



**Policy on
Collaborative and Transnational Education Provision**

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1 Introduction

At an institutional level, the University of Limerick ('the University', or 'UL') has set strategic goals that highlight increased flexibility of learning, student mobility, research excellence, internationalisation, and civic engagement. This policy and its related procedures support these goals by setting out how the University will collaborate and engage with its partners in all of these contexts. In particular, it will support the University's vision for the importance of building educational partnerships with international universities, to reduce the carbon footprint of its global activities and promote sustainable development. These partnerships include developing dual and joint degrees and offering UL programmes wholly offshore (see 1.3 below).

1.1 Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out a university-wide approach to collaborative and transnational arrangements in line with the strategic plan and related faculty and divisional strategies. The policy outlines the principles that the University will use to evaluate proposals for partnerships with institutions. The variety of models and complexity of collaborations will continue to expand, and it is anticipated that this will present new challenges for the University. Collaborations carry risk and can give rise to high human, financial and legal costs. It is incumbent on UL to assess the risks involved and manage the process appropriately. The policy and its associated procedures provide direction to staff in evaluating complex proposals, drafting agreements, and developing new and existing collaborations, thereby encouraging consistency, transparency, and good practice across UL.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 *To whom does this policy apply?*

This policy applies to all staff engaged in developing and providing collaborative programmes with educational providers or other organisations.

1.2.2 *In what situation does this policy apply?*

This policy applies to all partnerships involving the provision of **a programme or part of a programme of study** or the granting of a University of Limerick award, as defined in 1.3 below.

Arrangements involving undergraduate cooperative placement, teaching practice or clinical placement are excluded from this policy.

Linked provision and apprenticeships are particular forms of collaborative provision. Policies and procedures for these types of provision while referring to this policy are described in the Linked Provider Framework and the Policy for Apprenticeship Provision.

1.2.3 *Who is responsible for ensuring that the policy (and any associated procedure) is implemented and monitored?*

The Provost and Deputy President is responsible for ensuring that this policy and associated procedures are implemented and monitored.

The following have specific responsibility in the implementation of the policy:

- Collaboration Proposer
- Deans of Faculty
- Vice President Global and Community Engagement
- Members of the Global Partnerships Working Group

- Members of the Standing Panel on Collaborations
- Designated university signatory

1.3 Definitions

Collaborative Provision, as defined by [QQI](#), means two or more providers being involved by formal agreement in provision of a programme of higher education and training. For the purposes of this policy, the University extends this definition to the provision of a programme or part of a programme of education or the granting of a University of Limerick award.

Transnational Education, as defined by [QQI](#), is the provision or partial provision of a programme of education in one country by a provider which is based in another country. This includes online provision to students normally resident outside of the Republic of Ireland.

Franchise Arrangement: As the awarding institution, the University of Limerick authorises the whole or part of one of its own validated/accredited programmes for delivery by a partner institution.

Articulation Arrangement: The admission of a student into a UL programme with advanced standing based on credits earned at a partner institution. This is sometimes also known as a Credit Transfer Arrangement. Unlike a Joint, Multiple, Double or Dual Degree, the student is not registered at UL while completing academic credits at the partner institution.

Academic Oversight Model: UL accredits an academic programme developed and delivered in whole or part by a partner institution. Programmes under this model are subject to the quality assurance procedures of University of Limerick and students are registered as University of Limerick students.

Degree: Any degree, diploma or other certificate issued by a competent authority (degree awarding body) attesting the successful completion of a higher education programme

Joint Programme: An integrated curriculum coordinated and offered jointly by different higher education institutions and leading to a double, multiple, or joint degree.

Joint Degree: A single degree awarded by higher education institutions offering the joint programme and nationally acknowledged as the recognised award of the joint programme.

Multiple Degree: Separate degrees awarded by higher education institutions offering the joint programme attesting to the successful completion of the programme.

Double Degree: Two degrees awarded by higher education institutions offering the joint programme attesting to the successful completion the programme.

Dual Degree: Two degrees awarded individually attesting to the successful completion of two separate curricula with potential overlap and efficiencies in course taking. If more than one institution is involved, each institution is primarily responsible for its own degree.

Articulation/Transfer: An articulation arrangement is a process that enables students who satisfy academic criteria on one programme to be admitted with advanced standing to a subsequent stage of a programme of a different degree-awarding body. These arrangements are subject to a formal agreement between the parties.

Student Exchange: The University of Limerick and a partner institution agree to allow students to study a specified part of their programme at a host institution, normally over one semester.

Arrangements normally involve credit accumulation and transfer so that credit achieved at the host institution is transferred to contribute to the programme and award at the home institution.

Overseas Campus: An entity that is owned, at least in part, by UL; operated in the name of UL; and provides an entire academic programme, substantially on site, leading to a degree awarded by UL.

