



Academic Quality Framework

Section 16: Collaborative Activity

2023-2024

Academic Quality Framework

Section 16: Collaborative Activity

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of particular interest to current and prospective Collaborative Partner institutions and all UCO staff.

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Equality Impact					
Positive equality impact (i.e. the policy/procedure/guideline significantly reduces inequalities)					
Neutral equality impact (i.e. no significant effect)					X
Negative equality impact (i.e. increasing inequalities)					
If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this document, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk					

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

16.1 INTRODUCTION TO COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY

- 16.1.1 This section of the Academic Quality Framework focuses on the collaborative activity of the UCO. This includes the principles, processes for approving and management of collaborative provision with others. It has been developed to align to the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Partnerships¹.
- 16.1.2 “Collaborative provision”, which encompasses a number of different arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with others both nationally and internationally, is defined by the Council for Validating Universities (CVU) as:
- “...the process whereby a degree-awarding body judges one or more programmes of study, courses, or modules offered by another body to be appropriate to lead to a qualification and/or credit of that degree awarding body. The programmes of study may be designed and developed by either the degree-awarding body or the other body or a partnership of the two.”²*
- 16.1.3 The UCO welcomes opportunities to work with others in collaborative arrangements and views these as valued additions to its portfolio of educational and corporate activities.
- 16.1.4 The UCO recognises that collaborative arrangement opportunities serve to broaden and enrich staff and student experiences through educational and scholarly activity. Some arrangements may involve the exchange or transfer of staff and students, giving both a new perspective regarding the business, social and educational practices in other institutions and cultures. Others may provide students access to higher education that may otherwise have been denied the opportunity to learn at that level. In addition, collaborative arrangements enrich the intellectual life of the UCO, promote national and international co-operation and enhance cross-institutional sharing of good practice.
- 16.1.5 When considering a collaborative arrangement to offer provision in either the UK or overseas, the UCO must satisfy itself that the arrangement has a potential long-term benefit and will enrich the experiences of both staff and students. The UCO's Academic Council is responsible for making this decision and may delegate authority of approval to a named sub-committee. This responsibility will be set out in the following sections of this part of the Academic Quality Framework, which also describes the approval and review processes for collaborative partners, provision, and modes of operation.
- 16.1.6 Collaboration proposals that are based solely on the prospect of income generation are not acceptable, and awareness of the academic and financial risk(s) involved in the management of the relationship should be paramount.
- 16.1.7 The UCO is committed to ensuring the success of all collaborative arrangements and works hard to achieve this. This involves ensuring that the considerable benefits to the students and staff of both the UCO and partner are sustained appropriately. The UCO takes ultimate responsibility for:
- a) The academic standards and the quality of any awards granted in its name.
 - b) The academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities provided regardless of where these opportunities are delivered and who provides them.

¹ <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/partnerships>

² <http://www.cvu.ac.uk/about/>

- c) The accuracy of any formal transcript or record of achievement confirming any awards granted in its name.

16.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY

16.2.1 In approving any collaboration, the UCO must be certain that students are receiving an appropriately high quality of educational experience, that intended learning outcomes are being achieved, and that the standard of awards conferred in the UCO's name are being upheld. The UCO achieves this by taking into account guidance issued by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), through the UK Quality Code³ and of the good practice described by other appropriate external reference points and guidance, and statutory requirements including the Office for Students⁴.

16.2.2 The guiding principles for the establishment and maintenance of collaborative activity are that:

- a) The decision to enter into a collaborative partnership is the UCO's and that agreements between a department, individual faculty member or other and a potential collaborative partner are not permitted.
- b) A judgement will be made by the UCO's Senior Management Team about the nature of the institution with which the collaboration is proposed, and its strategic fit with the UCO, at an early stage in any development. A process of risk assessment shall be undertaken to supplement this, to acknowledge potential hazards and ensure that any necessary mitigation is put in place.
- c) An investigation into the good standing of a prospective collaborative partner shall be undertaken to establish its legal status and capacity in law to contract with the UCO. Partnerships should not endanger the reputation of the UCO.
- d) It shall be established whether the delivery of provision through a partnership is financially viable for the UCO, by employing a suitable costing mechanism, and whether it will strategically enhance the educational / research ability of the UCO.
- e) All collaborative activity must be initiated and managed within the UCO's framework of academic quality assurance policy and practice, as set out in the Academic Quality Framework, and should be articulated through an appropriate legal agreement.
- f) The UCO maintains responsibility for setting and maintaining academic standards and managing the quality of student learning opportunities when working with collaborative partners. The UCO will therefore apply its quality assurance processes to the provision, including annual monitoring and periodic subject and course reviews.
- g) All dealings with collaborative partners shall be carried out in line with the UCO's 'Code of Conduct for Staff'⁵ to safeguard against any financial temptations and preserve the integrity of the process. It is incumbent on staff not to accept hospitality of a degree greater than that which could be reciprocated at the UCO's expense, and gifts other than those with limited monetary value should be refused.
- h) In accordance with the Office for Students and the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Partnerships, the UCO retains responsibility for the academic standards of awards delivered in its name, and for the quality of the learning experience delivered by collaborative partners. All other obligations under the Office for Students and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education must be demonstrably fulfilled.

³ <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>

⁴ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/>

⁵ <https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy>

- i) The UCO must be able to assure itself of the accuracy and completeness both of information provided to students and of information that is publicly available (whether in hard copy or on the UCO's or partner's website).

16.3 COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY REGISTER

16.3.1 In line with the requirements of the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Partnerships (Principle 6), the Quality Team maintains the UCO's Collaborative Activity Register (AQF16-01).

16.3.2 Only once a collaborative partnership and the associated provision have been formally approved by the UCO will the details be entered onto the Collaborative Activity Register.

16.3.3 The information held on the Register includes:

- The name and location of the collaborative partner.
- The award level and course title.
- The nature of the provision (validated, franchised etc.).
- The UCO staff member responsible for the collaborative partnership.
- The Collaborative Partner staff member responsible for the collaborative partnership.
- The name of the Link Tutor (or equivalent) for the collaborative partnership.
- The name of the External Examiner attached to the collaborative provision.
- The date for the Periodic Course Review and Institutional Review.

