

Code of practice for academic partnerships

Academic year 2025/26

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose and scope

1. This *Code* covers processes for establishing, managing, and overseeing academic partnership arrangements for all undergraduate, taught postgraduate, and postgraduate research programmes that lead to an award of the University of Surrey. It ensures that these partnerships are securely and effectively implemented in alignment with the University's values¹ and its reputation for academic excellence.
2. The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) defines an academic partnership as “An arrangement between two or more organisations to deliver aspects of teaching, learning, assessment and student support. It refers to collaborative arrangements involving students and/or awards, which include those involving guaranteed progression and sharing of services”² (QAA, 2018).
3. The University is responsible for upholding the academic quality and standards of all credit and awards granted. Maintaining high-quality education is essential to ensure the University's registration with the Office for Students. Academic partnerships with other institutions can offer valuable opportunities but could also introduce potential risks to the learning experience.
4. This *Code of practice* outlines the processes and procedures that effectively manage these academic partnerships while mitigating risks, maintaining academic standards, and enhancing quality. These processes allow the University to secure the benefits of academic partnerships, such as internationalising the curriculum, fostering research collaborations in both the UK and abroad, attracting international students, providing study exchange opportunities, widening access to higher education, and enhancing the University's global reputation.
5. This *Code* provides guidance on all types of academic partnership types. However, the main focus is on academic partnership types D and E (see section 2), where the high level of academic risk requires rigorous quality assurance processes.

1.2. Strategy and principles

6. The University of Surrey enters academic partnership agreements based upon alignment with its vision, goals, and the University's strategies for student experience, education, and international engagement in line with the University's overall Strategic Plan. These are assured through the Executive Board and its delegated sub-committees (see section 3).
7. The University will always retain responsibility for the awards issued in its name. Any awards that are issued in the name of the University of Surrey are assessed in accordance with the University of Surrey's academic regulations and *Codes of practice*³.

1.3. Register of partnerships

8. The University of Surrey requires that records of the academic partnership arrangements should be maintained and kept up to date with any changes following review or evaluation of the partnership or other relevant changes, such as financial arrangements or changes of key personnel. The following departments are responsible for their maintenance:
 - UK academic partnerships: records are maintained by the Academic Quality Services (AQS);

¹ <https://www.surrey.ac.uk/working-at-surrey/who-we-are>.

² [Partnerships](#)

³ See University of Surrey's Quality Framework: <http://www.surrey.ac.uk/quality-framework>

- International academic partnerships: records are maintained by the International Engagement Office (IEO).

The Doctoral College is responsible for liaising with both AQS and IEO teams to ensure that the published records of research degree partnerships are accurate.

9. AQS is responsible for the generalised publication of the University's academic partnerships on the University website (<https://www.surrey.ac.uk/academic-quality-services>).

2. Types of Academic Partnerships

10. Degree-awarding bodies can be involved with different types of academic partnerships. For clarity, these have been grouped under five categories associated by their approaches to governance, set-up, management, monitoring, and review. This list should be used as guidance only. Any other types of academic partnership arrangements will be considered and advised upon on a case-by-case basis.

2.1. Type A: Partnerships that do not directly involve the award of credit

11. **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** – A statement of intent to work with another organisation, or organisations, which is not legally binding. Other types of non-legally binding statements of intent include Memorandum of Agreement, Intention to Collaborate, Statement of Agreement, Statement of Intent, etc.
12. **Progression** – An agreement between institutions which allows seamless student admission to the awarding institution's programme of study after completion of an agreed programme at a partner institution. This arrangement does not involve recognition for advanced standing or credit transfer. Entry onto a programme at the awarding institution may be subject to other required admission criteria, such as English language competency, etc.
13. **Professional Accreditation or Recognition** – Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)⁴ may accredit or endorse (recognise) a programme of study, where this programme meets particular PSRB requirements.

2.2. Type B: Partnership involving student work/clinical placement

14. **Placement** – An opportunity for students to undertake a placement period in a professional work/clinical setting that is an integral part of an academic programme, and which counts towards the final degree award classification/grading.
15. **Professional Training Year (PTY)** – Normally, a year-long work-based, study exchange or blended (50/50) placement/study period, which is an integral part of an academic programme, but does not count towards the final degree award classification/grading.

2.3. Type C: Partnerships where students spend a study period at partner institutions: either prior to or during their degree programme

16. **Articulation** – An arrangement whereby a provision delivered by a partner is formally recognised for the purposes of advanced standing towards another degree-awarding body's

⁴ Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) are a diverse group of professional and employer bodies, regulators, and those with statutory authority over a profession or group of professionals. PSRBs engage with higher education as regulators. They provide membership services and promote the interests of people working in professions, accredit or endorse courses that meet professional standards, provide a route through to the professions, or are recognised by employers. (HESA 2013)

award, usually via credit accumulation and transfer. Entry onto a programme remains subject to the agreed admission criteria.