Joint Education Institution (JEI): A JEI is an institution set up in China and approved by the Ministry of Education in China. UL has representation on the Institute Board and on committees with oversight of academic affairs and quality. A specific number of programmes are approved.

Co-Supervision: Where a student is co-supervised by a supervisor in another institution. The student may be registered at UL or another institution. The arrangement is formally agreed at an institutional level.

2 Legal and Statutory Context

This policy fulfils the University's requirements to have documented quality assurance arrangements for relationships with other parties as outlined in [sections 10.1 and 10.2](#) of the Statutory Core Guidelines for Quality Assurance and in the [Topic Specific Guidelines for Providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes](#).

In writing this policy and its associated procedures, due regard has also been given to:

- [Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners](#) (2023)
- [Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision](#)
- QQI's [Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards](#)
- [Statutory provisions for the International Education Mark \(IEM\)](#) and related QQI policy
- [European Approach to the Quality Assurance of Joint Awards](#)
- [Guidelines for the establishment of joint PhD degree award or double/ dual PhD degree award with IUA Universities](#)

3 Policy

The University of Limerick ('the University') will consider entering into a collaborative agreement with third parties on a case-by-case basis. The University will enter into such a relationship only if the relationship aligns to the strategic aims and objectives of the University and does not present an undue risk to students, staff or the reputation and operations of the University.

3.1 Principles

When considering proposals, the University will use the following principles to decide whether to enter into a partnership.

3.1.1 Strategic Considerations

Collaborations with education institutions, industry, community, or sectoral bodies shall be with those that demonstrate:

- Alignment with University of Limerick strategic aims and objectives
- The academic and/or professional standing to successfully contribute to or deliver programmes of study to appropriate academic and professional standards.
- The financial standing to sustain such programmes of study.
- Adequate infrastructure facilities and resources to support such programmes of study, including appropriate staffing.

- The legal standing to enter into a contract to deliver such programmes of study.

Where relevant, institution-level partnerships will be with peer institutions that are ranked similarly or higher than UL globally.

For prospective partners whose international institutional ranking is not uniformly high, the partner institution will normally be internationally recognised in the discipline(s) concerned.

Where the University is engaging in new territories, each prospective partner institution shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and a justification made to support the proposed partnership.

3.1.2 Academic Considerations

The academic standards and, where relevant, awards of the proposed collaborative partner shall be equivalent with the University's awards and consistent with the Irish [National Framework of Qualifications](#) level descriptors.

In the case of joint, double, or multiple awards, at least 30% and no more than 70% of the taught credits, where relevant in the programme of study, will be offered by UL.

Articulation to the University's programmes is limited to those programmes specified in the relevant agreement.

Mapping of learning outcomes, curricula and grade equivalences will be undertaken by relevant academic staff and shall be approved at the relevant departmental or hosting departmental meeting.

Where professional and statutory body accreditation requirements apply to a University programme, confirmation shall be required as to whether these requirements apply to students entering under the partnership. This shall be clearly stated in any agreement or documentation provided to students.

Unless explicitly delegated to another body in the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA), programmes of study developed on behalf of or in collaboration with a partner (where the award associated with the programme is a University of Limerick award) shall be subject to the programme approval, annual monitoring and periodic review policies and procedures of the University.

Those delivering programmes of study shall be appropriately qualified according to the norms of the University. Continuing professional development shall be made available to all staff delivering programmes, whether they be employed by the University or otherwise¹.

3.1.3 Student Experience Considerations

The quality of the student experience and learning opportunities on proposed collaborative programmes shall be equivalent to those of students on enrolled programmes offered solely by the University.

The facilities provided for students in a proposed partner institution shall meet a minimum standard and will be verified by UL.

¹ This will be linked to the outcomes of the Regional Enterprise-Academic Partnership (REAP) project and the National Framework for Professional Development (National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning).

Consideration shall be given to the potential HREDI barriers that student groups may face when availing of a partnership opportunity.

The MoA between the University and the partner shall outline the specific arrangements to be put in place for the protection of enrolled learners in the event of the termination of a collaborative arrangement between the University and the partner.

The MoA shall outline the specific arrangements and responsibilities for the maintenance, sharing, transfer and retention of applicant and student records and the management of applications, enrolment, academic fees, registration, progression, and final award.

3.1.4 Operational Considerations

Proposals for partnerships shall provide a rationale for establishing the partnership; the proposal will include a business case outlining the initial setup costs and continuing operational costs of maintaining the partnership.

Proposals shall demonstrate consultation with all relevant internal stakeholders so that the practical implications of implementing and operating the partnership can be fully costed and documented in an implementation plan. *Stakeholders may include;*

- *Academic Registry*
- *Programme Department(s)/School(s)*
- *Course Directors' Committee*
- *UL Global*
- *Management Committee*
- *Faculty Board*
- *Doctoral College*
- *Graduate and Professional Studies*
- *Information Technology Division*
- *Legal Services Division*
- *Data Protection Officer*

Each partnership shall have a nominated owner, who shall be responsible for providing an annual report on the arrangement. This report may be incorporated into existing reporting structures, such as the Annual Quality Report (AQR) and annual programme review reports.

