

# POLICY AND CODE OF PRACTICE ON COLLABORATIVE EDUCATION PROVISION

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**the place of useful learning**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- I. The Charter of the University permits it to co-operate with other university authorities for 'the conduct of examinations and for such other purposes as the University may from time to time determine'. In addition, it permits students to undertake courses of study, examinations and periods of study at other universities or places of learning. These permissions have enabled the development of collaborative arrangements with appropriate institutions and agencies in the UK and overseas where these support the University's strategic objectives and where there is clear educational benefit to the students and the partners concerned.
- II. In particular, the University's links with overseas institutions and overseas students enrich the cultural life of staff and students, stimulate teaching and research and enhance the international standing of the University.

The policy and procedures outlined here align with [UK Quality Code for Higher Education Chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others](#).

## 2. PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE UNIVERSITY'S COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

- I. The following principles will be applied to all new collaborative provision.
- II. Full account must be taken of the Policy and Procedures outlined in this Code of Practice prior to establishing a collaborative agreement.
- III. Collaborations with institutions in the European Higher Education Area must have regard to Part 1 of the [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(2009\)](#).
- IV. The rationale for all collaborative provision must align with the University's strategy.
- V. Proposals for collaborative education should only be considered in areas which are compatible with the Faculty's academic profile and expertise.
- VI. The Faculty must be able to demonstrate how proposals for collaborative education align with its strategic and academic plans.
- VII. The Faculty must be able to demonstrate how proposed new developments complement rather than compete with existing collaborative and other provision.
- VIII. Any collaboration leading to awards (including joint, double or dual awards) of the University must be academically sound, developed and maintained through rigorous quality assurance and enhancement processes.
- IX. Any collaborative activity must be financially sound.
- X. Risks associated with any collaborative activity must be identified and mitigated wherever possible.
- XI. The University expects that any institution named in a proposal for collaborative activity should:
  - i) be an established educational provider with the legal capacity to enter into such an arrangement and, where relevant, award degrees;

- ii) have a mission and ethos which aligns with the University's vision and strategic aims;
  - iii) have appropriately qualified staff (academic, administrative, technical);
  - iv) have clear academic structures;
  - v) have an appropriate physical infrastructure; and
  - vi) operate on a sound financial basis.
- XII. The University expects due diligence to have taken place with regards to the proposed collaborative partner's infrastructure and facilities. This should be recorded in the annual review report that is sent by the Faculty to the Quality Assurance Committee.**
- XIII. Except where the collaboration relates to the teaching and assessment of a language other than English, the University normally requires the language of instruction and assessment to be English. If there are sound academic reasons why this is not possible, the approval of Senate must be sought for the language of instruction and assessment to be a language other than English. Where the language of instruction and assessment is not English, arrangements must be put in place for the translation, by an independent translator, of a sample of course materials and examination scripts so that these can be appropriately reviewed and monitored by the University and the External Examiners.
- XIV. **The University requires dissertations to be written in English. Exceptionally, the relevant Board of Study may permit submission in a language other than English, in which case a translation of the abstract into English must accompany the thesis ([General and Course Regulations for Graduate and Postgraduate Awards and Degrees 2015- 2016](#)).**
- XV. The University may:
- i) collaborate to offer joint taught courses leading to an award of the University of Strathclyde;
  - ii) collaborate to offer joint taught courses leading to an award of the partner institution(s);
  - iii) collaborate to offer dual degrees jointly taught and leading to individual degree awards of both the University and the partner institution;
  - iv) collaborate to offer joint degrees leading to a single qualification awarded jointly by both, or all, institutions;
  - v) collaborate to offer double degrees jointly developed to deliver a single programme leading to separate qualifications being granted by both, or all, of them;
  - vi) validate taught courses that complement the University's portfolio and are of an appropriate standard;
  - vii) enter into appropriate articulation and twinning arrangements to facilitate student entry to specific degree courses at the University, usually with advanced standing;
  - viii) collaborate to jointly supervise a student on a research programme;
  - ix) collaborate in international student exchanges; and

- x) enter into contract with institutions and agencies to supply administrative and/or academic services to support the University's off-campus programmes. Such contracts may include the use of properly supervised local tutors or counsellors to support delivery.
- xi) collaborate on research activities or enable staff exchanges.

[Note: all of the above are defined more fully in the Glossary at Annex 4.]

- XVI. The University records all collaborative provision on the University's [Database of Collaborative Provision](#).
- XVII. The University does not normally enter into franchising arrangements.

### 3. APPROVAL OF COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES

- i. Senate has oversight and formal responsibility for the approval of collaborative agreements, with the exception of Faculty-specific student exchange and articulation agreements. This Policy and Code of Practice outlines the process and expectations for draft agreements; Senate expects faculties to satisfy themselves that these conditions are met prior to recommendation for final approval by Senate (following an earlier review by Senate Business Committee's Collaborative Provision Agreement Sub-Group).
- ii. The Collaborative Provision Agreement Sub-Group reviews and assesses new collaborative agreements leading to an award or joint award of the University, with the exceptions outlined above. The Sub-Group will report to Senate Business Committee and will undertake due diligence of draft agreements to ensure:
  - Strategic alignment with institutional aims and objectives;
  - Partnerships support the delivery of an *outstanding teaching and student experience*;
  - Adherence to this policy and code of practice as well as the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.
- iii. The Sub-Group aims to provide a cohesive approach to the initiation, approval and ongoing monitoring of collaborative provision, integrating strategic and operational activity across departments/ schools/ faculties and professional services including Special Fee arrangements.

### 4. PROCEDURES FOR ESTABLISHING A COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY

#### a. Sharepoint Site

- i. All collaborative arrangements should be developed, agreed and managed in accordance with this *Policy and Code of Practice*.
- ii. The [Sharepoint site](#) contains useful information and links for international activity including collaborations in research, education and knowledge exchange. The [International Partnerships page](#) provides outline guidance on drawing up collaborative agreements, whether national or international.
- iii. A flow chart is provided on the Sharepoint site for each type of educational collaboration showing the different stages which must be followed in the development of collaborative

education and providing links to checklists, template agreements, and further guidance. For further details regarding the maintenance of the database please refer to section 4h iv.