17. **Study Abroad** – This is a one-way agreement permitting a student from one institution to study specified module(s) at another institution enabling credit acquirement. At Surrey, this type of arrangement is used to specifically refer to inbound students from other institutions where their study will receive a transcript of credits achieved for use at their registered institution.
18. **Student Exchange** – A reciprocal arrangement between two institutions that send and host an agreed number of students at their institutions. This could involve study, traineeship placements, or summer schools. The University may recognise credits achieved in the exchange as part of an award.
19. **Work-based Learning** – A range of work-based learning that may involve delivering full programmes, individual modules, or elements of programmes for a specific employer, or otherwise using the workplace as a site of learning (for example, Degree Apprenticeships).
20. **Split or Off-Site** – An arrangement where students are registered at one degree-awarding body but carry out all or part of their studies or research at a partner institution. This arrangement may involve one student or a cohort of students. The registered degree-awarding body grants the award.

2.4. Type D: Partnerships that require substantial collaborative efforts with an external partner to develop and deliver a degree programme, resulting in one or more simultaneous awards.

21. **Dual Award/Dual Degree** – An arrangement where two separate awards are granted for the same programme by two degree-awarding bodies who have jointly delivered the programme. These arrangements should involve cohorts rather than individual students. *(At PhD level, this is referred to as a 'cotutelle' when it relates to an arrangement for an individual student, which, as a much lighter touch arrangement, is organised by the DC and possibly the IEO).*
22. **Flying Faculty** – An arrangement where a programme is delivered in a location away from the main campus by staff from the degree-awarding body alongside local staff, if required.
23. **Franchise** – A partner organisation that delivers, and sometimes assesses part of, or all of, the programme on behalf of the degree-awarding body.
24. **Validation** – Programmes designed, developed, and delivered by the partner are recognised and awarded by the institution with degree awarding powers (the awarding body).
25. **Joint Degree** – An arrangement where two or more degree-awarding bodies jointly design and deliver a programme that leads to students receiving one award on behalf of the degree awarding bodies involved. In some instances where, due to regulatory circumstances in a specific country of one of the partners, both partners award a degree, it is called a Double award (or multiple awards if more than two are involved).
26. **Joint Delivery** – Two or more institutions deliver a programme that results in one award.
27. **Online Programme Management (OPM)** – An arrangement where a third-party company handles a significant portion of the online degree programme development, potentially delivery and/or elements of student services, whilst working alongside the degree-awarding body.

2.5. Type E: Partnerships where the degree award is issued by the awarding institution whilst the degree programme is designed and/or delivered at third-party institutions or at internationally located campuses

28. **Accredited** – A highly trusted form of franchising, where an independent institution is accredited to design and deliver programmes, which are awarded by another degree-awarding body. Accredited institutions carry out the quality assurance processes under the oversight of the degree-awarding body, following the main institution's regulations. (Associated partners are similar, but these partnerships have a higher level of scrutiny on the programme design and delivery).
29. **International branch campus** – A degree-awarding body's campus that is located away from the main campus outside of the UK.

3. Governance of Academic Partnerships

3.1. The University of Surrey's Scheme of Delegation

30. The [University's Scheme of Delegation](#)⁵ determines the final authority level(s) for key decisions made within and on behalf of the University. There are several references to the governance of partnerships, as summarised below in Table 1.
31. Delegated by Council, Senate is the senior academic body responsible for the oversight of the University's academic matters. As such, any partnership that affects the University's granting of credits and awards is overseen by Senate and its subcommittees, in particular the University Education Committee (UEC), in accordance with Senate governance. However, in the cases of branch campuses and accredited institutions, the responsibility is not delegated and remains with Council, based on the associated risk level.
32. Executive Board subcommittees, the Partnership and Reputation Committee (PRC)⁶ for International, and Executive Board Academic Leadership Board (EBALG) for UK, provide the Vice-Chancellor assurances regarding the University's reputational interests in entering and continuing partnerships with other institutions.⁷ The risk level then dictates the signatory requirement.

Table 1. Governance of partnerships: final authority

Scheme of Delegation section	Key decisions	Final authority
Section 3, Governance, Management and Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting up of associated/accredited institutions. (Note that Section 3 of the University's Scheme of Delegation also covers approvals relating to subsidiaries, operating units and assets & leases, all of which could potentially govern the setting up of branch campuses) 	Council on the recommendation of Senate
Section 6, Academic and Student Matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approving and terminating teaching and research partnerships 	Senate

⁵ [Governance | University of Surrey](https://www.surrey.ac.uk/about/governance) https://www.surrey.ac.uk/about/governance

⁶ PRC, whilst ultimately responsible, may delegate its powers to its sub-committees to manage its work (such as the Global Committee)

⁷ [Our Partners and Reputation policy statement](#)

Section 8, International and UK Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of academic partnerships (post academic due diligence), with high and medium risk on the recommendation of PRC (for international partnerships) or UEC (for UK partnerships) Research collaborative arrangements including termination of collaboration, with high and medium risk on the recommendation of PRC 	<p>High risk – Vice-Chancellor sitting as Executive Board</p> <p>Medium risk – Provost</p> <p>Low risk (international) – Vice-President Global</p> <p>(UK) – Pro Vice-Chancellor Education</p>
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33. The following flow diagram identifies the “Accountable” EB member at various stages of the setup, approval and delivery of Transnational Education (TNE).