It is recognised that the University may respond to commercial tenders or tenders for funding which may require or result in the creation of a partnership arrangement and that these processes may have aggressive response timelines. Notwithstanding this, proposers are required submit an application for initial approval as set out in Appendix 1 below. The agreement (MOA) developed in these cases may be the contract for services as provided within the tender and contract negotiations process.

3.1.5 Governance Considerations

Figure 1 below sets out the phases, matters for consideration and governance processes for collaborative partnerships. All partnerships are considered initially by the Standing Panel on Collaborations and are then subject to the approval of Executive Committee (risk and resourcing) and Academic Council (academic matters).

All partnerships shall be subject to a due diligence process that confirms alignment with the values and strategic aims of the University and highlights areas of risk.

All partnerships shall comply with institutional and national quality assurance protocols.

Recognising the different complexities of partnerships, an appropriate documentation and approval pathway shall be determined based on the partnership level.

The partnership level shall be determined based on the level of risk associated with the partnership. Risk will be determined based on the risk management framework of the university. The University shall publish information relating to its collaborative provision.

Collaborative partnerships shall be an item on Faculty and other relevant risk registers.

3.1.5.1 Agreement in principle from partner institutions

Prior to development of a partnership, the proposer shall provide a letter of confirmation that the partner institution has agreed to the development of the proposal. This letter should come from the Registrar/Vice President of Academic Affairs office or equivalent. This may take the form of an MOU. (See 3.2.1)

