

Processes for the Approval and Management of Academic Collaborative Provision

Section 4: Processes for the Approval and Management of Articulation and Guaranteed Progression Arrangements

POLICY SCHEDULE	
Policy title	Processes for the Approval and Management of Academic Collaborative Provision Section 4: Processes for the Approval and Management of Articulation and Guaranteed Progression Arrangements
Policy owner	Academic Quality and Development
Policy lead contact	Collaborative Provision Manager
Approving body	Academic Board (AB17:13)
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Related Procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1: Introduction and Definitions • Section 2: Processes for the Approval and Management of Associate Partners • Section 3: Processes for the Approval and Management of School Direct and SCITTs • Threshold Criteria for Institutional Approval • Scheme of Delegation • Validation Process • Academic Collaborative Provision Plan
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. This document describes the University's processes for the consideration, approval and management of Articulation and Guaranteed Progression arrangements. This document has two sections:
 - Part A – Processes for the approval of new Articulations and Guaranteed Progression arrangements.
 - Part B – Processes for the management of Articulations and Guaranteed Progression arrangements.
2. These processes apply to prospective partnerships and new developments with existing Academic Collaborative Partners, with effect from 2017-18.

Part A: Approval of New Associate Partners

Initial Enquiries

3. Initial proposals for partnerships are directed to the CP Team in AQD. The CP Team in AQD undertakes initial scoping. This will be based upon:
 - A fit with the University's academic offer.
 - An alignment to the University's Strategic Plan (17/18 – 19/20) and Academic Collaborative Provision Plan.
 - An outline investigation into the prospective partner organisation.
4. The AQD CP Team respond accordingly to those enquiries that do not meet these areas. The Head of Academic Partnerships and Skills, Director of Industrial Strategy and relevant Heads of Department are brought into discussion as appropriate.
5. Where proposals relate to student exchange, these are passed onto the relevant departments for consideration.

Process for Formal Approval

6. An application is made to the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Enterprise Business Development and Engagement) to seek authorisation to proceed with the proposal. The relevant Head of Department, with support from Head of Academic Partnerships and/or Director of Industrial Strategy (as appropriate) present a short rationale and case for consideration.
7. For those proposals authorised to proceed and, to facilitate the overall approval process, the Head of Department will liaise with relevant staff to facilitate the development. Typically this will include the CP Team in AQD, Admissions and the APL Office.

Due Diligence

8. All proposals that are supported for progression go through a process of financial and legal due diligence investigations. This is undertaken proportionate to the type of proposed partnership and the nature of the prospective partner. Typically, this will be less intensive than for full Associate Partners
9. In addition to financial and legal due diligence, the CP Team in AQD will undertake investigations to identify any perceived reputational risks to the University in entering into a partnership. This is reported into the ongoing approval process.
10. The Finance and Planning Service undertakes Financial Due Diligence (or confirms that due diligence is not required). Financial Due Diligence seeks to provide assurance of a prospective partner's financial good standing based on the scale of the proposal and extent of commitment entailed. A Financial Due Diligence Report summarises investigations undertaken, outcomes, and identifies risks associated with entering into a partnership. It also includes a recommendation on proceeding. The Financial Due Diligence stage is signed off by the Director of Finance and Resources.
11. Legal Due Diligence seeks to provide the University with assurance of the legal entity with whom the University is proposing working, and to gain confirmation of a prospective partner's legal capacity to enter into a proposed partnership with the University. Depending on the nature and location of the prospective partner, the

University legal representatives may be used to undertake this activity. Legal Due Diligence findings are signed off by the Chief Operating Officer.

12. For overseas partnerships, the Head of Academic Partnerships and Skills will work with relevant colleagues to seek, through the University's legal representatives, to undertake an investigation into the legislative, financial and jurisdictional frameworks within which the proposed partnership will operate. This will also seek to clarify the educational structures of the country to support any general information about comparability of awards that might be available via NARIC. The University will make use of any existing generic in-country investigations resource and supplement this with specific in-country investigations as appropriate to the type of partner and proposed partnership.

Consideration by the Vice Chancellor's Executive

13. At this stage, proposals are presented to the Vice Chancellor's Executive (VCE) for approval. This would normally be undertaken by the Head of Academic Partnerships and Skills and/or the Director of Industrial Strategy plus others as appropriate. For proposals that are deemed to pose a significant level of risk to the University, the VCE may refer the proposal to be presented to the appropriate Board committee for consideration.

