recruitment and Portfolio Development shall report to CPSC with a summary of the partnership to date and a recommendation to endorse to Academic Board the renewal of the partnership. Where the endorsement is to not continue the partnership, The Head of Student Recruitment and Portfolio Development will notify the Partner of the decision and liaise with the DfE as necessary. The Head of Collaborative Provision in AQD shall liaise accordingly to instigate teach-out arrangements.