16.3.4 The Collaborative Activity Register will be held by the Quality Team and can be made available on request.

16.4 TAXONOMY OF COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY

16.4.1 The UCO may enter into a number of different types of relationship with collaborative partners both in the UK and overseas which are reflective of the accountability, oversight, management and approval requirements and related terms that the partnership may entail.

16.4.2 A taxonomy (shown in [Table 16.1](#)) has been ascribed to each type of relationship and should be described as such when referring to a specific collaborative partnership.

TABLE 16.1: TAXONOMY OF COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY

Type of Collaborative Partner	Definition of Collaborative Partner	Type of Collaborative Provision	Definition of Collaborative Provision
Associate Partner	A partner institution that has been approved by the UCO to deliver courses which lead to awards in the UCO's name.	Dual Award	Where the UCO and the partner institution, which has its own degree awarding powers, collaborate to provide a course at the partner institution, which leads to successful students achieving an award from both.
	Associate Partnerships are approved via Collaborative Activity Initial Approval (Part 2), Collaborative Partner	Franchised	Where the UCO authorizes the delivery of its own approved course/s wholly by a partner institution retaining oversight of for the course's content, delivery method and pattern, assessment, and quality assurance arrangements.

	Approval (Part 3), and the relevant Collaborative Provision Approval (Part 4)	Validated	Where the UCO has judged that a course developed and delivered by another institution without degree awarding powers is of an appropriate quality and standard to lead to a UCO award.
Link Partner	A partner institution that has a formal relationship with the UCO that does not involve the partner delivering a course leading to an award in the UCO's name. Link Partnerships are approved via Collaborative Activity Initial Approval (Part 2), and the relevant Collaborative Provision Approval (Part 4)	Study Centre Arrangement	Where an approved partner's premises are used to deliver a UCO-approved course using a 'flying faculty' arrangement.
		Articulation Arrangement	Where a course provided by an approved partner institution is formally recognized by the UCO and grants guaranteed admission with advanced standing to a UCO award (subject to the availability of places).
		Progression Arrangement	Where the successful completion of a course provided by an approved partner institution is formally recognized as an entry qualification for a specified UCO course.
		Memorandum of Understanding	Where the UCO has a non-binding written agreement with the partner institution to promote cooperation, detailed discussions and collaborative activities.

16.5 SELECTING COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

- 16.5.1 The UCO aims to establish good working relationships with its collaborative partners, which will normally be institutions that share the UCO's values and support its vision and mission.
- 16.5.2 When seeking and entering into a collaborative partnership with an external organisation, the UCO considers the advantages and benefits that the relationship will bring to both itself and the partner.
- 16.5.3 Advantages may enhance the student experience; deliver benefits and opportunities for learners, staff and employers; or may bring financial benefits.
- 16.5.4 In addition to the advantages a partnership brings, the risks of the relationship are equally considered. These are formally assessed, quantified and mitigated as far as possible.

16.6 COLLABORATIVE PARTNER SELECTION CRITERIA

- 16.6.1 The UCO considers several criteria for selection of a partner including:
- Alignment with the UCO's mission, vision and aims.
 - Alignment with the UCO's strategic plan.
 - Shared understanding of the proposed collaborative arrangements.
 - Financial viability, including new avenues of income generation.
 - Potential collaborative research and scholarship activities.
 - Potential participation in student exchange activities.
 - Other benefits, such as reputational advantage to the UCO, Continuing Professional Development (CPD), and engagement with employers.

- 16.6.2 Regardless of where delivery takes place, the UCO is responsible for any awards delivered in its name and therefore must have confidence that:
- a) There is an institutional commitment by senior management and teaching staff to the academic success of the collaboration.
 - b) The partner institution is able to provide and sustain an ethos and learning environment appropriate to UK higher education in the subject(s) concerned.
 - c) The learning opportunities provided by the partner are appropriate for the delivery and support of HE provision, and the partner is capable of providing a suitable learning experience.
- 16.6.3 The UCO's Academic Regulations (see AQF Section 7: Academic Regulations) do not permit students registered on courses leading to the UCO's awards to be taught and assessed in a language other than English, other than in exceptional circumstances approved on a case-by-case basis by the Academic Council.
- 16.6.4 Sponsors of proposed collaborative arrangements should initially consult with the Vice-Chancellor before any collaborative partner and provision approval process is initiated.
- 16.6.5 A visit to the proposed partner institution by a senior representative of the UCO to explore and assess the viability of the proposed collaboration and explore the expectations of each party may also be undertaken prior to progression of the proposal.
- 16.6.6 Initial discussions between and visits to prospective partners only constitutes sharing of information; collaborative partnerships are subject to approval in line with the UCO's policies and procedures outlined below.

16.7 APPROVAL OF COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS & PROVISION

- 16.7.1 The UCO uses specific processes to approve collaborative partner institutions and their provision appropriate to the type of collaborative activity proposed. These processes may involve approval of the partner institution (Collaborative Partner Approval) or approval of a specific course (Collaborative Provision Approval) or may entail both.
- 16.7.2 The first phase in all circumstances is Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval (Part 2).
- 16.7.3 The second phase entails Collaborative Partner Approval (Part 3) and/or Collaborative Provision Approval (Part 4) as necessary, depending upon the type of partnership proposed.
- 16.7.4 Normally, Collaborative Partner Approval (Part 3) and Collaborative Provision Approval (Part 4) for a given institution will run in parallel, culminating in a single on-site event and decision timeline.
- 16.7.5 Where collaborative partners will be involved in the delivery of UCO awards an appropriate level of externality is incorporated into the approval process.

16.8 COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS: LEGAL & CONTRACTUAL MATTERS

- 16.8.1 All collaborative partnerships require an appropriately written agreement (a formal contract), setting out the key details of the relationship including details concerning courses leading to an award of the UCO, where the partner has been approved to deliver. Draft contracts will only be signed and come into force following the appropriate approval event.
- 16.8.2 The purposes of the contract are to:
- a) Define the high-level arrangements for managing the partnership.