**Only the Principal or Dean (or their nominee) may sign agreements with proposed collaborative partners. For a list of agreements that can be signed either by the Principal or Dean (or nominees), see Annex 3.**

- iv. Any member of staff who is approached by an institution(s) wishing to undertake collaborative activity with the University (be that at Departmental, Faculty or University level) **must** first discuss this with their Head of Department/School and the Dean/Vice Dean Internationalisation (or equivalent) of the Faculty to ensure the proposal would align with the Faculty strategy and that the proposed partner is appropriate. The consent of the defined responsible person within the Faculty must be obtained before proceeding further with negotiating an agreement.
- v. The University's Database of Collaborative Provision **must** be consulted by the initiating department/ School to establish whether the proposed partner is new to the University or whether a collaborative agreement already exists. An Outline Case for the Proposed Collaboration should be completed to assist with the preliminary consideration of a proposed new partner and a checklist is also available for guidance on what aspects should be considered. The strategic, academic and business case justification for collaboration should be established and information provided (other than in the case of existing collaborative partners) on the legal status of the proposed partner, its operating environment, its financial viability, its mission and values, its management and organisational structure, its academic provision, its overall staffing, and staffing available to the collaborative activity.
- vi. All arrangements for collaborative activity must be finalised in a Collaborative Agreement. A Memorandum of Understanding will not suffice as this is simply a statement of intent to explore possible forms of collaboration.

b. **Signing of collaborative agreements**

- i. A Collaborative Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding should **never** be signed by the member of academic staff negotiating it. **All** Collaborative Agreements must follow the procedures within this policy and be reviewed by the Collaborative Provision Agreement Sub-Group, approved by Senate and signed by the Principal. This workflow is detailed in annex 2.
- ii. *The **only** exceptions to (i) above are:*
  - 1. **Student Exchange Agreements** where exchange opportunities are open **only** to students from a particular Department/School or Faculty may be signed by the **Dean** of the relevant Faculty (not the Head of Department). Student Exchange agreements do not require Senate approval but University-wide agreements and
  - 2. **Articulation Agreements** where progression is determined by faculties based on qualifications, standard courses and standard fees should be signed by the Dean of the relevant Faculty (not the Head of Department). Articulation where progression is automatic, the course is not a standard programme (eg 2+2 arrangements) and special fee arrangements apply should be approved by Senate via the Collaborative Provision Agreement Sub-Group.

- iii. A signed copy of all formal Collaborative Agreements in respect of collaborative provision, service support for off-campus learning, and external and jointly supervised research students should be uploaded onto the Database of Collaborative Provision and **the original must be sent to the [Archives](#). This includes agreements signed by the Dean or Head of Department as well as those approved by Senate.**
- iv. A copy of all **institutional** agreements in respect of international student exchanges should be lodged with the Recruitment and International Office. All local arrangements should be retained in the Faculty Office and a copy to be sent to RIO and Archives.

c. **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

- i. An MOU is not required by the University; however, it may be required by the Partner institution before a more detailed agreement is discussed. The desire to discuss collaborative ventures may be recognised initially through a *Memorandum of Understanding* along the lines set down in the *MOU template*. MOUs with overseas institutions should be discussed with the Recruitment and International Office (RIO), Research & Knowledge Exchange Services (RKES) for appropriate general terms and conditions and Education Enhancement for academic terms and conditions and quality assurance purposes before they are signed. MOUs must **not** be used in place of Collaborative Agreements and would not normally be signed where no further agreement was anticipated.
- ii. An MOU should be signed within the Faculty by the Dean (or nominee), or, in the case of institution-wide agreements, by the Principal (or nominee) and details should be entered in the [Database of Collaborative Provision](#). An MOU cannot commit the University to anything more specific than a willingness to discuss potential collaborative activities, anything more specific requires a Collaborative Agreement which must be approved by Senate via the Collaborative Provision Agreement Sub-Group and signed by the Principal or nominee.
- iii. Copies of the *MOU* signed by the Dean (or nominee) in all the institutions involved should be kept in the relevant Faculty Office and entered on the University's Database of Collaborative Provision by the Faculty Office. **The Faculty Office should send all signed original copies of agreements to [Archives](#).**
- iv. For quality assurance purposes Faculties are responsible for informing the Recruitment and International Office (RIO) of who within the Department/ School or Faculty is responsible for maintaining the MOU's.

d. **Draft Collaborative Agreement**

- i. If the responsible person within the Faculty agrees that the proposed partner is appropriate and that the proposed collaborative activity fits within Faculty strategic and academic plans and with their academic profile and expertise, then consideration can be given to the preparation of a draft Collaborative Agreement. Assistance may be sought from: the Faculty Office for wider faculty information and strategic 'fit'; Research and Knowledge Exchange Services for advice on contractual terms and conditions, partnerships, international issues and exchange; Education Enhancement for quality assurance issues in completing an agreement; and, Senate Business Committee's Collaborative Provision Agreement Sub-Group for Recognition of Prior Learning and Special Fees.
- ii. The University expects due diligence to have taken place with regards to the proposed partner's infrastructure and facilities and for this to be reported on. Where students will

be registered for a University of Strathclyde award, the University will want to be assured that the collaborating body has the capability to provide, and assure the quality of, an appropriate student learning experience. In these cases, information should be provided to demonstrate a relevant track record and experience, appropriate internal procedures (preferably endorsed by external quality assurance review) and adequate facilities for learning support.

- iii. In all cases, Senate expects Faculties to satisfy themselves that:
- i) each partner institution has the legal capacity to enter into the proposed collaborative arrangements and award joint degrees if appropriate (i.e. single parchment in name of all partner institutions);
  - ii) each partner institution is adequately resourced and is currently operating on a sound financial basis;
  - iii) each institution's mission and strategic aims (including the learning and teaching strategy) align with those of the University of Strathclyde;
  - iv) each partner institution complies with the relevant national quality assurance regime;
  - v) due diligence has been carried out with regards to each partner institution's infrastructure and facilities;
  - vi) the standard of each programme is appropriate to the award;
  - vii) there are appropriate internal structures to assure standards and quality in the HE provision;
  - viii) staff in the area of collaboration are appropriately qualified;
  - ix) the administrative structures underpinning effective admission, delivery, assessment and maintenance of student data are appropriate and robust;
  - x) the quality of the student learning experience is comparable to that within the University itself;
  - xi) there are adequate resources to facilitate student learning in an HE environment;
  - xii) each partner institution offers a safe work and study environment;
  - xiii) each partner institution complies with local Health and Safety standards;
  - xiv) each institution operates an environment of equal opportunity for all students and staff, including appropriate provision for those with disabilities.
- iv. The [Checklists](#) on the Sharepoint provide further detailed guidance that should be considered at this stage.
- v. **Discussions with the proposed partner can only proceed once information on the legal and financial standing and educational vision of the proposed partner has been assessed and agreed to be appropriate by the responsible person within the Faculty (Dean/Vice Dean Internationalisation).**
- e. **Liaison with Professional and Statutory Bodies (PSB)**
- i. Departments/ Schools and Faculties should inform any professional, statutory or regulatory body which has approved, recognised or accredited a course of any possible or actual collaborative arrangements that have a direct impact on accreditation and should ensure that the status of the course in respect of PSB accreditation is made clear to prospective students.
- f. **Financial Arrangements**
- ii. Collaborative education must be fully costed (including overheads) and accounted for accurately and fully, and should be of clear benefit to the University. A business case should be prepared including a risk matrix. Adequate safeguards should be in place