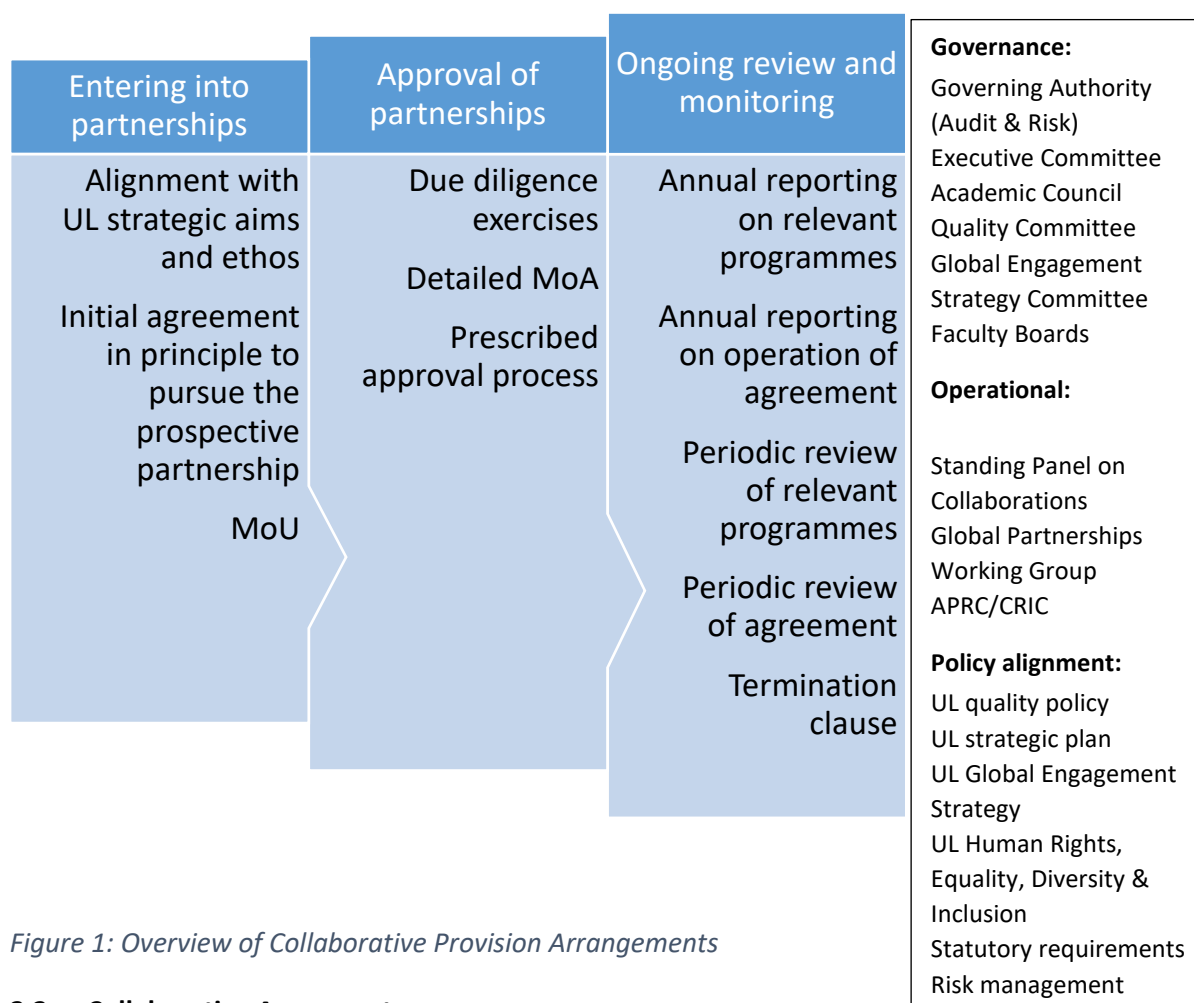


Figure 1: Overview of Collaborative Provision Arrangements

3.2 Collaborative Agreements

Each collaborative arrangement shall have a written and legally binding agreement setting out the objectives of the partnership and the rights and obligations of the parties and signed by the

authorised representatives of all institutions involved in the partnership. Written agreements serve to clarify the arrangements to all those involved and to provide assurance that the partner agrees to fulfil its responsibilities and obligations.

Agreements can be programme-specific, faculty-specific, or University-wide. Formal agreements shall be signed in accordance with the [University Contract Signing Policy](#) before the activity to which they relate commences.

The existence of an agreement is not in itself a guarantee that the terms and conditions are being met effectively. All agreements should describe the mechanisms that are in place at UL to monitor the collaborative and transnational arrangements in order to ensure that the terms, conditions and expectations that were originally approved or anticipated have been realised.

3.2.1 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

An MoU is a non-legally binding document that expresses an intention to cooperate with another organisation which may lead to a formal agreement which will require approval as set out in Appendix 1 below in 3.1.5.3. An MoU is not required for every partnership; however, some organisations may require the MOU to provide a structure through which the detail of deeper relationships can be pursued.

For domestic relationships, the sponsoring staff member will discuss the potential MOU with relevant stakeholders and present any proposal to the Faculty Management Committee. If agreed to proceed the template MOU should be completed and submitted to the Provost and Deputy President for signing.

In the case of international partnerships, the sponsoring staff member will discuss potential MoUs with the relevant stakeholders and present any proposal to the Global Partnerships Working Group for further consideration. If agreed to proceed, the International Partnerships team will draft the MoU, which will be signed by the Vice President Global & Community Engagement.

All MOUs will be forwarded to the Standing Panel on Collaborations for noting and recording.

3.2.2 Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)

Arising from the MOU, a later commitment to a specific activity is the subject of a separate written, legally binding Memorandum of Agreement (a MoA). The University Solicitor is responsible for overseeing the drafting and quality assurance of agreement templates which will apply where UL is the lead institution. The Overview of Collaboration Types matrix, is a guide to the typical arrangements for specific collaboration types.

With the exception of Articulation Agreements, the MoA and related schedules shall contain the following:

- A definition on the roles, responsibilities, and obligations of each party
- A definition of any powers delegated to each party.
- Academic framework
- Details of the academic record management and maintenance agreement with Academic Registry
 - Details of the contact roles in UL and in the partner institution
 - Detail of programme and module information
 - Arrangements for obtaining, submitting, and converting grades from the partner institution.

- Arrangements for the presentation of results at examination boards
- Arrangements for the presentation of students to Academic Council for award
- Arrangements for the arrival and scheduling of students from the partner institution
- Arrangements for assessment when assessment is not undertaken at UL.
- Quality assurance of programmes of study governed by the agreement.
- Details of any insurance and indemnity, where relevant
- Financial arrangements
- Statement on the complaints policy to be used for students.
- Statement on the grievance policy to be used for staff, where appropriate
- Statement on the appointment and activities of external examiners
- Statement on the ownership of copyright and intellectual property
- Statement requiring compliance with statutory obligations, including public sector duty on equality and human rights, data protection, GDPR, freedom of information, immigration, health & safety, and environmental law.
- Statement on the use of the heraldic crest and the University logo and name for promotional purposes
- Statement on and draft of design and content of award parchments arising from the collaboration, referencing UL's guidelines for parchments (get reference)
- Statement on the location of conferring of awards.
- Specification of the law applicable to the agreement and the legal jurisdiction under which disputes would be resolved.
- Provision to withdraw from or to suspend the agreement.
- Termination and mediation clauses and the financial arrangements that would follow, including scope for compensation.
- Specification of the residual obligation of both parties to students on termination to allow students to complete their studies unaffected.
- Procedure for amending the agreement or agreeing additional appendices.
- Date and agreed mechanism and timeline for review of the agreement.

3.2.3 *Articulation Agreements*

Articulation agreements are those that describe an agreed admission route for students studying at another institution, either in Ireland or internationally. These agreements may allow applicants to be admitted to any year or semester of a programme of study.