3.2. Roles and responsibilities for supporting partnerships

34. Different types of partnerships may require support and advice provided by various operational areas of the University, including those in the following table:

Role	Responsibilities
Academic Quality Service (AQS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing information and advice on all teaching and research academic partnerships to ensure their full alignment with the University Quality Framework (Regulations, student procedures, <i>Codes of practice</i>) Managing records for UK-based academic partnerships Publishing a compiled list of academic partnerships on the University website Specifically, for types D and E: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> supporting the completion of relevant documentation (including approval forms) ensuring that all relevant documentation and forms are submitted to the appropriate governance stage (committee, etc.) liaising with colleagues in IEO, Doctoral College, and Governance as appropriate arranging events and panels, where required
Doctoral college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead academic support for all types of postgraduate research academic partnerships (Home and International) Supporting effectiveness of quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms throughout the entire lifecycle of postgraduate research academic partnerships from their establishment to termination/teach-out
International Engagement Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing information and advice on international <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOUs all study exchange and study abroad opportunities articulations all international partnerships Liaising with international partner institutions and maintaining relationships with key contacts Supporting agreement negotiations with international partner institutions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaising with ADEs, ADIs, and Faculty International Committees to support the development and progress of partnerships
Programme team/School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiating new proposals and completing associated documentation for consideration at the Faculty/University levels • Seeking relevant support and guidance with the processes • Managing programme/School-level academic partnerships • Implementing quality assurance and enhancement processes for their programme/School-level academic partnerships throughout the entire lifecycle of these arrangements
Faculty-based Committees (including Faculty Education Committee, Faculty International Committee, Faculty Research Degree Committee, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking a lead role in the development of Faculty academic partnership initiatives • Liaising with relevant internal and external stakeholders • Considering and approving relevant proposals and associated documentation at the Faculty level, prior to submitting to the senior University committees • Reviewing existing academic partnerships within their Faculty
University professional services/Chief Student Officer Directorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities include providing support mechanisms with the relevant student record system developments
Legal team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking University insurances • Preparing University contractual documentation

4. Establishing New Academic Partnerships

35. It is essential that Surrey's objectives for entering into a new academic partnership are determined at the initial stage of the process. These should be made clear and ultimately form part of the agreement with the partner (QAA 24a & OfS 24).

4.1. Partnership types A-C: advice, support and setting up processes

36. Table 3 below summarises where to get support and guidance around the development of A-C types of partnerships:

Type A: Partnerships that do not directly involve the award of credit		
MoUs	Support and Guidance comes from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International: IEO and DC. • Home (UK): AQS and DC. • Where the proposal involves academic credit, for example credit transfer and transfer of marks, etc. please contact the Head of Academic Policy and Governance. 	
Progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEO: provides support with international partnerships. • Admissions Office: provides support with UK-based progression partnerships. 	
Accreditation and recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice and support provided by the Head of Academic Policy and Governance (Regulations and policies) and the Academic Quality Services (forms, processes, etc.). 	mailto:regulations@surrey.ac.uk
Type B: Partnerships involving student work or clinical placement		

Placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Quality Services provide support to programme teams in the design of programmes as per the <i>Code of practice for programme lifecycle processes</i>. Clinical placement partnerships are managed in the Faculty of Health and Human Sciences (Head of Health & Medical Partnerships) and covered by the <i>Code of practice for continuous enhancement review</i>. 	See also: Code of practice for professional training , Code of practice for programme lifecycle processes , and Code of practice for continuous enhancement review
Professional Training Year (PTY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employability and Careers provide advice and support with the delivery of PTY and placements, as per the <i>Code of practice for professional training</i>. 	
Type C: Partnerships where students spend a study period at partner institutions: either prior to or during their degree programme		
Articulation	<p>IEO provides direct support for international articulations and the approval process.</p> <p>AQS supports UK-based articulations and the approval process.</p> <p>As articulations involve credit transfers or exemptions for either whole level(s) of study or a specific module(s), AQS require a record (or access to the records) of the agreements and rationales. Academic Policy and Governance (regulations@surrey.ac.uk) will be able to provide further advice on the recognition of prior credit/learning processes. The minimum and maximum thresholds for credit exemption are determined in A1 Regulations for taught programmes (see Recognition of prior credit/learning sections).</p> <p>The Admissions Committee will confirm any standard entry criteria that are required for the programmes involved.</p>	regulations@surrey.ac.uk A1 Regulations for taught programmes Quality Support: qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk
Study Abroad & Student Exchange	<p>The IEO supports this type of partnership, which the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education subsequently approves.</p> <p>Opportunities for students to study abroad during their programme registration should be considered during programme validation events. AQS can provide advice and support with any queries regarding study exchange requirements, including recognising credit achieved during study exchange.</p>	Code of practice for programme lifecycle processes A1 Regulations for taught programmes (see student study exchange sections)
Split or Off-Site	<p>Advice and support is provided by the Head of Academic Policy and Governance, AQS and the Doctoral College (in case of postgraduate research programmes) regarding quality assurance and quality control of these partnerships.</p> <p>This partnership requires approval by the Faculty Education Committee as well as PRC's approval for international locations.</p>	regulations@surrey.ac.uk qualitysupport@surrey.ac.uk
MoU or Agreement/ Cooperation involving credit transfer and marks	<p>Memorandum of Agreement/Cooperation involving credit transfer and associated marks as determined in <i>A1 Regulations for taught programmes</i> (see section Contribution of marks from previous study towards a University final award).</p>	A1 Regulations for taught programmes

4.2. Partnerships D and E

37. At the University level, prior to detailed academic due diligence, partnership type E requires that the Vice-Chancellor, sitting as Executive Board (EB), would seek Council's approval in principle, as the level of risk is potentially very high. EB will produce detailed reports in line with the University Strategy 2041 and its strategic priorities and plans to outline the opportunities, risks, and mitigations surrounding the proposals. EB may set up a Project Group to manage the arrangement of these types of partnerships.
38. In regard to quality assurance, enhancement, and due diligence process for both types D and E partnerships, including Dual Award/Dual Degree, Validation, Franchise, etc., advice is provided by the Head of Academic Policy and Governance (regarding regulations, assessment processes, credits, and awards). Further support is provided by AQS (for taught programmes) and IEO (international partnerships) and jointly AQS and the Doctoral College (in case of postgraduate research programmes).

Academic Due Diligence: Consideration of the proposal at the School/Faculty level

39. For School or Faculty-based partnerships, the first part of academic due diligence starts locally. Working with the support of the relevant area (see Table 3 above), Schools/Faculties are guided regarding the viability and potential risks, and are supported to complete initial proposal forms, where relevant.
40. Proposals for new partnerships should be reviewed accordingly at different levels of the School/Faculty academic governance structure, including the Faculty International Engagement Committee for international partnerships. However, the Faculty Education Committee (FEC) should discuss the finalised academic partnership proposal as part of the academic due diligence due to the granting of awards. The signatures on the forms indicate the appropriate level of approval, including by the Chair of FEC.
41. Where proposals involve more than one Faculty, each Faculty should approve their own level of involvement and responsibility. The IEO should prepare an overview of the partnership proposal for international partnerships, UK partnerships likewise by AQS.

Academic Due Diligence: Consideration of the proposal at the University level

42. The formal due diligence processes of the academic partnership proposals take place at the University level, facilitated by the Academic Quality Services (AQS) for taught provision and research partnerships, the latter with support from the Doctoral College. Where relevant for type E partnerships (Branch campuses, Accredited Institutions), any Project Group set-up has a significant role in managing this process. In complex partnership arrangements, such as those warranting a project group, the academic approvals sit within a wider commercial partnership process and will be timed accordingly.
43. The overview of the process can be found in Appendix A: *Partnership Responsibility, Support, and Approval Flow Diagrams*. The flow diagram in the appendix demonstrates the differences between taught and research-degree partnerships. There are three distinct stages in the academic partnership approval process, which are outlined below with additional guidance on each stage:
 - Initial proposal approval
 - Academic approval
 - Agreement.

44. All proposed academic partnerships are assessed for their risk level. This will determine the level of scrutiny and the approval process to mitigate the identified risks. The risks are assessed in two ways:

- Strategic, Reputational and Commercial Risk: determined by PRC for International partnerships, and EBALG for UK partnerships.
- Academic Risk: determined by AQS.

Academic Due Diligence: Initial proposal approval stage

45. Once the initial proposal is approved at the Faculty level, all relevant documentation, including the initial proposal forms, should be submitted for approval to PRC (or Global Committee in the first instance) for international or EBALG for UK. Where the proposal is designated as high-risk (either by PRC/EBALG as above, or by AQS re: academic risk), it would also need to be considered and approved by EB. Following the approval of the initial proposal by the University, it will proceed to the academic approval stage.
46. The initial preparation of associated contracts should be commended at this point, which is the responsibility of the proposing Faculty or project team. In cases of cross-Faculty proposals, one of the Faculties should be identified as a lead proposer. IEO and AQS will provide advice and support and should be kept aware of the progress of the drawing up of the draft contract(s).