against financial or other risks which might compromise academic standards or the quality of learning opportunities. Validation fees for the new session need to be set timeously and these fees **must** be communicated to the partner institution, following the Recruitment and Fee Setting Group.

- iii. Any collaborative agreements with Special Fee arrangements must be reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer and the Collaborative Provision Agreement Sub-Group, prior to approval by the Principal through Senate.

g. **Collaborative Agreements**

- iv. All collaborative programmes that lead to awards (including joint, double or dual awards) of the University **must** be governed by a formal written Collaborative Agreement approved by Senate and signed by the Principal (or nominee) and the responsible person in the collaborating agency / institution.
- v. Where the University of Strathclyde is the Administering Institution, the Faculty Office and academic leader for the programme should draw up a draft agreement based on one or more of the standard University templates that are available on the [Sharepoint site](#). All such agreements must be made subject to the University's *Standard Terms and Conditions* for collaborative provision.
- vi. **Before** a Collaborative Agreement can be signed, it must have been approved by the relevant Faculty and by Senate Business Committee's Collaborative Provision Agreement Sub-Group. The Faculty will require the following paperwork as the basis for the recommendation of a Collaborative Agreement to, and final approval by Senate:
  - i) detailed Course Proposal, as for other University courses;
  - ii) draft Course Regulations, as for other University courses (which should state the name of the Collaborating Body and indicate which parts of the course will be delivered by the Collaborating Body);
  - iii) draft Agreement.
- vii. It is the responsibility of the leading department/ school/ Faculty to ensure that detailed course proposals and regulations are prepared and submitted to the relevant Faculty committees and the Ordinances and Regulations Working Group, ([regulations-amendments@strath.ac.uk](mailto:regulations-amendments@strath.ac.uk)), in accordance with the guidance for Course and Class Approval. New classes must be set up in time for the new session and checked.
- viii. Appropriate consultation should take place with the partner(s) in parallel with Strathclyde's internal approval process. Senate approval is subject to any necessary minor changes that may be agreed subsequently with the partner, the Faculty Office and, where appropriate, the Senior Officer with responsibility for Learning and Teaching (Vice Principal or nominee).
- ix. The leading academic and the Faculty Office are responsible for finalising the proposed Agreement and ensuring that the final Agreement is signed, and that the details are entered on the Database of Collaborative Provision.
- x. The Head(s) of the relevant Department(s)/School(s) is responsible for ensuring that the collaboration proceeds in accordance with the Agreement.
- xi. The Faculty Office is responsible for ensuring that the Agreement is reviewed at the appropriate time. This would normally occur every three years, and six months prior to expiry as detailed in the Collaborative Education Provision Review template, available from the Quality Assurance Committee [Sharepoint site](#).

- xii. Where Strathclyde is not the Administering Institution, the University would expect to sign a comparable agreement prepared by the Administering Institution and approved by Senate.

h. **Database of Collaborative Provision**

- i. The Database of Collaborative Provision should be updated regularly by each Faculty Office in respect of Agreements generated within the Faculty. The data will be made available to the Quality Assurance Committee at the time of the discussion of the Annual Faculty Reports.
- ii. Responsibilities are as follows:
- Each Faculty Office is responsible for updating the database with relevant information on collaborative activities;
  - The Recruitment and International Office is responsible for maintaining the database and for coordinating and managing international and Erasmus Exchange Agreements;
  - Education Enhancement has a quality assurance and monitoring role and provides advice on adherence to the Collaborative Education Provision policy.
- iii. A [Database of Collaborative Provision](#) has been developed. It identifies, as relevant, for each agreement:
- the responsible Faculty
  - the collaborating institution(s)
  - the name(s) of any agent(s)
  - the date of signature of the Memorandum of Understanding where applicable
  - the type of collaboration
  - the date of signature of the Collaborative Agreement
  - when the agreement is valid from
  - when the agreement is valid to
  - the date for next review of the agreement
  - date of termination of the agreement
  - the name of a contact person within the University.
- iv. New Agreements should be added once they have been approved. **The dates of Senate approval and signature should be added following the meeting of Senate which gave the approval.**

## 5. RESPONSIBILITY FOR, AND EQUIVALENCE OF, ACADEMIC STANDARDS

- i. Quality assurance arrangements for collaborative provision must be as rigorous as those for the University's internal provision. As far as possible they should accord with the relevant University policies, procedures and guidelines. In particular:
- i) all collaborative provision should be appropriately located within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) in terms of both level and credit;
  - ii) standards should be benchmarked by reference to the QAA national subject benchmarks (where available) and the use of peer review through the work of the External Examiners and, where relevant, Professional and Statutory Bodies;