Academic staff from the relevant programme(s) of study shall be required to review the curriculum offered at the partner institution to ensure that those arriving at the University have the pre-requisite knowledge, skills and competences required for the programme they are being admitted to.

Once the applicant is admitted, they are a student at the University of Limerick and are subject to the regulations of the programme and of the University.

The standard University articulation agreement template should be used.

3.2.4 *Drafting of Agreements*

Agreements shall be drafted using the appropriate template where UL is the lead institution. This may be amended by mutual agreement between parties. The exception is the student exchange agreement template. Due to the nature of this kind of agreement, there is a degree of flexibility to

make adjustments to accommodate the partner's requirements. Where UL is not the lead institution, the draft agreement must be considered and edited to ensure that the UL requirements outlined in 3.2.2 are included.

3.2.5 Adjustments to Agreements

It may be necessary to adjust a current collaborative agreement to acknowledge a change in the terms or details of the partnership. This shall be actioned by writing an addendum, which must be signed by both parties and attached to the existing agreement.

The Standing Panel on Collaborations is responsible for authorising addendums. Extensions to an agreement are applicable only in exceptional circumstances. Due to the changing nature of agreement templates, the information provided in the agreement should be updated as required to ensure it remains compliant, current and relevant.

3.2.6 Authorised Signatures

Before the partnership becomes operational, two original versions of the final agreement shall be signed by one authorised signatory from each institution.

Where the first language of the partner institution is not English, two copies are drafted and signed in English and two in the official language of the partner.

The authorised signatory from the University perspective will be determined in accordance with the UL Contract Signing Policy.

Agreements may only be signed if accompanied by a contract assessment form as set out in the Contract Signing Policy.

3.2.7 Maintenance of Records and Agreements

A central database of all MoAs shall be held; the database will note the partner, duration and renewal date.

Records related to partnerships shall be stored and maintained in accordance with the University's [Records Management & Retention Policy](#) and [Signing Authority Policy](#).

3.2.8 Monitoring and Review

The performance of collaborative arrangements shall be monitored on an annual basis through various existing mechanisms relevant to the arrangement, such as:

- Student feedback
- Staff/partner feedback
- Annual programme monitoring
- Risk register monitoring.
- Review of partnerships by the Global Partnership Working Group
- Any other mechanism deemed appropriate to the arrangement.

The periodic review of a collaborative agreement should commence one year in advance of the expiry date of an agreement. See Appendix 2 for information on the procedures for managing and monitoring collaborations.

3.3 Levels of Collaboration

In the context of formulating a policy on collaborations, the University recognises that a 'one size fits all' approach is neither sufficient nor appropriate. Different forms of collaboration will require an approval pathway that is tailored and proportionate to the breadth of impact of the collaboration and of the risks involved. The table to follow categorises collaborations into three levels and provides details on each.

| Level | | Partnership description | Initial Institutional Approval to Proceed | Due Diligence |
|---------|--|--|---|---|
| Level 1 | Major institutional-level commitment | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transnational Provision/Overseas Campus 2. Joint or multiple programmes, including PhD. | <p>Executive Committee & Academic Council</p> <p>Standing Panel on Collaborations</p> | <p>ADI</p> <p>HR</p> <p>Finance</p> <p>AVPAA/Quality Support Unit</p> <p>GPS (where relevant)</p> <p>Academic Registry</p> <p>Legal</p> <p>Student Affairs</p> <p>Library/ITD/VLE</p> |
| Level 2 | Academic programmes subject to an agreement | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Articulation progression; Agreements and abridged entry arrangements leading to a UL credit or award. 2. Progression collaborations such as 3+1+1 3. Development of UL awards for external bodies | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Standing Panel on Collaborations 2. Standing Panel on Collaborations 3. Standing Panel on Collaborations | <p>Faculty Dean</p> <p>Assistant Dean International</p> <p>Heads of School/Dept</p> <p>IED</p> <p>Quality</p> <p>HR</p> <p>Finance</p> <p>GPS</p> <p>Academic Registry</p> |
| Level 3 | Smaller collaborations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student and staff exchanges (EU, non-EU and reciprocal). 2. Study Abroad direct enrolment agreements and other short-term programmes that are non-credit bearing. 3. Co-supervision | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ADI 2. ADI 3. Doctoral College | <p>Academic Registry</p> |

3.4 Collaborations and New Programme Development

Where the approval of a collaboration also involves the development of a new programme of study, the programme development and approval process shall not commence until the partnership has been approved through Stage 1, Initial Approval by the Standing Panel on Collaborations.

3.5 Programmes Being Delivered under Franchise Arrangements

Where the University has approved the delivery of the whole or part of one of its programmes at a partner institution, the partner institution is not permitted to use this arrangement to establish further collaborations with other third-party institutions to deliver that programme.