Academic Due Diligence: Academic approval stage

47. At this stage, all additional forms should be completed, with help and support from AQS, IEO, and/or Doctoral College. Once completed and signed off by the various bodies the table below, identifies the next steps according to the level of risk (these should be read in conjunction with the process diagrams in Appendix A of this *Code of practice*).

<p>Low risk: All documentation is checked by AQS, before a final check is made at PRC(Int)/EBALG(UK) to complete the approval process.</p>
<p>Medium Risk: These are then reviewed by the Director of Academic Performance Quality and Governance to determine if approval events are needed. This decision is dependent upon the mitigations in place to reduce the risks associated, the type of partnership, and the partner's location.</p> <p>If no approval event is required, all completed forms are checked by AQS, before a final check is made at PRC(Int.)/EBALG(UK) to complete the approval process.</p>
<p>High-Risk Partnership Events (& for Medium risks deemed to require an event): A University partnership approval panel reviews the proposal and the risks and planned mitigations that are in place, including consideration of the partner's facilities and resources. Partnership events may require site visits as well as a formal approval event.</p> <p>For Type E accredited partnerships and branch campuses, there might be multiple meetings to address the considerations and risks, and these proceedings will feed into the final approval event (the project team along with AQS will organise these if one was formed to manage the partnership). There may also need to be phased approaches to the mitigations of risk, which are designed to reduce support as the partnership/branch campus matures.</p> <p>The outcomes from approval events are similar to validation and periodic reviews where it may reject proposals, set conditions, or make recommendations. The conditions would have to be met before the proposal progresses.</p>

Once conditions have been met, proposals may be approved by UEC, unless it is felt that the risk remains high after mitigations are put in place. In these cases, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education, as Chair of UEC, may request the Senate to determine if the partnership should be approved. If approved, a final check is made at PRC to complete the approval process.

Newly validated taught programmes: If the partnership approval involves the delivery of a new programme that requires validation, this would run alongside the partnership approval process. The validation follows the standard processes set out in the *Code of practice for Programme Lifecycle Processes*, with partnership-specific considerations over delivery and quality assurance. Additional programmes added to a partnership would likewise follow standard processes. Accredited Institutions have allowances set out within the code.

The validation event and, where required, the partnership approval event, can be conjoined.

Council's approval of type E partnerships:

Type E partnerships: At the end of the academic approval process, Council would be required to make the final approval. In the case of branch campuses, additional considerations of subsidiaries, operating units, and assets & leases would all need to be approved in conjunction.

Academic Due Diligence: Agreement stage

48. Once the partnership proposal has been granted academic approval by the University (including, where required, approval by Council), the final steps are taken to finalise the contracts. AQS and/or the IEO (liaising with the Doctoral College regarding research partnerships accordingly) will coordinate the final drafting of the contract in liaison with the University Legal team.
49. Once the contract has been finalised and submitted to the Legal team for approval, the draft contract will be passed to the partner for review. Any contract amendments at this stage would need to be approved by both parties before the final contract is ready for sign-off. At the University of Surrey, the authorised signatory is determined by the level of risk (see Table 1).

5. Management, Delivery and Monitoring

50. The management of academic partnerships should follow the University's requirements for high-quality degree awards and student experience, regardless of which partner institution(s) or where the students are studying. It is the responsibility of the Faculty/School to assure these high-quality standards consistently and transparently to ensure parity of provision. The University of Surrey Quality Framework⁸ (academic and student Regulations, *Codes of practice*, etc.) apply to all partnerships resulting in Surrey academic credits and awards. It is expected that the bodies responsible for approving partnerships should also be involved in monitoring the partnerships and supporting Faculty/School staff to do so.
51. All partnerships must follow the University's requirements for published information outlined in Appendix B.

5.1. Management and monitoring of partnership types D and E

52. The management and monitoring of academic management processes such as student admissions and registration processes, student records and monitoring, student representation, and the flow of information between partners should all be clearly defined in the partnership agreement. This agreement should also include a reference to the Academic Partnership Quality Handbook. This document details the processes related to academic quality and the student learning experience for programmes delivered through the academic partnership. The Academic Partnership Quality Handbook also outlines the academic governance procedures for the approval and ongoing management of Surrey-validated programmes, specifies responsibilities for different aspects, and identifies any exceptions to the University of Surrey Quality Framework. The Academic Partnership Quality Handbook is adapted to each individual partnership, with both parties contributing collaboratively on the agreed content.
53. For dual degrees/awards, there should be clarity on the responsibilities in the monitoring processes. These would normally be set out in the formal agreement and satisfy each partner's needs.
54. The requirements for published information for Surrey programmes are also applicable to academic partnerships. Appendix B includes a comprehensive list of considerations relating to published information, either physical or online.
55. The ongoing monitoring of provision processes are covered by the *Code of Practice for continuous enhancement review*⁹.
56. There should be regular and effective means of communication between the academic partners, with designated principal points of contact at the University. These designated individuals are responsible for monitoring the quality assurance processes, reviewing and supporting the enhancement of the student experience, and supporting partner institutions in their development.
57. Where students are taught away from the campus, arrangements should be in place to ensure students will have the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience and clarify how this information is relayed to Surrey. Surrey staff are encouraged to talk to the students directly, and opportunities for this should be built into monitoring plans.