- iii) any divergences from UK reference points (e.g. relevant subject benchmark statements, etc.) should be explicitly acknowledged and explained in the agreement;
  - iv) the processes and procedures for course and class approval and review should be integrated with the University's own quality assurance procedures;
  - v) there should be clear processes for student representation and for seeking and responding to the views of students;
  - vi) be reviewed where appropriate by the Collaborative Provision Agreements Sub-Group.
- ii. For all arrangements that lead to awards of the University of Strathclyde, the University of Strathclyde will be the Administering Institution. For collaboration that leads to joint awards, either of the partner institutions may take on this role by agreement with the other partner institutions. The Administering Institution will take the lead in establishing the details of the collaborative activity and will be responsible for the academic standard of the programme and all aspects of programme and student administration, including quality assurance and enhancement.
- iii. In the case of articulation and twinning arrangements, the partner institution will be responsible for the academic standards of provision and the quality of the student learning experience while students are in attendance at that institution. The University of Strathclyde will be responsible for the academic standards of provision and the quality of the student learning experience at Strathclyde and for the standard of the final award.
- iv. Where the University validates a course delivered in whole or in part by a partner institution, it accepts responsibility for the academic standard of the programme and the level and credit-rating within SCQF. The University will approve and monitor the validated programme alongside its own programmes using the appropriate structures and processes.
- v. Where the University agrees to provide joint supervision of research students, supervision arrangements and the standard of awards are the responsibility of the Administering Institution. Any arrangement with another institution/agency to jointly supervise a student on a research programme leading to an award or joint award of the University must be approved by Senate.
- vi. Similarly any arrangement with another institution/agency to register a student as an external research student of the University must be approved by Senate. All such arrangements must be formalised in writing and signed by the appropriate Dean (or nominee) and the responsible person in the external agency.
- vii. Responsibility for assuring due diligence with partner institutions and students for ERASMUS student exchange programmes rests with the relevant Head of Department/School (or nominee) in the first instance. Any resultant bilateral agreements must be signed by the Dean (or nominee) for Faculty- or Department-specific agreements or the Principal (or nominee) where the agreement is institution wide. Arrangements for credit transfer from any such international student exchanges must be agreed with the Head of Department/ School (or nominee) before the exchange takes place.
- viii. Credit transfer will not exceed 25% of the total credit required for an honours degree or 34% for a pass degree without the approval of the appropriate Faculty Academic Committee and Senate. Assessments carried out by the collaborating institution will not count for more than 10% of marks for the purposes of Honours Classification without the approval of the Faculty Board of Study.

## 6. ASSURING ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND THE QUALITY OF COURSES AND AWARDS

### a. Duration, Modification and Review of Agreements

- i. Agreements will be valid in the first instance for an appropriate period as specified in the agreement.
- ii. Agreements may be modified by written agreement of both parties. Modifications must allow students already on a course to complete the course under the terms and conditions they originally enrolled on.

Agreements will be subject to periodic review as specified in the written agreement, to a normal maximum of three yearly intervals, and six months prior to expiry as detailed in the Collaborative Education Provision Review template, available from the Quality Assurance Committee Manager.

### b. Termination of Agreements

- i. Agreements may be terminated by mutual agreement of the University of Strathclyde and the partner institution, provided that an agreed minimum period of notice is given and that the interests of any students already studying under the terms of the agreement are safeguarded.
- ii. In addition, the University of Strathclyde may terminate an agreement for any significant breach of the terms of that agreement, such as:
  - a decline in the standard of the operation or delivery of the course identified by periodic review which the University feels cannot be sufficiently rectified in an appropriate timescale;
  - extensive deviation from the agreed class and/or course proposal;
  - financial viability;
  - deviation from other matters detailed in the agreement (such as the use of the University of Strathclyde name in other contexts, financial irregularities, equality and diversity, and health and safety);
  - risk, by association, and so adverse effect by continued association.
- iii. When a Collaborative Agreement comes to an end or is terminated the interests of any students already studying under the terms of the agreement must be safeguarded.
- iv. Any decision to terminate the Agreement will be subject to satisfactory arrangements being made to enable existing students to complete their course and be assessed for the award for which they registered. Such arrangements will be determined by agreement between the University and the partner institution.
- v. The following should be considered when agreeing an exit strategy and will apply until all students have graduated or otherwise left the course(s) concerned:
  - External Examiners will continue to be appointed and to carry out their duties;
  - Examination Boards will continue to be held;
  - If a Joint Management Committee was formed, it should continue to meet;
  - Annual Monitoring will continue in line with normal procedures;
  - All scheduled reviews will be carried out;

- Any fees payable by either institution will continue to be paid relative to the remaining number of students.
- vi. A decision to withdraw must be communicated promptly to the partner institution and must allow sufficient time for detailed arrangements to be discussed and agreed. Where a decision to terminate is taken voluntarily, by mutual consent, or is, in effect, a decision not to renew, sufficient time should be built in to the notice period to allow all students to complete their course. A date should be agreed for the final intake of students as well as a method of calculating the appropriate fees payable by either institution where these are not already calculated on a per student basis.
- vii. An action plan should be agreed between the Faculty and Partner Institution and Faculty Academic Committee kept informed. Where the withdrawal also involves withdrawal of a course/programme, approval must be sought from Senate.
- viii. Following the completion or departure of the final students, the Faculty should write to the Partner Institution to confirm the termination of the Agreement. The Quality Assurance Committee informed accordingly.
- ix. Where a joint Institute or Centre has been set up in connection with a joint programme, any decision to terminate the agreement will be subject to satisfactory arrangements being made in relation to staff employed by that Institute or Centre. The HR Departments at all the partner institutions should be consulted at an early stage.

c. Policy on Serial Agreements

- i. The written agreements underpinning all collaborative provision should make clear that the partner may only offer approved collaborative provision at a venue other than that specified in the collaborative agreement with the express written permission of the University. This permission will only be granted once the University is convinced that the academic and physical infrastructure at the new venue is suitable.
- ii. Similarly, the partner organisation may only assign the powers delegated to it by the University to a third party with the express written permission of the University.

d. Assessment Requirements

- i. Where a Partner Institution is involved in the assessment of students for Strathclyde awards, it is essential that it understands and follows the University's requirements for the conduct of assessments.
- ii. In the case of twinning arrangements, the University expects that its staff will act as External Examiners for the part of the course offered by the partner institution.

e. External Examining

- i. External Examining procedures for classes and courses offered through collaborative arrangements should be consistent with the University's normal practices as laid down in the [Procedure and Guidelines for External Examiners of Taught Courses](#) and the [Guidance for Examiners for Research Degrees](#) as approved by Senate.
- ii. The awarding institution must retain ultimate responsibility for the appointment, functions and briefing of External Examiners, including responding to External Examiners' reports.

f. Certificates and Transcripts

- i. The University of Strathclyde retains sole authority for the award of certificates and final transcripts relating to its courses delivered through collaborative arrangements.
- ii. The certificate and/or the transcript must record the language of instruction and the language of assessment where this was not English (except where this relates to the study of a foreign language where the principal language of assessment is also the language of study).
- iii. The certificate and/or the transcript should normally record the name and location of any partner organisation engaged in the delivery of the course of study leading to the award.