3.6 Extending Partner Approval to New Arrangements

The University recognises that the initial development of a collaborative arrangement may lead to further and deeper relationships with the University. Where a new collaboration or collaboration type is proposed with an existing partner, the proposal shall undergo a tailored due diligence process as agreed with the Standing Panel on Collaborations.

3.7 Transnational Education

The delivery of UL accredited programmes outside of the jurisdiction should be considered with care. This includes programmes delivered online to students outside of the State. Special consideration should be given to:

1. The legal right of UL to operate within that country. Complying with the legal, regulatory and government agency requirements of Ireland and the host country.
2. The official recognition of UL awards within the country of delivery or study.
3. The risks to embarking on transnational provision. A university delegation should complete a validation visit to the host institution to complete a desk-based followed by an in-person on the ground due diligence assessment of all aspects of the proposed TNE venture.
4. Defining who will teach on the programme and how the credentials and ongoing professional development of those staff are evaluated and monitored.
5. Defining the governance arrangements to allow for visibility, accountability and clear lines of communication by both parties.
6. Defining the quality assurance arrangements for the programme(s) being delivered.
7. Mapping the proposed TNE to how it could contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly 4,5,8,10 and 11.
8. Fulfilling the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) and CSR expectations around the TNE venture by assessing the human rights and social impacts in the host country, across the entire supply chain.
9. Defining what rights and obligations to services at University of Limerick (e.g. library, learning resources, VLE, if any, are being offered to students registered on the programme(s)
10. Ensuring that learning materials provided to or shared with a host institution are compliant with intellectual property and export control legislation and the principles of knowledge security.
11. Ensuring that provisions for staff and fee payments are compliant with legislation relating to taxation and employment law.

4 Procedures

See appendices 1 and 2.

5 Related Documentation

1. Linked Provider Framework
2. Collaborations Proposal Form (Levels 1, 2 & 3)
3. Periodic Review and Renewal of Collaboration Agreement
4. Policy and Procedures for the Provision of Apprenticeship Programmes

6 Document Control

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
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| Date | 5 th June 2024 |
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7 Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed in 2027.

8 Appendix 1: Procedures for the Approval of Collaborative Partnerships

8.1 Initial Consideration

Proposals for establishing a collaborative partnership can come from a number of channels within the University. Proposals shall have the approval of the Dean of Faculty or Director of Division prior to submitting for initial approval from the Standing Panel on Collaborations (SPC). Those considering establishing partnerships should consult Appendix 4, Overview of Collaboration Types, as a guide to the matters that should be considered.)

8.2 Global Partnerships Working Group (GPWG)

The Global Partnerships Working Group is a working group of the Global Engagement Strategy Committee. Its remit to identify and oversee the assessment, development and performance monitoring of global partnerships, to include:

- transfer and progression agreements for students joining UL programmes from international partners
- partner-supported distance learning
- joint and double degrees
- international credit mobility (including partnerships supported by Erasmus+)
- joint Erasmus+ projects under KA1-3
- joint summer schools and other short-cycle student and staff mobility
- bilateral and multilateral institutional partnerships

Where the partnership involves an award with academic credits delivered by two or more institutions, such arrangements will be recommended for approval by the Standing Panel on Collaborations.

8.3 Standing Panel on Collaborations (SPC)

The SPC is a sub-committee of the Quality Committee. It evaluates proposals for new collaborations developed in accordance with this policy. It oversees the due diligence process and ensures that the proposed partnership aligns with the strategic priorities of the University. It recommends approval of partnership agreements to the relevant signing authority as set out in the University Contract Signing Policy.

The SPC will meet at least six times per annum and when necessary. If required to do so, the SPC can consider issues and proposals by electronic means.

8.3.1 Membership of the SPC

The membership of the SPC is set out in its terms of reference and is representative of the academic and professional services units.

8.4 Approval Pathway for Collaborative Partnership

As outlined in Figure 2 below, there are five phases to the process of approving a collaborative partnership:

1. Development of the initial idea or proposal within the faculty/division
2. Initial approval of the Global Strategy Working Group (where relevant) and SPC to proceed to further development

3. Due diligence
4. Evaluation of the final agreement and recommendation from SPC
5. Signing

Figure 2 below outlines an ***indicative*** timeframe for collaboration approval. The development and approval timeline of a collaborative arrangement is dependent upon the complexity of the arrangement being proposed.