Academic Partnership Management Board

58. Depending upon the size, scope, and complexity of academic partnerships, an Academic Partnership Management Board may be set up to oversee the academic portfolio of provision delivered through the partnership. All considerations of the organisation and management,

⁸ [University Quality Framework](#)

⁹ [University Codes of Practice](#)

quality assurance, and enhancement of students' experience will then be coordinated and monitored through the board meeting as frequently as required, usually each semester.

59. This Board would report into the faculty's Education committee or, if there were more than one faculty involved, to IEO, who would liaise with all faculties concerned. For further information, see *Senate Governance*, which includes terms of reference and membership.

Boards of Examiners and External Examiners

60. The scheduling of Boards of Examiners meetings will need to be coordinated for consideration and conferment of awards and level progression in a timely manner. In accordance with the standard Quality Framework procedures, partnership programmes are required to appoint external examiners (see [Code of practice for external examining](#)). Where provision is the same or broadly the same as existing University provision, normally the same external examiner(s) should be involved in the external verification of the partner provision.

Postgraduate Student Research Partnerships

61. Postgraduate student research will require clarity over the processes followed for supervision monitoring, vivas, the role of external examiners, and Boards of Examiners. In the case of Dual Awards, the regulatory arrangements should be clear to students (and academic & professional services staff involved).

6. Review, Renewal and Termination

6.1. Annual Review Process

62. The University is required to regularly review its academic partnership arrangements to ensure that its stated outcomes, academic standards, and quality are being maintained. Reviews occur annually, periodically, and at interim periods, where appropriate.
63. An annual evaluation of the academic partnerships (taught programmes) is integral to the University's Continuous Enhancement Review process. The [Code of practice for continuous enhancement review](#) describes roles and responsibilities for the review process.
64. At the end of each academic year each faculty with IEO for international partnerships, or AQS for UK partnerships, must also complete a systematic review of the agreements for all academic partnership arrangements, including for postgraduate research, to submit a report to the Academic Partnerships Subcommittee (see paragraph 74 below). The agreements must be reviewed to determine that the records for academic partnerships are still accurate.

6.2. Periodic Review Process

65. Academic partnership agreements are subject to periodic formal reviews as specified in the written agreement.
66. The University reserves the right (during the period specified in the agreement) to conduct appropriate and proportionate interim reviews that may include due diligence enquiries. Major identified risks may also trigger periodic reviews.
67. Faculties need to allow sufficient time to review those that are due for renewal to ensure renewal approval is granted prior to the agreement lapsing. Partnerships that are beyond a single faculty, where a lead faculty has not been identified, will have periodic reviews led by either IEO for international partnerships or AQS for UK partnerships. This should normally be carried out a year in advance of the expiry date.
68. The review provides an opportunity for reflection between the school and the academic partner on the operation, management, and development of the partnership, and to consider the future. The standard considerations for the faculty/school:
 - Is the partnership meeting its goals and objectives?
 - Is there a strong level of commitment from both sides of the partnership?
 - Are there acceptable student outcomes and student satisfaction?
 - Is the quality and reputation of the partner still appropriate?
 - Does the cost-benefit analysis of the partnership justify its continuation?
 - Is the faculty/school happy to stand the associated risks and the required resources to maintain the partnership?
 - Is the partnership agreement up to date and in line with current legislation?

6.3. Renewal Process

69. Following the periodic review of the partnership, if the university/faculty/school wishes to continue the agreement, then the relevant Academic Partnership renewal form needs to be completed and approved as per the same process for new partnerships (as per the typology and

associated risk, which may well have changed since (re)approval). If new or different activities are to be included in the partnership, any due diligence checks relevant to the changes should be undertaken and outlined in the documentation.

70. If approval is granted, a new agreement will be created, negotiated, and signed.

6.4. Termination Process

71. As a result of the University's review mechanisms of its partnership portfolio, a partnership may be ended either:

- During the period of the agreement, in accordance with the conditions, procedures, and notice period defined in the agreement,
- As a result of a significant breach of the terms of the agreement¹⁰, or
- At the end of the agreement when it expires.