- b) Ensure that the roles and responsibilities of both parties concerning the security of the academic standards of the provision are clearly set out, and that signposts are given to appropriate attendant documents describing these in greater detail.
 - c) Identify clear channels of authority, accountability, and executive action.
 - d) Specify the financial arrangements for the proposed collaboration.
 - e) Stipulate all legal details, including the resolution of disputes and termination of the contract.
- 16.8.3 It is the responsibility of the Vice-Chancellor in liaison with other relevant staff to draft a Collaborative Agreement for any new / changes to approved collaborative activity.
- 16.8.4 Drafts of the agreement should not include terms which are in direct contradiction to the Academic Regulations or quality assurance processes of the UCO. The contract must cover any provisos in place as a result of any approval/review event.
- 16.8.5 Each agreement is tailored to the individual requirements of the partnership.
- 16.8.6 All agreements must be signed by the Chair of the Academic Council to be enforceable. Notwithstanding this, there are a number of aspects which will be common to all agreements, unless otherwise explicitly stated:
- a) Disputes will be resolved within the jurisdiction of English law.
 - b) Courses will be managed, and assessments conducted in accordance with the UCO's regulations and all assessment and examination arrangements must be approved by the UCO.
 - c) The UCO will specify the quality assurance arrangements for the provision concerned.
 - d) The partner's procedures for student discipline, complaints and grievances shall normally apply as approved at Partner Approval and shall contain a final stage of appeal to the UCO.
 - e) The UCO is responsible for the appointment of External Examiners.
 - f) The UCO reserves the right to arrange for an independent audit of the academic integrity of the examinations process.
 - g) Where Boards of Examiners are held at the partner, at least one member of staff of the UCO will be present, and a member of UCO staff will chair the Board.
 - h) The partner will provide the UCO with full, accurate personal details of students enrolled on courses leading to the UCO's awards, so that they may be registered with the UCO and entered on the UCO's student record system (failure to do so may result in students not having access to online resources and, ultimately, in not receiving an award from the UCO).
 - i) The UCO will be responsible for issuing award certificates to students who successfully complete the courses on which they are registered.
 - j) All publicity and promotional material is to be approved by the UCO, according to procedures as specified in each contract.
 - k) That each party must retain and, if requested, produce documentation and full records in relation to courses.
 - l) That serial franchising of any UCO provision is expressly prohibited.
- 16.8.7 The agreement should also be appropriate to the relationship with the partner and specify:
- a) The names of the parties to the agreed contract, in addition to the UCO.
 - b) The provision associated with the partnership and the mode of its operation.

- c) Contextual matters of a legal nature, for example intellectual property rights.
 - d) Procedures for resolving any differences that might arise in respect of the provision or the partnership.
 - e) The action to be taken if either partner is shown to be in serious breach of the contract, and the procedures to be followed in the event of a dispute between partner institutions.
 - f) Financial arrangements governing the provision of resources, both physical and human, actual fees, costs, and charges.
 - g) Procedures and responsibilities in respect of the academic management of the course, particularly noting where these differ from those expressed in the UCO's Regulations or Academic Quality Framework, including academic appeals and student complaints.
 - h) The period of notice required for its termination and how the 'run out' of the course(s) associated with the contract will be handled, focusing on the rights of the students.
- 16.8.8 The agreement must include its period of validity, which would normally not exceed five years.
- 16.8.9 Following approval of the final version of the agreement by all parties, it must be signed by the appropriate members of UCO staff. It is then sent to the partner for their signature and on its return a copy is lodged with the Quality Team.
- 16.8.10 Collaborative agreements must not come into force until after the approval or review event is concluded to allow for any additional clauses emerging as a result to be incorporated.
- 16.8.11 Collaborative agreements must only be signed by the Vice-Chancellor or their nominated representative on behalf of the Academic Council in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the UCO.
- 16.8.12 In some circumstances it may be appropriate for senior staff to cement a prospective collaborative relationship with an overseas institution by signing a non-legally binding Memorandum of Understanding. The Memorandum of Understanding template (AQF16-02) should be used for this purpose.
- 16.8.13 Although not falling into the category of collaborative partnerships there may be a need to contract with agents for the recruitment of students. In these circumstances the collaborative agreement contents should comply with the guidance contained in the British Council document 'Recruitment Agents: A Legal & Regulatory Overview'⁶.

⁶ <https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/recruitment-agents-a-legal-and-regulatory-overview.pdf>

PART 2: COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY INITIAL PROPOSAL APPROVAL

16.9 INITIAL PROPOSAL APPROVAL PROCESS: ASSOCIATE PARTNERS

- 16.9.1 The Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process ensures that all proposed collaborations are in line with the Collaborative Partner Selection Criteria (see [Section 16.6](#)), are risk assessed and meet due diligence and site delivery requirements.
- 16.9.2 The Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process is outlined in [Diagram 16.2a](#) and is explained in detail below. A recommended timeline for the Collaborative Activity approval process is provided in [Diagram 16.2b](#).

A) CONFIRMATION OF THE PROPOSAL

- 16.9.3 Sponsors of proposed collaborative activity should first consider the selection criteria for collaborative partners listed in [Section 16.6](#) and discuss and agree this with the Vice-Chancellor.
- 16.9.4 The Vice-Chancellor will then inform the Head of Quality & Partnerships and Partnerships Quality Manager of the proposal, confirming the type of collaborative activity being proposed and advising the sponsor of the approval processes and timelines required.
- 16.9.5 The Vice-Chancellor will confirm that the proposal may be taken forward formally.

B) PROPOSAL DOCUMENTATION

- 16.9.6 Following confirmation that the proposal may be taken forward, the sponsor will liaise with the Partnerships Quality Manager and the Head of Quality & Partnerships to complete the following proposal documentation. In all cases this will normally consist of the following:
- a) **Collaborative Activity Proposal Form (AQF16-03):** a formal rationale for the proposal which includes preliminary costings (to provide a projection of income and expenditure based upon an initial description of the activity, and to estimate the fee level that may be required to generate sustainable income to support the activity), any other non-financial benefits or detriments that may arise from partnership, identification of proposed arrangements for student recruitment, selection, admission and induction, availability and equivalency of partner learning resources and academic staffing of the proposed partner provision.
 - b) **Collaborative Activity Due Diligence & Risk Assessment Form (AQF16-04):** to categorise the proposal as low, medium, or high risk and enable key risk indicators to be identified and addressed during the development process. This form should consider the partner's status and capacity, its quality assurance arrangements, the country in which it is located, its collaborative experience, and its financial stability. Appendix 1 of this form will examine whether the prospective partner is an organisation with which the UCO would wish to work and be associated with, including financial, academic quality, and reputational perspectives. The partner must have the legal, financial and resource capacity to enter into a productive and sustainable relationship. Due diligence should be undertaken in liaison with the Finance Director.
 - c) **Collaborative Activity Delivery Site Visit Report (AQF16-05):** to verify reported information and provide assurance that the proposed partner is of good standing, will provide an educational experience of the quality and to the standard required and that the premises where provision is to be delivered is suitable and appropriate in liaison with the Partnerships Quality Manager. The process for undertaking Delivery Site Visits is provided below.
- 16.9.7 The sponsor of the proposal is responsible for submitting the proposal documentation to the Partnerships Quality Manager and Head of Quality & Partnerships within an agreed timeline.