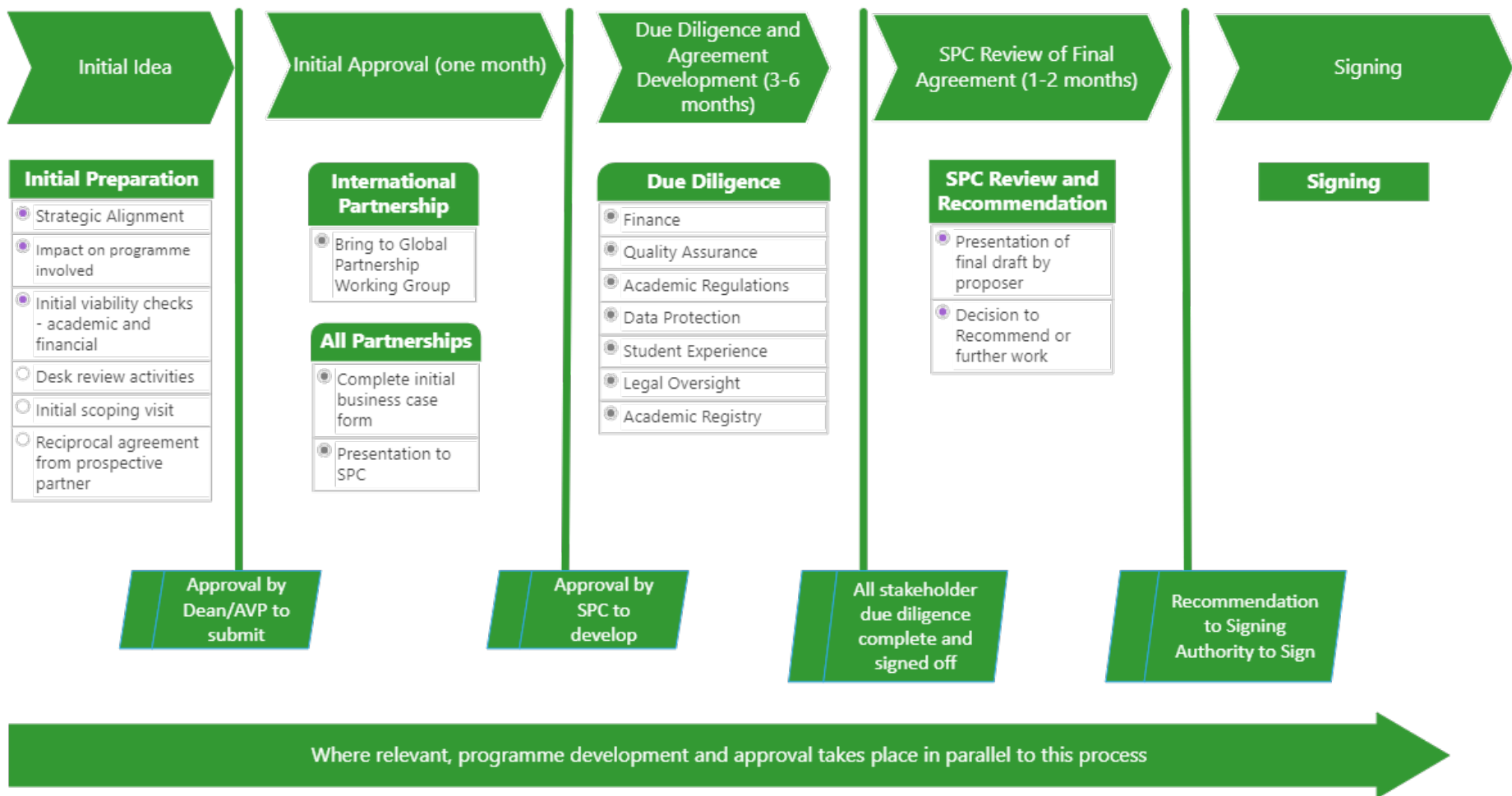


Figure 2: Summary of MOA Approval Process and Stages

8.4.1 *Initial Approval*

Once agreed by the proposing faculty or unit (end of phase 1), the proposal is referred to:

- a) the Global Partnership Working Group in the case of international partnerships or
- b) directly to the SPC.

In the case of (a), the GPWG will review the strategic nature of the partnership and will recommend approval or not to the SPC approval to proceed to phase 3 – Due Diligence of development of the partnership.

In cases as set out in 8.4.2.2, the GPWG will complete the due diligence requirements in advance of making its recommendation to the SPC.

In the case of (b) the SPC will consider the proposal for strategic development and will approve or not development of the proposal to phase 3 – Due Diligence.

The specific requirements of the due diligence process informed by 8.4.2 below will be determined by the SPC based on the context of the proposal. This shall be communicated to the proposer.

8.4.2 *Due Diligence and Evaluation*

Due diligence is the undertaking of enquiries about a prospective collaborative or transnational arrangement to inform a decision on whether or not to proceed with a proposed partnership or to inform the terms of a Memorandum of Agreement.

Appropriate and proportionate due diligence procedures are determined for each proposed arrangement. These are conducted at the outset of the collaboration and then periodically to check the capacity of the partner to continue to fulfil its designated role in the arrangement.

The form of approval required for different types of collaboration is set out in the *Overview of Collaborative Types matrix*.

8.4.2.1 *Standard Approval*

Where the collaborative proposal is approved in principle by the SPC, certain types of collaborative partnership require significant due diligence checks to further investigate the benefits that could derive from the collaboration.