g. Information for Students

- i. All students registered on a collaborative programme should, as a minimum, have a copy of the programme specification approved by the Awarding Institution.
- ii. It is important that all students understand the nature of their formal relationship with the University, and which partner organisation is responsible for which part of their learning experience. Information available to students and prospective students on a collaborative programme should include information about the appropriate channels for particular concerns, complaints, appeals and discipline.
- iii. The University requires that the information given by the partner organisation or agent to students and prospective students on collaborative programmes be monitored regularly to ensure that it is accurate, complete and up to date.

h. Publicity and Marketing

- i. In order to ensure that there is no opportunity for misunderstanding about the nature and standing of the courses and awards provided under a particular collaborative arrangement, Partner Institutions must agree that the name of the University of Strathclyde shall only be associated with the classes and/or courses detailed in the Collaborative Agreement. The name of the University of Strathclyde should not be associated with the Partner Institution in any other connection.
- ii. All publications pertaining to classes and/or courses which are the subject of Agreement shall be approved by the Faculty nominee prior to publication and use.

The University also operates the following additional types of collaborative provision:

i. Shared Class Arrangements

- i. The University may permit students to take classes at other Higher Education Institutions (HEI) on the recommendation of the relevant Faculty and with the approval of Senate where classes are of an appropriate level and credit weighting. The following basic guidelines have been agreed and may be further refined to suit specific degree regulations.
- ii. Arrangements will be made at Departmental/School level and the Departments/Schools concerned should agree on the classes to be made available to students in the collaborating University. Efforts should be made to develop a convenient timetable for teaching, taking into account the need for staff or students to travel between institutions.

- iii. There must be excellent communication between the Departments/Schools, the students and the Student Business sections or equivalent of the institutions concerned. A Class Co-ordinator (agreed by both Departments) must be appointed for each shared class. The Class Co-ordinator will be responsible for ensuring that both Student Business sections have the appropriate information about each shared class (class title, the course(s) that the class is to be part of, etc.) and for seeing that information on the shared class is made available on web sites, in handbooks, and other public material.
- iv. Where the institutions concerned operate different assessment schemes, assessment in shared classes will conform to the practice in the Department/ School delivering the class and where necessary the final mark will be converted (as agreed by the Departments/ Schools at the outset) into the appropriate format for the student's home institution. The Class Co-ordinator will be responsible for reporting student marks to the student's home institution in the format appropriate to that institution. The student's home institution will be responsible for recording and publishing the class result. Staff teaching shared classes should be invited to attend relevant Boards of Examiners in each HEI.
- v. Students will register at their home institution only. Each Student Business section will determine whether and how to record the external class element of the curriculum for such students on their respective systems. It is expected that students taking shared classes will only require access to the facilities of their home University.
- vi. It is expected that there will be a comparable volume of student exchange so that cross charging will not be necessary. If there is expected to be an imbalance, arrangements for cross-charging should be agreed by the Faculty in advance.

j. External Research Students

- i. A Department/School/Faculty can accept a student to undertake a research degree outwith the University (for example within a company or Government Research Laboratory). Any proposal to register a student as an external research student of the University must be explicitly notified to the Head of Department/ School for approval.
- ii. The arrangements for external research students will as far as possible follow the normal procedures and guidelines for postgraduate research programmes set out in the University's *Policy and Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Programmes* as approved by Senate. In particular and in accordance with these PGR Guidelines:
  - i) two University Supervisors should normally be appointed in addition to any External Supervisor;
  - ii) the University Supervisors should ensure compliance with the University's *Policy and Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Programmes*;
  - iii) the University Supervisors should ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for regular contact between the internal supervisors, the external supervisor or contact point and the student.
- iii. Academic staff are also reminded that the QAA *Code of Practice*, Research Council guidelines and the University's own *Procedures and Guidelines* place considerable emphasis on providing students with research training, appropriate instructional classes and contact with an appropriate research community. Arrangements for external research students must take this into account.
- iv. In order to expedite requests to the Faculty and Senate for approval of external research students, the appropriate form (which can be downloaded from [here](#) must be

completed and signed by the Head of Department/ School, appropriate signatories in the external agency and the relevant Dean (or nominee). Approval requests to Senate must confirm that the appropriate form has been completed with copies returned to Student Experience and Enhancement Services.

k. Joint Supervision Arrangements

- i. Any proposal for a Department/ School or Faculty to collaborate with another institution/agency (University X) to jointly supervise a student on a research programme leading to an award or joint award of the University must be explicitly notified to Senate Business Committee's Collaborative Provision Agreement Sub-Group for approval.
- ii. Proposals to Senate must confirm one of the following:
- iii. ***EITHER* The University of Strathclyde will be the Administering Institution.**  
In this case, University of Strathclyde Procedures, Guidelines and Regulations will apply. Students will be students of the University of Strathclyde: they will be bound by University of Strathclyde Regulations and will be entitled to use the student support services of either University.
- iv. ***OR* The University of X will be the Administering Institution.**  
In this case University of X Procedures, Guidelines and Regulations will apply. Students will be students of the University of X: they will be bound by University of X Regulations and will be entitled to use the student support services of either university. Senate may nevertheless insist that the University of Strathclyde Senate is required to approve the Examining Committee. **This option may only be used where the collaborating institution has powers to award research degrees and where Senate considers it appropriate.**
- v. The arrangements for jointly supervised students will as far as possible follow the normal procedures and guidelines for postgraduate research programmes set out in the University's *Policy and Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Programmes* as approved by Senate.
- vi. In order to expedite requests to the Faculty Board and Senate for approval of jointly supervised students, the appropriate form (which can be downloaded from [here](#)) must be completed and signed by the Head of Department/ School, appropriate signatories in the external agency and the relevant Vice Dean. Approval requests to Senate must confirm that the appropriate form has been completed with copies returned to SEES and the Faculty Office.
- vii. These agreements for external and jointly supervised research students should also be made subject to the University's *Standard Terms and Conditions* for collaborative provision.

l. International Student Exchanges

- i. Arrangements for student exchanges within the EU are normally based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the ECTS Quality standards in respect of documentation, learning agreements for individual students and student transcripts. Departments/ Schools are expected to adopt ECTS or comparable standards for all student exchanges.
- ii. Departments/ Schools and Faculties are expected to monitor international exchange arrangements and are encouraged to comment on student uptake and feedback in the



annual Faculty Annual Reports to the Quality Assurance Committee, Senate and Court. This information should be shared with RIO.