C) DELIVERY SITE VISIT

- 16.9.8 Where courses leading to a UCO award are delivered at sites other than those at UCO premises, a delivery site visit is required to ensure that the facilities are appropriate for the provision.
- 16.9.9 Site visits are normally undertaken by delegated senior staff, who will liaise with the partner to confirm logistical arrangements and a partner representative to host the visit. A virtual tour of the partner's delivery site(s) may be undertaken where an in-person visit is not possible, however an in-person visit will normally be arranged as soon as it is possible to do so.
- 16.9.10 If a partner has multiple sites of delivery that they wish to include in the approval process an independent site visit will be required for each centre.
- 16.9.11 The delivery site visit will result in the production of a delivery site visit report (AQF16-05).
- 16.9.12 It is the responsibility of the allocated visitors to produce the report and should include confirmation about the site's suitability as a delivery location.
- 16.9.13 It is expected that the proposed partner institution will cover costs associated with the site visit, and these costs will be agreed in advance of the visit.

D) APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSAL

- 16.9.14 The Head of Quality & Partnerships will be responsible for presenting the proposed collaborative activity accompanied by the proposal documentation to the Senior Management Team for consideration and approval (specifically regarding the nature of the institution with which the collaboration is proposed, its strategic fit with the UCO and the completed due diligence and risk assessment to acknowledge potential hazards and ensure that any necessary mitigation may be put in place) and the Academic Council for consideration from an academic perspective.
- 16.9.15 Following approval of the proposed collaborative arrangement by the Senior Management Team (SMT) and Academic Council (AC):
- The Partnerships Quality Manager in liaison with the Head of Quality & Partnerships initiates the appropriate approval process for the type of collaboration being proposed.
 - The drafting of a Collaborative Partnership Agreement for the collaborative activity (seeking legal advice where necessary) in liaison with members of the Vice-Chancellor's Group and SMT as appropriate commences.
- 16.9.16 [Table 16.2](#) identifies the tasks and individual / committee responsibilities for the Collaborative Activity Initial Approval Process. Tasks should be undertaken in numerical order. Those listed under the same Stage Number take place concurrently.

TABLE 16.2: INITIAL COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY PROPOSAL APPROVAL PROCESS TASKS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Stage No.	Stage One Task	Responsibility
1	New collaborative activity is proposed and agreed for being taken forward.	Proposed Partner UCO Vice-Chancellor
2	Proposal approval process, documentation requirements (in line with the partner / provision proposed) and timelines for their completion are confirmed with the Proposed Partner.	UCO Head of Quality & Partnerships

		UCO Partnerships Quality Manager
3	Proposal approval documentation is completed in liaison with appropriate staff. Delivery Site Visit (if necessary) is arranged and completed.	Proposed Partner UCO Site Visit Team
4	a) Consideration of the completed proposal approval documentation to confirm that the proposal fits with the UCO's academic and research strategy and conforms to the overarching principles of Collaborative Activity with the following possible outcomes: i. Approval to progress the proposal. ii. Approval to progress the proposal subject to recommended changes / further actions. iii. Approval of the proposal is not granted.	UCO Academic Council (AC)
	b) a) Consideration of the completed proposal approval documentation to confirm that the proposal fits with the UCO's strategic objectives, human and physical resource availability and meets market demand as appropriate with the following possible outcomes: i. Approval to progress the proposal. ii. Approval to progress the proposal subject to recommended changes / further actions. iii. Approval of the proposal is not granted.	UCO Senior Management Team (SMT)
5	a) Further to AC and SMT approval of the proposal approval documentation and a timeline and requirements of subsequent stages of the approval process are confirmed with the Proposed Partner.	UCO Head of Quality & Partnerships UCO Partnerships Quality Manager
	b) The Teaching Quality & Standards Committee (TQSC) is informed of the proposal approval outcome and undertakes subsequent monitoring of the progress of subsequent approval process stages.	UCO Head of Quality & Partnerships UCO Partnerships Quality Manager
	c) If the proposed provision relates to Recognised Qualification provision the appropriate Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) is notified.	UCO Proposed Partner

16.10 INITIAL PROPOSAL APPROVAL PROCESS: LINK PARTNERS

16.10.1 The Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process ensures that all proposed collaborations are in line with the Collaborative Partner Selection Criteria (see [Section 16.6](#)), are risk assessed and meet due diligence and site delivery requirements.

16.10.2 The Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process is outlined in [Diagram 16.2](#) and is explained in detail below.

A) CONFIRMATION OF THE PROPOSAL

16.10.3 Proposed partners or sponsors of proposed collaborative activity should first consider the selection criteria for collaborative partners listed in [Section 16.6](#) and discuss and agree this with the Vice-Chancellor and Head of Quality & Partnerships.

16.10.4 The Head of Quality & Partnerships will confirm the type of collaborative activity being proposed and advises the partner / sponsor of the approval processes required.

16.10.5 The Vice-Chancellor will confirm that the proposal may be taken forward formally.

B) PROPOSAL DOCUMENTATION

16.10.6 Following confirmation from the Vice-Chancellor that the proposal may be taken forward, the partner / sponsor will liaise with the Partnerships Quality Manager and Head of Quality & Partnerships to confirm the proposal documentation to be completed. In all cases for both proposed collaborative partnerships and provision this will normally consist of the following:

- a) **Collaborative Activity Proposal Form (AQF16-03)**: a formal rationale for the proposal which includes preliminary costings (to provide a projection of income and expenditure based upon an initial description of the activity, and to estimate the fee level that may be required to generate sustainable income to support the activity) and any other non-financial benefits or detriments that may arise from partnership, identification of proposed arrangements for student recruitment, selection, admission and induction, availability and equivalency of partner learning resources and academic staffing of the proposed partner provision.
- b) **Collaborative Activity Due Diligence and Risk Assessment Form (AQF16-04)**: to enable key risk indicators to be identified and addressed during the development process. This form should consider the partner's status and capacity, its quality assurance arrangements, the country in which it is located, its collaborative experience, and its financial stability, in addition to undertaking due diligence.