Formal Consideration of Proposal

14. For proposed Articulation arrangements, the academic lead supporting the proposal undertakes a mapping to evidence alignment of academic level, volume of credit, and learning outcomes of the articulation organisation's programme and the University's programme against which students will articulate.
15. For proposed Guaranteed Progression arrangements, the academic lead supporting the proposal liaises with the University's Admissions Team where required (such as for an international arrangement), a mapping (as above) may be required to provide the University with evidence that students satisfy the entry requirements.
16. The proposal and mapping is considered as follows:
 - The relevant University academic endorses the proposal and mapping.
 - The APL Office reviews and comments on prospective articulation arrangements.
 - The Admissions Team reviews and comments on prospective guaranteed progression arrangements, in particular to satisfy itself that the qualifications students will be achieving at the other organisation meet the relevant programme entry requirements. For proposed overseas arrangements, this is normally undertaken via UK National Recognition Information Centre (NARIC).
 - External commentary is sought (normally the External Examiner) on the appropriateness of the mapping and the suitability of the articulation.
17. Once the above endorsements have been obtained, the proposal is presented to the Dean for Student Success for approval. All proposals are reported to Collaborative Provision Sub-Committee for note and where appropriate, the Dean for Student Success may refer the proposal to Collaborative Provision Sub-Committee for consideration. Following approval, the CP Team in AQD draw up a formal agreement to be signed by both organisations. Those proposals that had been considered as posing a high level of risk to the University would be referred to the appropriate Board committee for approval.

18. Articulation Agreements and Guaranteed Progression Agreements are signed for a period of time. Prior to the partnership end date, the Collaborative Provision Manager will notify the relevant Head of Department and Programme Leader for them to consider the arrangement to date. Where the Department wish to continue the arrangement, the Academic Lead will present a paper to the Dean for Student Success to seek ongoing approval. Once approval has been granted, a revised agreement is drawn up and signed.
19. In the event of continuing approval not being granted or the arrangement coming to a close otherwise, the University will work with the Articulation Partner or Guaranteed Progression Partner to establish interim arrangements as appropriate to enable commitments to students to be fulfilled.

Part B: Management of Articulation, and Progression Arrangements

Introduction

20. Part A of this document described the processes for the approval of articulation and guaranteed progression arrangements. Part B describes the processes for the management of these arrangements.

Framework for Quality Assurance

21. In accordance with the UK Quality Code, the University of Cumbria is responsible for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name.

22. The University's awards will be delivered and managed by Associate Partners in accordance with University's Academic Regulations and the University's Academic Processes and Procedures. The University may approve bespoke arrangements to manage awards granted by more than one degree awarding body.

23. The University's awards will be delivered and managed by Accredited Partners in accordance with Academic Regulations, Processes and Procedures approved by the University.

24. University-wide oversight of ACP is maintained through the **Collaborative Provision Sub-Committee (CPSC)**. CPSC is a sub-committee of Student Success and Quality Assurance Committee which reports to Academic Board. The Terms of Reference and Purpose are detailed in the University's Committee Handbook.

25. The University's Relationship Management Framework articulates how the University manages each partnership arrangement. This framework details senior management link and an academic partnership link for each partnership. These roles help maintain consistency of approach with individual partners, provide a strategic connection between the partnership and the University, and also ensure effective communication of collaborative provision activity at different levels of the University.

26. The Head of Academic Partnerships and Skills maintains oversight for the development of academic collaborative provision activity in line with University strategy, working with the Finance Manager to monitor partnership performance against any agreed targets.

27. University Academic Links are responsible for the day to day management of partnership arrangements at programme level. The Head of Department is responsible for identifying an academic to act in the capacity of Academic Link.

28. The Collaborative Provision Manager in AQD is responsible for managing the quality assurance arrangements for the University's Academic Collaborative Provision (ACP).

29. The University's Student and Academic Administration Service (SAAS) provide University administrative support to Academic Links in managing programmes.

Management of Associate Partnerships

30. Students admitted to a programme leading to a University award must satisfy the University's entry requirements and are admitted in accordance with the University's standard processes.
31. Students applying to a University programme through an Articulation or Progression arrangement apply to the University. The CP Team in AQD will work with the University Admissions Team to ensure partners have sufficient information to enable them to accurately inform students about the processes for applying.
32. Once a student has articulated onto a University of Cumbria programme or has accepted onto a University of Cumbria programme through a guaranteed progression arrangement, they shall be registered and enrolled as a University of Cumbria student.
33. The CP Team in AQD will work with relevant University academics to undertake periodic auditing of articulation and progression arrangements. This shall encompass the following:
 - To review whether any changes made to respective programmes would require a review of the mapping underpinning the arrangement.
 - To analyse student data available in terms of student performance of students entering a programmes under an articulation arrangement compared with the rest of the cohort.
 - To ensure the accuracy of partners' public information about their arrangement with the University.
34. Action plans shall be developed as appropriate to manage to outcomes of such audit work. Where the performance of articulating students is identified as a concern, the CP Team in AQD shall liaise with the relevant academic team to investigate further to determine steps required to manage this.
35. The findings of this auditing shall be reported into CPSC.