- iii. RIO provides support to international students coming into Strathclyde and has operational oversight of the Database of Collaborative Provision to monitor student movements under institutional exchange schemes. RIO also maintains the Mobility Online database for ERASMUS Exchange students. The faculties are responsible for ensuring the currency of the collaborative agreements on the Database of Collaborative Provision. Quality assurance of current agreements lies with Education Enhancement.
- iv. The Head of International Business in RKES is responsible for contractual matters in respect of European Community Funding for exchange schemes.
- v. Students taking a year out abroad to study a language and culture as a compulsory part of their Strathclyde degree are exceptions to the foregoing arrangements and the responsibility for student support and monitoring in these cases rests with their Department/School and Faculty in the first instance.

m. Dual Degree Awards

- i. Dual awards are subject to the principles and procedures governing other forms of collaborative provision. Further rationale and context on dual awards is described in Annex 1.
- ii. A Faculty can submit a statement of intent to Quality Assurance Committee seeking an 'agreement in principle' for new proposals to ensure early compliance with minimum requirements. Departments/ Schools are encouraged to liaise with the SEES Directorate, specifically Education Enhancement in the first instance and Student Business. RIO should also be consulted in the early developmental stages of a new dual/ joint/ double degree course proposal.

## ANNEX 1 – POLICY FOR THE AWARDING OF DUAL DEGREES

### 7. RATIONALE

- a. Collaboration and partnerships are at the heart of our strategic approach to Education as a leading international technological university. In this context, the ability to engage in partnerships to deliver dual awards (as defined in 2.1 below) is seen as a natural way of extending existing strategic institutional partnerships or a potential component in establishing new ones.
- b. There are many benefits to be achieved through collaborative partnerships which seek to develop and deliver dual awards, including:
  - i. The development of deeper, sustainable relationships with key partners;
  - ii. Academic benefits including curriculum innovation, exchange of staff, and access to new expertise and networks; and
  - iii. Opportunities to increase our reputation and ranking as an international university, through strategic collaborations with partners of good standing aligned with our institutional values.
- c. It is recognised that while there are no standardised ways of defining the curriculum shape of different partnerships, the institution must set out minimum expectations in order to preserve the core characteristics of education at Strathclyde, which is integrated with research and knowledge exchange and which seeks to develop global graduates with impact. Furthermore, the academic integrity of degree programmes must be rigorously assured in order that dual degrees merit the award of the University of Strathclyde.
- d. In order to ensure clarity and consistency across such partnerships, this document outlines the proposed definition, scope and principles upon which agreements for dual awards may be approved.

### 8. PRINCIPLES OF AWARDING DUAL DEGREES

This document sets out the principles against which the University will consider agreements for dual awards.

#### Definitions

- a. Joint - a programme of study developed jointly by two or more institutions leading to a single qualification awarded jointly by both, or all, institutions.
- b. Dual - two separate degree-awarding bodies jointly design a programme of study comprising a joint curriculum, which diverges at a given point leading to two entirely separate qualifications awarded individually by the two degree-awarding bodies.
- c. Double - two or more degree-awarding bodies jointly develop and deliver a single programme (whether taught or research) leading to separate qualifications (and separate certification) being granted by both, or all, of them.

#### *Notes:*

1. 'Equivalent level' is used to advise that the dual degrees conferred are of the same standing (eg SCQF level 11 and FQ-HEA level 7, which both correspond to

postgraduate diploma and masters level study), recognising that titles themselves may differ across regions.

2. The dual award will result in an academic transcript from each institution, where each institution explicitly recognises the award of the other institution, based on an agreed and transparent definition of standards.
3. Dual degree programmes are distinct from joint degree programmes in that joint degree programmes award a single qualification upon completion of the collaborative programme requirements established by two partner institutions.
4. Partner institutions may be UK or international partnerships, however, they must be able to demonstrate strategic alignment, as outlined within the section 1.1 of the Policy and Code of Practice<sup>2</sup> which currently states, “*The Charter of the University permits it to co-operate with other university authorities for ‘the conduct of examinations and for such other purposes as the University may from time to time determine’.* In addition, it permits students to undertake courses of study, examinations and periods of study at other universities or places of learning. These permissions have enabled the development of collaborative arrangements with appropriate institutions and agencies in the UK and overseas where these support the University’s strategic objectives and where there is clear educational benefit to the students and the partners concerned.

### Scope

- a. The Policy and Code of Practice is developed in accordance with the following Expectation within Chapter B10 of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education:

*Degree awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organisations other than the degree awarding body are implemented securely and managed effectively.*

- b. The Policy covers applications for programmes leading to dual award at Masters level only. **Honours level programmes and Integrated Masters programmes are excluded from this policy.** This does not preclude the extension of dual award provision to undergraduate or integrated masters in future, pending amendment of the policy.
- c. The partner institution must be a body which has the authority under its national law to award degrees, including as Dual Awards.
- d. The Policy and Code of Practice outlines the process for approval, renewal and termination of agreements for dual awards.