C) DELIVERY SITE VISIT

16.10.7 For proposed Link Partners, a site visit is only required where the proposed outcome is a Study Centre Arrangement, in which case the process is as [detailed above](#) and in [Table 16.2](#).

16.10.8 Where a site visit is required a team of delegated senior staff will be appointed to undertake the visit, who will liaise with the partner to confirm logistical arrangements and a partner representative to host the visit. A virtual tour of the partner's delivery site(s) may be undertaken where an in-person visit is not possible, however an in-person visit will normally be arranged as soon as it is possible to do so.

d) APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSAL

16.10.9 The Head of Quality & Partnerships will be responsible for presenting the proposed collaborative activity accompanied by the proposal documentation to the Senior Management Team for consideration and approval (specifically regarding the nature of the institution with which the collaboration is proposed, its strategic fit with the UCO and the completed risk assessment to acknowledge potential hazards and ensure that any necessary mitigation may be put in place) and the Academic Council for consideration from an academic perspective.

16.10.10 Following approval of the proposed collaborative arrangement by the Senior Management Team and Academic Council:

- a) The Partnerships Quality Manager and Head of Quality & Partnerships initiates the appropriate approval process for the type of collaboration being proposed.

- b) The Head of Quality & Partnerships in liaison with the Vice-Chancellor begins drafting a Collaborative Agreement for the collaborative activity (seeking legal advice where necessary) in liaison with members of the Vice-Chancellor's Group and Senior Management Team as appropriate.
- 16.10.11 [Table 16.2](#) identifies the tasks and individual / committee responsibilities for the Collaborative Partner & Provision Proposal Approval Process which applies also to Link Partners. Tasks should be undertaken in numerical order. Those listed under the same Stage Number take place concurrently.

PART 3: COLLABORATIVE PARTNER APPROVAL

16.11 ASSOCIATE PARTNER APPROVAL PROCESS

16.11.1 The Associate Partner Approval Process is undertaken at an institutional level; this process is not normally applicable for Link Partners as these are institutions that the UCO has a formal relationship with, but which do not involve the partner delivering a course leading to an award of the UCO. Link Partners are therefore not normally approved at an institutional level but are approved according to the type of collaborative provision that will be undertaken with them (see [Section 16.19](#)).

16.11.2 An Associate Partner is a partner institution that has been approved by the UCO to deliver courses which lead to an award in its name.

16.11.3 All Associate Partner relationships must adhere to the requirements of the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Partnerships⁷.

16.11.4 Following approval of the proposal to approve a new Associate Partner as outlined in Part 2, an institutional approval process is initiated to assure the UCO that the proposed partner institution fulfils the criteria detailed in [Section 16.6](#), and additionally establishing and confirming whether:

- a) The partner's mission, strategy and aims are compatible with those of the UCO.
- b) The partner's approach to teaching, learning and assessment are consonant with those of the UCO.
- c) Research carried out by staff at the partner underpins the curriculum.
- d) Suitable learning resources and a learning environment appropriate to higher education are available at the partner.
- e) The student experience at the partner will be equivalent to that at the UCO.
- f) There is an institutional commitment by senior management and teaching staff to the academic success of the collaboration.
- g) The partner institution is able to provide and sustain an ethos and learning environment appropriate to UK higher education in the subject(s) concerned.
- h) The learning opportunities provided by the partner are appropriate for the delivery and support of HE provision, and the partner is capable of providing a suitable learning experience.
- i) The partner possesses the financial collateral to guarantee the sustainability of the proposed collaborative agreement, at least for an appropriate period into the foreseeable future.

16.11.5 If a prospective partner has multiple sites of delivery that they wish to include in the approval process, independent approval for each site will be required to ensure that they fulfil the UCO's criteria detailed in section [16.6: Collaborative Partner Selection Criteria](#).

16.11.6 Approval of a proposed Associate Partner of the UCO includes the following stages:

- a) **Contact & Communication:** The identification of one of the partner's staff to act as the point of contact with the UCO throughout the institutional approval process to enable efficient communication regarding the submission documentation and event organization.

⁷ <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/partnerships>

- b) **Approval Documentation:** The production and submission of a standard set of documentation by the partner together with the sponsor of the proposed collaborative arrangement.
- c) **Approval Panel Appointment:** Appointment of an approval panel of appropriately qualified members to consider the approval of the proposed collaborative partnership.
- d) **Approval Event:** An approval event where the approval panel review the documentation submission and meet with partner staff and students to fully review and evaluate the proposed collaboration enabling them to make an informed judgement to approve the partner at an institutional level in line with the approval criteria.
- e) **Approval Event Outcome:** The production of an approval event outcome report to formally communicate these to the partner and relevant UCO staff.
- f) **Reporting & Responding to Event Outcomes:** The production of a formal response to the outcome report by the partner and arrangements for monitoring the completion of approval conditions.
- g) **Formal Approval:** Confirmation of approval of the partner by the Academic Council and agreement and signing of the Collaborative Agreement cementing the partnership between the UCO and the partner.

A) ASSOCIATE PARTNER APPROVAL CONTACT & COMMUNICATION

16.11.7 The UCO's Quality Team will ask the partner to nominate an individual to act as the primary point of contact for the duration of the partner institutional approval process. This individual will normally be responsible for:

- a) Liaising with the UCO's nominated point of contact as appropriate.
- b) Submitting the required documentation to the UCO.
- c) Communicating approval event details and requirements to partner staff as appropriate.

16.11.8 Similarly, the UCO will nominate an individual, normally the Partnerships Quality Manager or a member of the Quality Team (or nominated individual), as the partner's primary point of contact for the duration of the partner institutional approval process. This individual will be responsible for:

- a) Liaising with the partner's nominated point of contact as appropriate.
- b) Confirming, requesting and receiving submission documentation from the proposed partner.
- c) Drafting the approval event agenda in consultation with relevant UCO and partner staff.
- d) Confirming the membership of the approval panel in consultation with relevant UCO and partner staff.
- e) Circulating submission documentation to the approval panel in good time.
- f) Arranging for the taking of minutes at the approval event.