72. In line with Surrey's Student Protection Plan¹¹, whenever a partnership agreement is terminated, there must be a satisfactory commitment to protect the interests of all the students involved in the partnership, so that they are able to successfully complete their current studies. These processes should be included in the termination letter.

73. Termination letters are written by the Legal Services team, working with the relevant faculty staff and the relevant supporting team (IEO/AQS). These letters determine all specific matters, including the confirmed date when the partnership will end, the responsibilities of all partners to any remaining students, etc. They are signed at the University senior management level, per the original legal Agreement. The formal letter indicating the termination of the collaboration should then be sent to the partner institution(s). All terminated agreements are reported to the appropriate committee for information, as well as the Partnership Review Committee.

6.5. Academic Partnerships Subcommittee

74. The [Academic Partnerships Subcommittee](#) provides a clear evaluation of the quality assurance and enhancement of the provision (including student experience and outcomes), and the impact of the partnerships. The Subcommittee meets periodically to review the quality and standards of the University's academic partnerships, including new, existing, in-runout, and those terminated in a previous year. The Subcommittee reports to UEC. If concerns arise regarding strategic or operational matters related to an individual partner, the Chair of the Academic Partnerships Subcommittee will engage with the relevant stakeholders to address these issues.

¹⁰ A significant breach may include deviation from other matters detailed in the agreement, such as the prohibited use of the name and logo of the University and/or financial irregularities.

¹¹ [Surrey's Student Protection Plan](#).

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Consultation

This Code has been drafted in consultation with the following teams and individuals:

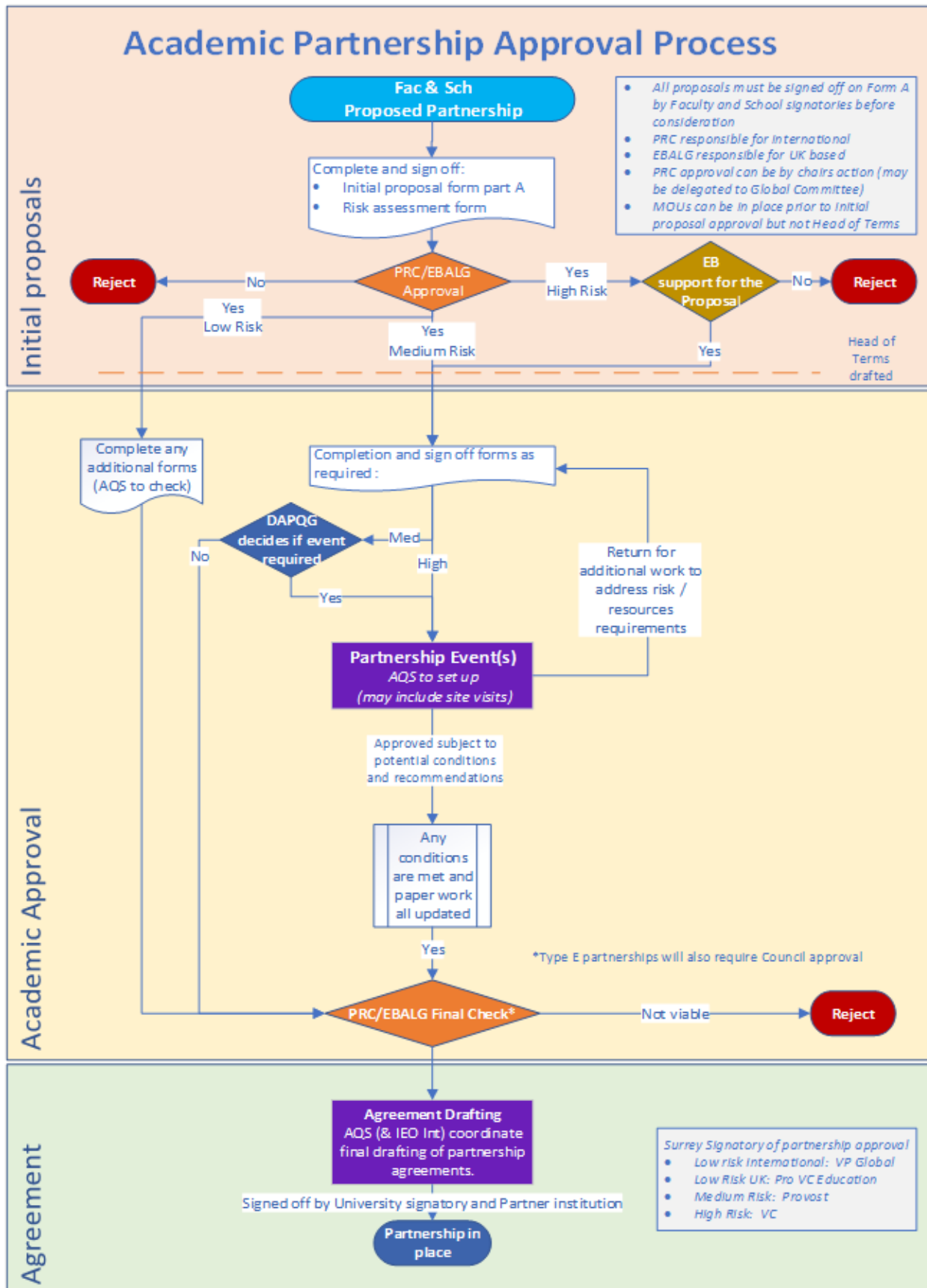
- Directorate of Academic Performance, Quality and Governance: Dr Svetlana Reston, Katherine Finch
- Doctoral College: Prof Lisa Collins, Dr Ruan Elliot
- International Engagement Office: Prof Tao Chen, Elizabeth Lynch, Prof Amelia Hadfield, Dr Tina Schilbach, Tom Windell
- Governance & Risk Assurance: Ros Allen, Sarah Litchfield