8.4.2.2 *Essential Approval*

In other types of collaborative partnership, such as student progression partnerships (3+2 and 1+1+1) and student exchanges, the information provided in the collaboration's proposal form may be considered to be satisfactory in terms of providing oversight of the academic, legal and governance status of the intended collaborative partner.

Further quality, legal, financial, student experience and general due diligence checks are coordinated by the International Partnerships Manager in UL Global in the case of international partnerships and QSU in the case of domestic partnerships, who will work with the proposer and various stakeholders from across UL and with the collaborative partner to collate the information and assess the risk. Due diligence checks are carried out within the parameters of the UL Risk Register (<https://ulsites.ul.ie/corporatesecretary/risk-management>).

A due diligence checklist includes the following items.

| Item | Type of Collaboration |
|---|--|
| Organisational reputation | All |
| University ranking and reputation | Dual/Joint/Franchise/Exchange |
| Country location considerations, visas, and safety | All transnational |
| Governance and contractual relationships | All excluding Articulation |
| Quality – internal and external policies | All excluding Articulation |
| Finance – copies of audited accounts may be required | All excluding Articulation |
| Equality, Diversity & Human Rights strategy/record | All excluding Articulation |
| Export Controls and Knowledge Security | All excluding articulation |
| Infrastructure – copies of organisational charts required | All excluding Articulation |
| References – information about other academic collaborations required | All excluding Articulation |
| Disputes, complaints, and litigation information required | All |
| Data sharing | All |
| Insurance – details of insurance to cover occupational liability or third-party liability | All |
| Physical resources (sites, buildings) | Where delivery is not at UL |
| Reference checks from existing partner universities | Dual/Joint/Franchise |
| Learning resources (both general and specific resources applicable to the type of provision and subject area) | Where delivery is not at UL |
| Country Ministry of Education approval processes/ Quality Assurance agency approval process/due diligence | China If UL is delivering programmes overseas |

The due diligence findings will be presented to the SPC to be formally considered and for approval to be sought to proceed to the next stage of the approval process and recommendation for signing by the relevant signing authority. Similarly, due diligence checks must be carried out for collaborative partnerships that are scheduled for review to inform the decision making of the faculty and the SPC in relation to renewal or closure.

For some partnerships, further attention will be required to assess the impact on resources throughout the lifecycle of the collaborative partnership.

9 Appendix 2: Procedures for Managing and Monitoring Collaborations

All collaborative provision arrangements require regular monitoring to ensure that they are achieving their stated aims, which are articulated in the Memorandum of Agreement.

Where a partnership is inextricably linked with a programme of study, the partnership shall be evaluated in accordance with the Academic Programme Review Policy.

Where the University has a number of arrangements with the same organisation, it may be more appropriate to review these as a group.

9.1 Role of the Global Partnerships Working Group

The Global Partnerships Working Group is responsible for making recommendations to the SPC in relation to the renewal or termination of partnership agreements in the case of international partnerships.

9.2 Role of the Standing Panel on Collaborations

The Standing Panel on Collaborations is responsible for ensuring that the monitoring and review cycle of collaborations is managed by Faculties and by the GPWG.

The periodic review and renewal of agreements requires a full report to be submitted to the faculty and the Standing Panel on Collaborations. See the Periodic Review and Renewal of Agreements Form.

9.3 Role of the Course Director

Where grades are to be recorded at UL, the Course Director or nominee is responsible for obtaining, converting and submitting grades from the partner institution in line with UL grading deadlines. Any alternative arrangements must be agreed and included in the agreement.

The Course Director or nominee will ensure that students' grades, credits and final awards align with UL progression decisions and award regulations.

The Course Director or nominee will confirm whether or not students will be presented to a University of Limerick exam board. If students are to be presented, the Course Director or nominee will specify the date of the exam board.

The Course Director or nominee will ensure that students are presented to Academic Council for their awards to be confirmed. The agreement will state whether or not the students will be conferred in UL.

In cases where students are registered in the partner institution but intend to come to UL the following semester, the Course Director or nominee will notify Academic Registry of this each semester.

The Course Director or nominee will notify Academic Registry in early April (for the Autumn timetable) or late September (for the Spring timetable) if the students are to be included on the central class timetable.

The Course Director or nominee will be responsible for communicating student enrolment, grading and other relevant information between Academic Registry and the partner institution. Where Academic Registry is to liaise directly with the partner institution, the contact details of the designated person in the partner institution will be listed in the agreement.

Where students on the UL campus share modules with those taught off campus (including in another country), the Course Director or nominee will ensure that examination material is provided at the other centre and that arrangements are included in the MoA to administer examinations in line with UL examination requirements.

The Course Director or nominee will provide Academic Registry with a copy of the proposed agreement before it is signed and will maintain a central repository of all agreements.