B) ASSOCIATE PARTNER APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION

16.11.9 The partner together with the UCO's sponsor proposing the collaborative partner will be required to produce a standard set of documentation that will be considered at the partner institutional approval event. At a minimum this will normally consist of a Self-Evaluation Document (SED) and prescriptive supporting documentation. However, if the nature of the partner requires it additional documents may be requested.

16.11.10 Documentation requirements will be confirmed by the Partnerships Quality Manager to the partner at the beginning of the partner institutional approval process in addition to an agreed submission deadline, which will normally be at least four weeks prior to the event.

16.11.11 Documentation should be submitted to the Quality Team in electronic format.

I) THE SELF-EVALUATION DOCUMENT (SED)

- 16.11.12 The Self-Evaluation Document (SED) should be produced by the partner using the UCO's Associate Partner SED template (AQF16-06).
- 16.11.13 The SED should describe what the partner's current status and processes are.
- 16.11.14 The SED provides the following information:
- 1) SED Section 1 (Rationale): A rationale for the proposed partnership from the partner's point of view.
 - 2) SED Section 2 (The Partner Institution): Details about the nature of the partner institution, its background and context within Higher Education. Its current HE provision, the aims and objectives of this provision and how this provision is managed, including any collaborative relationships and provision and their context. Information about the partner institution's strategic direction and ethos and details about staff and student numbers.
 - 3) SED Section 3 (Governance & Management): The partner institution's governance, management (both academic and administrative) and committee structures.
 - 4) SED Section 4 (Student & External Feedback Arrangements): Details regarding the arrangements for seeking student and external (including employer) feedback, what course committee / staff-student committee system is in place, how these mechanisms are used to enhance the students' learning experience and how this is used to enhance the curriculum.
 - 5) SED Section 5 (Quality Assurance Arrangements): Details regarding the arrangements for quality assurance (including course approval, annual monitoring, managing changes to courses and units, external examining, academic policies and procedure, the approval of marketing and publicity information as appropriate) and who holds responsibility for these arrangements.
 - 6) SED Section 6 (Critical Commentary): a critical commentary on the following:
 - a) The quality of the students' educational experience provided by the partner, considering student admission, progression, and completion data over the past three years, with a particular focus on Higher Education.
 - b) The academic standards of courses currently delivered with reference to External Examiner reports and any reports from professional, statutory, and regulatory bodies as appropriate.
 - c) How teaching, learning and assessment strategies (including any concerning technology enhanced learning) align with those of the UCO.
 - d) Procedures for student complaints, academic appeals, and discipline.
 - e) The arrangements for student academic support and pastoral guidance including feedback to students on their assessment, careers advice and welfare services and how these align with those of the UCO.
 - f) Staffing resources including staff development and scholarship, research and professional activities that underpin the subjects delivered by the partner at Higher Education level.
 - g) The provision of learning resources including information technology, library, teaching and private study facilities.
 - 7) SED Section 7 (Conclusion): Conclusions, including identification of areas of strength and weakness.

II) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

16.11.15 The partner is also required to submit documentation in support of the SED as outlined in [Table 16.3](#). Where the partner intends to utilize UCO procedures, this should be clearly stated within the SED.

TABLE 16.3: SED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

SED Section	Supporting Documentation to be Submitted in Support
Section 1: Rationale	N/A
Section 2: The Partner Institution	Strategic Plan (or equivalent). Mission Statement (or equivalent). Staff data (number of part-time and full-time staff, academic and administrative). Student admission, progression and completion data for the past three years.
Section 3: Governance & Management	Governance / Management / Committee Structure Diagrams. Committee Terms of Reference.
Section 4: Student & External Feedback Arrangements	Course Team Committee Terms of Reference. Student-Staff Committee Terms of Reference. Student Voice Mechanism Diagrams. Examples of questionnaires used to gather student feedback.
Section 5: Quality Assurance Arrangements	Quality Handbook or equivalent, including course approval, annual monitoring, managing changes to courses and units, external examining, academic policies and procedure as appropriate. Mechanisms for approving marketing and publicity information with clear lines of responsibility. External Quality Assurance Reports (e.g. from the QAA, IQER or overseas report, in-county professional quality assurance bodies and professional bodies).
Section 6: Critical Commentary	Student admission, progression and completion data for the past three years. Most recent External Examiner reports and responses. Recent reports from professional, statutory and regulatory bodies. Teaching, learning and assessment strategies (including any concerning technology enhanced learning). Student Complaint Procedure with clear lines of responsibility. Academic Appeal Procedure with clear lines of responsibility. Academic Discipline Procedure with clear lines of responsibility. Samples of assessment feedback provided to students. Student academic support and welfare arrangements and procedures. Careers advice arrangements and procedures. Staffing list and CVs.
Section 7: Conclusion	N/A

C) ASSOCIATE PARTNER APPROVAL PANEL APPOINTMENT

- 16.11.16 The membership of the approval panel for the Associate Partner institution approval event is shown in [Table 16.4](#) and is constructed to allow for each member to focus on a specific set of areas; panel members may, however, pursue any relevant line of questioning outside of their area of focus.
- 16.11.17 Any change in the composition of the panel must be agreed in advance by the Head of Quality & Partnerships and other relevant senior staff who will ensure that the membership is appropriate for the context of the event.
- 16.11.18 Approval panel members are provided with guidance (AQF16-07) about their role by the Quality Team upon appointment, including information about the location and time of the event and payment of fees and expenses where applicable.
- 16.11.19 Approval panel members will normally receive Approval Documentation electronically four weeks in advance of the approval event; they may request a hard copy of the documentation from the Partnerships Quality Manager.
- 16.11.20 The Associate Partner Approval Panel is responsible for and is required to:
- a) Review the Approval Documentation and identify lines of enquiry that they wish to pursue at the approval event prior to the event using the Partner Approval Panel Feedback Form (AQF16-08).
 - b) Attend the approval event in its entirety and to contribute to discussions and decision-making as required of their role.
 - c) Consider the partner proposal in accordance with the Partner Institution Approval Criteria (see [Section 16.9E](#)).
 - d) Produce an Associate Partner Approval Outcome Report structured on the [Associate Partner Approval Criteria](#).