Appendices

Appendix A: Partnership Responsibility, Support and Approval Flow Diagrams

Appendix B: Guidance on Published Information

Appendix A: Academic Partnership Responsibility, Support and Approval Flow Diagram



Appendix B: Guidance on Published Information

Degree-awarding bodies should ensure that they have effective control over the accuracy of all public information, publicity, and promotional activity relating to learning opportunities delivered with others which lead to their awards. It is crucial for the University to ensure that its collaborative partners produce information for prospective and current students that is fit for purpose, accessible, and trustworthy.

In this context the term 'published information' refers to all forms of:

- *Publicity/promotional material (hard copy and electronic).*
- *Prospectuses.*
- *Programme specifications.*
- *Module descriptors.*
- *Certificates, transcripts and the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR).*

This section outlines the responsibilities of the University and the collaborative partner with regards to published information, along with information for students.

Responsibility of the collaborative partner to the University and students

It is the responsibility of the collaborative partner to ensure that:

- i. the consistency any of marketing and publicity materials using the University's name is kept up-to-date including the corporate image;*
- ii. marketing and publicity materials do not compromise but enhance the image of the University;*
- iii. the message communicated is clear and consistent and compliant with the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA);*
- iv. all publicity materials accurately represent the nature of the relationship with the University and are a fair and reasonable description of the University and of the approved provision, in accordance with this Code of practice;*
- v. all references to the University and its relationship to the collaborating partners are used only in the context of the activities as set out in the formal written agreement. Unless otherwise specified in the agreement, the University will not permit its name or logo to be used to imply a general endorsement or similar of another party over and above the specific activity stated in the agreement;*
- vi. any use of the University's name or logo does not imply any responsibility on the University's part for the collaborating partner's student visa sponsor license;*
- vii. any information published in the public domain that refers to the relationship with the University must be approved by the University prior to publication;*
- viii. the University's corporate identity is used in the following circumstances in association with the name and/or corporate identity of the collaborating partner, with no part of the identity ever appearing on its own;*
- ix. on/in all publicity materials concerning programmes leading to awards of the*

University of Surrey, whether these are produced in hard copy format or made accessible through the institution's website (for example, the institution's prospectuses; programme brochures; annual reports; display boards);

- x. *social media websites managed by collaborative partners, advertising websites used by a collaborative partner to advertise its services, and recognised and reputable programme listing websites;*
- xi. *on institutional signage;*
- xii. *on transcripts/HEAR of a student's academic career and achievement at the institution;*
- xiii. *the University Branding Guidelines must be adhered to whenever the corporate identity is used. Any proposed use of any element of the corporate identity must be sent to Creative Services (film, photography, design, copywriting, brand) - Marketing and Communications | SurreyNet for approval prior to publication and usage. No other use of the University of Surrey corporate identity may be made by a collaborative partner without the prior written permission of the Creative Design Team within the Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions directorate;*
- xiv. *Associated and Accredited Institutions are to submit all materials in electronic form every July to Academic Quality Services, who will then disseminate this to the appropriate internal departments for approval. Ten University working days must then be allowed for the approval by the University. If information does not comply with the University or CMA, or is found to be misleading in the University's review, the collaborative partner will need to recall and reprint all material immediately;*
- xv. *any and all costs for any published material, printed or electronic, are the responsibility of the collaborative partner;*
- xvi. *all students who are on dual degrees, placements or taking modules are provided with information about their studies and clear statements about their rights and responsibilities as students. Information is provided in pre-placement/de-briefing meetings with the relevant teaching staff;*
- xvii. *the students are provided with appropriate information during the induction period;*
- xviii. *a complaints and grievance procedure are firmly in place for dealing with issues regarding staffing, resources, and other matters surrounding the delivery of a programme leading to an award from the University of Surrey;*
- xix. *students are issued with a transcript, which stipulates the validating University, award title and classification, modules, credits, level, and results.*