### Requirements for Dual Awards

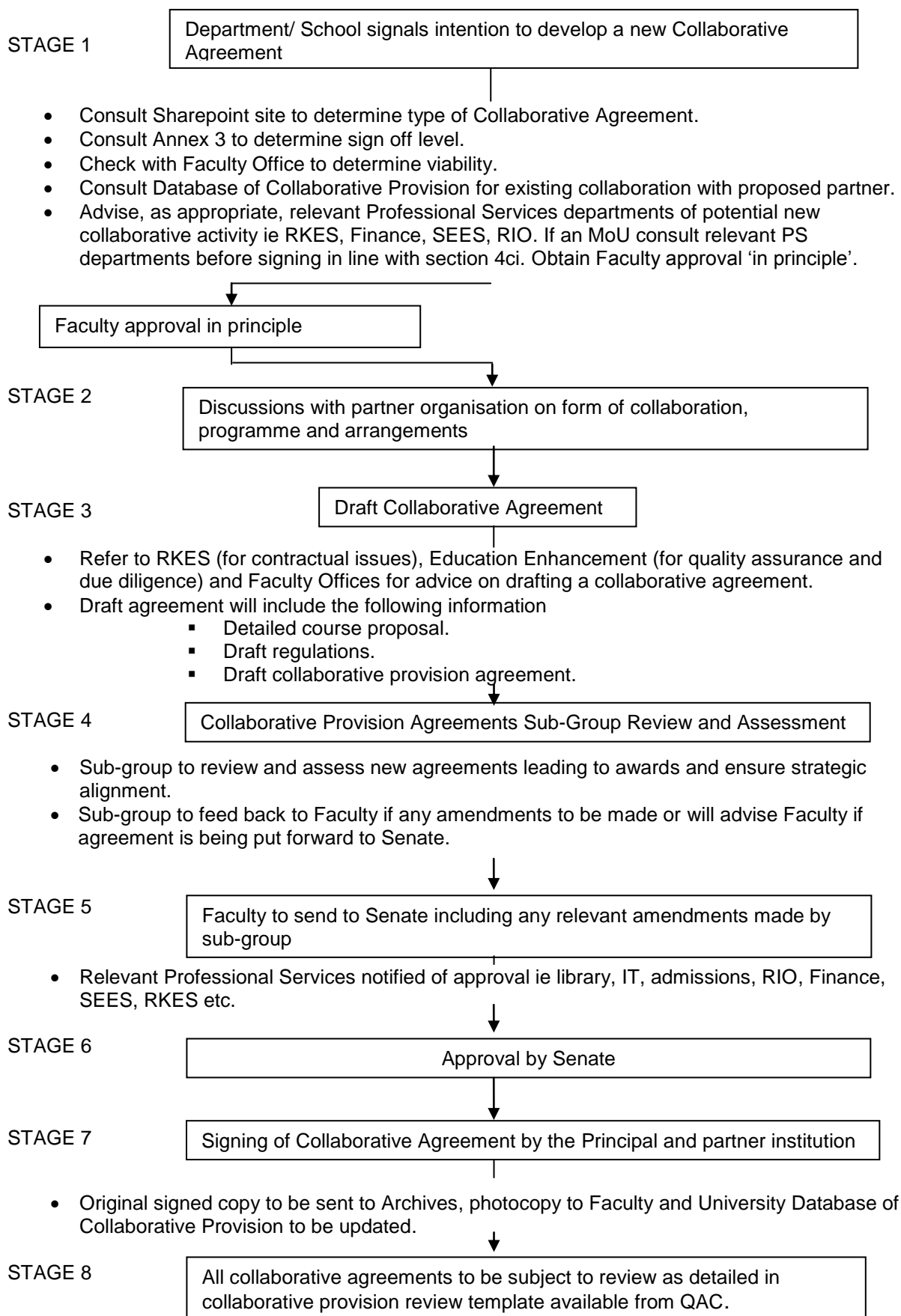
- e. The University will consider applications for programmes leading to dual awards at Masters level where the complete programme of study comprises no fewer than 240 SCQF credits (equivalent to 120 ECTS credits).

- f. The University requires that:
    - i. a minimum of 80 SCQF credits are awarded by the University of Strathclyde;
    - ii. a minimum of 80 SCQF credits are awarded by the partner University.
  - g. Departments/Schools/Faculties will be expected to articulate the rationale for the development of the dual degree in the course proposal, explicitly evidencing:
    - i. The benefits to the University of outlining how the programme will integrate with and enhance all levels of the Strathclyde strategic partnership;
    - ii. The pedagogic benefits of the dual degree programme for the student and, where relevant, the institution;
    - iii. The cultural and social benefits to the broader student experience articulated through the Strathclyde graduate attributes (engaged, enterprising, enquiring, and ethically, socially and globally aware);
    - iv. The expected level of engagement of students with the education experience at Strathclyde.
- 2.9 The rationale (in particular 2.8 III) is required as evidence of additionality to the student experience essential to articulating how the programme merits a dual award. This will be provided in addition to the minimum additional 60 credits.
- 2.10 A minimum duration shall exist for dual awards of no less than 18 months, except in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of Senate.
- 2.11 The proposal will outline mechanisms to ensure the quality of the academic award, consistent with the expectation and indicators within Chapter B10 of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/B10.pdf>

## ANNEX 2 – WORKFLOW OF COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT PROCESS



A Senate Approval Route Record can be found overleaf.

ANNEX 2 continued

Collaborative Agreements: Senate Approval Route Record

Collaborative Agreement	Faculty	Faculty Due Diligence (confirmation)	Details	Date Received by Senate Manager	Circulated to SBC/ Subgroup*	Comments/ Deadline	Approved by Principal/ Senate (Date)	Faculty/RIO Informed	Notify Senate

**DRAFT Process** – for Standard Programme Approval (ie Collaborations where programmes are awarding credit from the University of Strathclyde and require the approval of Senate)

**Stage 1:** Agreement drafted by Faculty, signed off and notified by Academic Committee (*propose implementing cover sheet/form indicating Faculty sign off*)

**Stage 2:** Faculty sends Collaboration Agreement documentation (*and form/cover sheet*) to Senate Manager (*electronically*) who logs details in tracking document (*example above*)

**Stage 3:** Collaboration Agreement discussed with Vice Principal and circulated to Senate Business Committee\* /Collaboration Agreements Subgroup

**Stage 4:** Senate Business Committee endorses Agreement for the approval of Senate.

**Stage 5:** EITHER Agreement signed off by Principal on behalf of Senate via Vice Principal, OR submitted to Senate for Senate business approval.

**Stage 6:** Once approved, Senate Committee Manager informs the Faculty who complete the Database of Collaborative Provision and inform Archives. Senate Committee Manager updates Approval Route Record.

### ANNEX 3 – COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT SIGNATURES

TO BE SIGNED BY THE PRINCIPAL (OR NOMINEE) AND/ OR APPROVED AT SENATE VIA CPA SUB- GROUP	TO BE SIGNED BY THE DEAN (OR NOMINEE)	TO BE SIGNED BY HEAD OF DEPARTMENT/ SCHOOL
University wide student exchange agreements and Special Fee agreements.	Student Exchange agreements open <b>only</b> to students from a particular Department/ School or Faculty.	
Articulation where progression is automatic, non-standard course and special fee arrangements apply.	Articulation where progression is determined by faculties based on qualifications for standard courses and standard fees apply.	
Institution-wide student exchange agreements.	Appropriate arrangements with partner institutions and students for ERASMUS student exchange programmes rests with Heads of Department/ School. Resultant bi-lateral agreements to be signed by the Dean.	Appropriate arrangements with partner institutions and students for ERASMUS student exchange programmes rests with Heads of Department/ School.
Where the language taught in is not English.		Arrangements for credit transfer from any international student exchanges must be agreed with Head of Department/ School (or nominee) before the exchange takes place.
Joint, double or dual degree awards.		
Any arrangement with another institution/ agency to jointly supervise a student on a research programme.		
Any arrangement with another institution/ agency to register a student as an external research student of the University.		
Renewals where material changes have been made to the agreement.	Renewals where no changes to the original agreement have been made.	