A) ASSOCIATE PARTNER EXTERNAL PANEL MEMBER NOMINATION PROCESS

- 16.11.35 The partner will liaise with the Partnerships Quality Manager to nominate an external panel member for the review panel to act on behalf of the UCO normally at least two months before the date of the event or within the agreed timeline.
- 16.11.36 The External Panel Member should be appropriate for the scope of the event. It is not necessary for the External Panel Member to be an academic; a senior member of professional services staff may be appointed if they have relevant experience of collaborative partnerships.
- 16.11.37 External panel members should not normally have had a link with either the UCO or the partner during the previous five-year period.
- 16.11.38 Nominations should be submitted to the Quality Team using the appropriate nomination form (Form AQF16-09) and be accompanied by the nominee's CV.
- 16.11.21 The Quality Team will seek approval of the nomination by the TQSC at its next available meeting (or by TQSC Chair's Action where review timelines require this).
- 16.11.22 The Quality Team will liaise with the external panel members as to their remit. This will normally include providing guidance to the external and other panel members regarding their expectations, their expected time commitment, fees and expenses and opportunity for a pre-panel meeting to ensure that they are clear about their role.

TABLE 16.4: NORMAL MEMBERSHIP OF ASSOCIATE PARTNER APPROVAL AND REVIEW EVENTS

Panelist	Criteria for Appointment	Panel Role
A Chair	A member of the Senior Management Team (normally also a member of the Teaching Quality & Standards Committee (TQSC)) or senior academic outside of that proposing the collaboration.	To lead discussions and to look at the congruence of the partner's mission and strategy with that of the UCO's.
A Senior Member of UCO Staff	A senior staff member un-related to provision in the institution.	To give an internal but independent view on issues relating to compliance with UCO processes, general teaching and learning issues, the learning experience and environment and general resource issues.
An External Member	An external member who has experience of working in a collaborative partnership, nominated by the partner but approved by the UCO. The external member should be appropriate for the scope of the event and, if possible, the nature of the course/s proposed to be delivered at the partner institution and should not have had a link with either the UCO or the partner during the previous five-year period.	To look at general teaching and learning issues, the learning experience and environment, general resource issues and comparisons with the sector.
A Quality Assurance Representative	Appointed by the Head of Quality & Partnerships.	To look at issues relating to compliance with UCO processes and with QAA requirements and other external reference points.
A Secretary	Appointed by the Head of Quality & Partnerships.	To liaise with Panel members regarding logistical arrangements and to minute the approval event.
A Student Member	A current student or recent alumnus.	To take a lead on issues about the student experience.

B) ASSOCIATE PARTNER APPROVAL EVENT

- 16.11.23 The date and agenda for the partner approval event will be confirmed by the Partnerships Quality Manager in liaison with the Head of Quality & Partnerships, the partner and other relevant UCO staff members.
- 16.11.24 The approval event is normally held at the partner institution to enable the approval panel to tour and assure the quality and standard of the partner's facilities.
- 16.11.25 The approval event will normally follow the standard agenda ([Table 16.5](#)) and include the following:
- A meeting with senior staff of the partner institution and senior staff from the UCO faculty to which they will be linked through the provision it is proposed they deliver, to discuss strategic and management issues.

b) A meeting with 6-10 students representing those studying on each of the UCO's courses at the partner institution, normally from different stages of the course(s) and including student representatives.

c) A tour of the partner institution's facilities to include any specialist facilities.

16.11.26 The standard approval event agenda may be tailored to suit the requirements of the event.

16.11.27 It is expected that the proposed partner institution will cover costs associated with the approval event, and these costs will be agreed in advance of the visit.

TABLE 16.5: STANDARD ASSOCIATE PARTNER APPROVAL EVENT AGENDA

Time	Meeting	Required Attendance
10:00	Private meeting of the panel to set the agenda for the first meeting and agree lines of enquiry.	The Approval Panel.
10:30	Panel meeting with the Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent) of the partner institution.	The Approval Panel. The Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent) of the partner institution.
11:00	Tour of the partner institution's facilities.	The Approval Panel. The Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent) of the partner institution.
11:30	Short presentation from the partner institution's Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent) to provide an overview of current activities at the institution and their strategic direction, followed by a meeting with partner management team to discuss issues surrounding the institutional partnership (and how the proposed partnership would fit in with the UCO's strategic aims) staffing, resourcing and staff development.	The Approval Panel. The Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent) of the partner institution. The partner institution's senior management team.
12:30	Meeting with course management and student support leads from relevant departments to discuss the setting and maintenance of academic standards and support for the quality of provision and the student experience.	The Approval Panel. Course Management Team. Student Support Leads.
13:30	Lunch including meeting with a representative sample of students, including student representatives, to discuss the student experience.	The Approval Panel. Representative Sample of Students. Student Representatives.
14:30	Private meeting of the panel to confirm whether an additional meeting is required or, if not, to confirm outcomes of the approval event.	The Approval Panel
15:30	Feedback of approval event outcomes to the partner and close of meeting (preceded by an additional meeting if required).	The Approval Panel. The partner institution's senior management team.

C) ASSOCIATE PARTNER APPROVAL CRITERIA

- 16.11.28 The panel is required to consider the following criteria when reviewing and approving an Associate Partner proposal. They will typically structure the event outcome report on these criteria, noting practice that is innovative and/or likely to be of interest to others.
- 16.11.29 These criteria form the basis of the SED and partners are therefore recommended to consider and structure the SED on these criteria:

a) Rationale

- i. The rationale for the proposed partnership is clearly articulated and aligns with the UCO's selection criteria for collaborative partners.

b) Nature of the Partner

- i. The nature of the partner institution is clearly articulated.
- ii. The aims, objectives and management of the partner's higher education provision are clearly articulated and align with the UCO's.
- iii. The partner's strategic direction and ethos is clearly articulated and is in line with that of the UCO's.
- iv. Other collaborative relationships which the partner has are clearly articulated.
- v. The staffing profiles (e.g., numbers, range of qualifications of staff, diversity, etc.) of the partner are clearly articulated and healthy.
- vi. The student profiles (e.g., student numbers per cohort, admission and progression data, diversity of student body, immigration compliance and reporting, etc.) are clearly articulated and healthy.

c) Governance & Management

- i. The academic and administrative governance and management structures of the partner are clearly articulated.
- ii. Committee membership and terms of reference are appropriate.