## ANNEX 4 - GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- Articulation** an arrangement whereby students, who have reached an agreed standard on a particular course of study designed and delivered by an external agency, may enter a specific University course, usually with advanced standing. The collaborating agency has the primary responsibility for assuring the quality of its own course and the standard of any award given to the student before entry to the University.
- Administering Institution** the institution taking the lead in administering a joint award of two or more institutions. The Administering Institution would register students on the joint award and would have a range of other responsibilities as detailed in the policy and shown in the collaborative agreement.
- Awarding Institution** is an institution empowered to award degrees, diplomas, certificates or credits by virtue of authority given to it by statute, Royal Charter, or the Privy Council, or under licence from another authorised body. It is the institution whose academic award is the award to which a programme of study leads.
- Double degree** two or more degree-awarding bodies jointly develop and deliver a single programme (whether taught or research) leading to separate qualifications (and separate certification) being granted by both, or all, of them.
- Dual degree** two separate degree-awarding bodies jointly design a programme of study comprising a joint curriculum, which diverges at a given point leading to two entirely separate qualifications awarded individually by the two degree-awarding bodies.
- Franchising** a hands off business agreement in which the University subcontracts an appropriate Providing Institution to deliver courses designed by the University. This would require a more formally documented process than that in operation for the University's internal or validated courses in order to ensure that the Providing Institution continues to maintain appropriate quality and standards. The continuing cost implication of this must be made clear and accepted by the University and the Providing Institution.  
**The University does not normally enter into franchising agreements.**
- Joint Courses** a programme of study developed jointly by two or more institutions leading to a single qualification awarded jointly by both, or all, institutions.

### *Leading to Awards of the University*

The University will be responsible for detailed approval and administration of the course as a whole in accordance with its normal procedures.

### *Leading to Joint Awards of the University*

Partners must be appropriate Institutions of Higher Education with degree awarding powers. The overall course must be approved in outline by all of the awarding institutions and each institution will be responsible for the quality of the student learning experience and the academic standard of those parts of the course it delivers. One institution is appointed Administering Institution to be responsible for detailed approval and administration of the course in accordance with the normal procedures of



that institution. The Administering Institution will be responsible for the production of an annual report to allow monitoring of academic quality and standards by all the partner institutions.

**Memorandum of Understanding** a statement that the partners intend to discuss possible collaborative ventures. A MOU is not required by Strathclyde but may be desired by a partner before more formal negotiations can begin. **An MOU does not commit the University to anything more than discussions and must be followed with a formal agreement before any collaborative activity commences.**

**Partner** or partner institution: the term used to describe the institution or other body or individual with which the University enters into an agreement to collaborate. It is also used to describe an institution or other body which the University commissions to provide learner support.

**QAA** Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education - An independent body funded by subscriptions from universities and colleges and through contracts with the higher education funding bodies. It is responsible for safeguarding standards and improving the quality of higher education in the UK through and provides guidance on maintaining quality and standards for universities and colleges. It carries out external quality assurance by visiting universities and colleges to review how well they are fulfilling their responsibilities. The review methodology applied in Scotland is Enhancement-led Institutional review (ELIR).

**The Quality Code** The UK Quality Code for HE gives all higher education providers a shared starting point for setting, describing and assuring the academic standards of their higher education awards and programmes and the quality of the learning opportunities they provide. Providers use it to design their respective policies for maintaining academic standards and quality. It comprises three Parts relating to academic standards, academic quality and information about higher education provision.

**Quality Assurance** the means through which an institution ensures and confirms that the conditions are in place for students to achieve the standards set by it or by another awarding body.

**SCQF** Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework brings together all the mainstream Scottish qualifications and provides a way of describing and comparing, qualifications. A qualification can be described in terms of the number of credit points which shows how much learning has been achieved, and the level which shows how demanding the learning is.

**Service Support** agreement whereby the University enters into a contract with an institution or agency to supply administrative and/or academic services to support the University's programmes.

**Serial Agreement** Where a partner organisation assigns the powers delegated to it by the University to a third party. This must only be done with the express written permission of the University.

<b>Standard Terms and Conditions</b>	The University has a set of Standard Terms and Conditions which define the legal aspects of collaborative agreements. These can be found as an appendix to the templates on the <a href="#">SharePoint site</a> . These should be used for all collaborative agreements. Where a proposed Partner requires modification of these RKES and, if necessary the Vice Principal, should be consulted before agreeing to these.
<b>Student Exchange</b>	A reciprocal agreement for student exchange between universities for the educational and cultural enrichment of their students. During the term of the Agreement each university will usually send an agreed number of undergraduate or integrated masters students per year (or per semester) to be enrolled at the other university. The student will undertake existing modules at the other institution that will overtake relevant learning outcomes for the course they are studying. The exact programme of study will be determined by the student with the approval of academic advisers at both the home and host institutions.
<b>ECTS</b>	European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is a credit system which provides a way of measuring and comparing learning achievements and transferring them from one institution to another. It is intended to assist in increasing the transparency of educational systems and facilitating the mobility of students across Europe.
<b>Twinning</b>	an arrangement whereby a course is developed by the University in conjunction with an appropriate collaborating agency. Usually the early stages of the course are delivered by the collaborating agency and the final stages are delivered by the University. The University is responsible for assuring the quality of the student learning experience throughout the course and the standard of the final award.
<b>Validation</b>	the formative, developmental, hands-on process by which the University assures itself, on a continuing basis, that courses designed and delivered by appropriate external agencies are of an appropriate standard to lead to an award of the University and are consistent with the requirements of the SCQF in respect of credits and levels. (Courses so validated will normally have different content and delivery details from internal courses and this will normally be reflected in a different award title.)