d) Quality Assurance Arrangements

- i. The partner institution's arrangements for quality assurance and management (including course approval, annual monitoring, managing changes to courses and units, external examining, academic policies and procedure, the approval of marketing and publicity information as appropriate) are clearly articulated and appropriate.
- ii. Responsibilities for quality assurance arrangements and management are clearly articulated and appropriate.

e) Feedback Arrangements

- i. The partner institution's arrangements for seeking student and employer feedback are clearly articulated and appropriate.
- ii. There are appropriate mechanisms in place for obtaining and responding to student feedback on the student experience.
- iii. Appropriate student feedback and consultation mechanisms are in place at the partner institution and enhance the students' learning experience.
- iv. There is evidence that student and employer feedback is used to enhance the curriculum.

f) The Student Experience

- i. There is evidence that the students' educational experience is of a high standard.
- ii. Study materials and assessment are equivalent in quality and the learning experience they support to those provided by the UCO in other learning contexts.

g) Academic Standards

- i. The partner has clear and appropriate processes in place to verify and benchmark academic standards.

h) Teaching, Learning & Assessment

- i. Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategies are clearly articulated and align with those of the UCO.

i) Student Appeals, Complaints & Discipline

- i. There are policies and procedures in place at the partner institution regarding student appeals, complaints and discipline and align with those of the UCO.
- ii. Confirmation is made whether the partner's or the UCO's policies and procedures will be used should the partner be approved.

j) Academic & Pastoral Support

- i. There are appropriate opportunities for, and sound arrangements in place for academic and pastoral support at the partner institution.
- ii. The partner makes available support to students in respect of any critical course-related choices or decisions (e.g., electives, placements).
- iii. Arrangements are in place for any language or other support required by particular groups of students (disability, overseas, etc.).

k) Staffing Resources

- i. The human resources available (or the plans that are in place to provide them) and the environment within which provision will be offered, are satisfactory.
- ii. There is confidence in the partner to develop and deliver provision.
- iii. Staff are externally engaged with relevant subject and professional communities, such as the AdvanceHE⁸ and through external examining and other networking roles.
- iv. The quality of provision and its further enhancement are fully supported by research, scholarship, and academic enterprise within the academic staff.
- v. There is a staff development policy in place that values and encourages academic and professional development activity by staff.
- vi. The research and scholarly activity of delivery teams are sufficient to maintain the standards of provision and enrich the curriculum with contemporary developments in subject areas, particularly to underpin work at QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level 6 and FHEQ Level 7.

l) Physical Resources

- i. Library, learning resources, IT and teaching resources and facilities are available and adequate.

- ii. Processes are in place to manage ongoing improvements / replacements to resources.

m) Financial Resources

- i. Institutional financial statements demonstrate an appropriate level of financial stability.
- ii. The institution has a viable strategy for its financial stability in future years.

D) ASSOCIATE PARTNER APPROVAL EVENT OUTCOMES

- 16.11.30 At the conclusion of an approval event a series of provisional outcomes will be determined by the approval panel and communicated verbally by the Panel Chair to the partner at the end of the event.
- 16.11.31 Possible outcomes of Associate Partner Approval Events are:
- a) Approval with no conditions.
 - b) Approval with conditions which may include either or both of the following:
 - i. Approval Conditions - where the additional work is substantial and required to satisfy the panel that the partnership meets UCO requirements in respect of standards and / or quality.
 - ii. Delivery Conditions - where updates to paperwork and course documentation are required.
 - c) Non-approval (either with a recommendation to reconsider partner approval at a later date or to withdraw the proposal)
- 16.11.32 The outcome may also include any recommendations that the panel feel will enhance the partner or partnership; by their very nature recommendations do not have to be addressed, but it is expected that actions taken to progress them or reasons for not doing so should be included in the partner's response to the approval event outcomes.
- 16.11.39 The dates by which conditions should be fulfilled should be appropriate and manageable and included within the outcome and may be negotiated with the partner.
- 16.11.40 The name of the person responsible for managing the response to conditions and for providing the final formal response should also be clearly articulated.
- 16.11.41 Both conditions and recommendations can be directed towards the partner and/or the UCO.
- 16.11.42 The partner will be formally notified of the confirmed approval event outcomes in writing through an event outcome report (see below).

E) REPORTING & RESPONDING TO ASSOCIATE PARTNER APPROVAL EVENT OUTCOMES

- 16.11.43 Following the approval event, an approval event outcome report to formally communicate the event outcomes to the partner in writing will be prepared by the Panel Secretary. The report will contain a full record of the event including discussions held, the agreed approval conditions and recommendations and reasons for the panel's conclusions.
- 16.11.44 The Secretary to the panel circulates the report to the members of the approval panel for confirmation and final approval and sign off by the Panel Chair.
- 16.11.45 The Panel Secretary then circulates the approved report to the Vice-Chancellor, Head of Quality & Partnerships, Partnerships Quality Manager, the partner, and appropriate UCO colleagues. The Panel Secretary will also provide the partner with the Partner Approval Conditions Response Form (AQF16-10) and a deadline for its completion.

- 16.11.46 The partner will be responsible for completing and returning the Partner Approval Conditions Response Form (AQF16-10) within the requisite timeframe to the Quality Team which will be forwarded to the Panel Chair for approval and sign off.
- 16.11.47 The approval event outcomes report and the response form will then be reviewed by the Teaching Quality & Standards Committee (TQSC). Following its endorsement, the TQSC, will recommend approval of the partnership to the Academic Council.
- 16.11.48 Should the TQSC require amendments to be made to either report for accuracy or completeness the Quality Team will distribute an updated version to all parties.
- 16.11.49 Similarly, the initial risk assessment may be re-visited and mitigation factors amended as appropriate. The Quality Team will distribute the updated version to all parties.

F) ASSOCIATE PARTNER FORMAL APPROVAL

- 16.11.50 The Academic Council is responsible for considering and formally approving the proposed partnership.
- 16.11.51 Following approval of the new partnership by the Academic Council:
- a) The Chair of the Academic Council will sign off the Response Form which serves as confirmation of approval.
 - b) The Partnerships Quality Manager shall confirm the approval of the new partnership with the partner institution and relevant internal colleagues by circulating the signed Response Form.
 - c) The new partner will be entered into the Collaborative Activity Register by the Quality Team.
 - d) The draft Collaborative Agreement is agreed and signed between the partner and the UCO.

16.12 LINK PARTNERS & PART 3

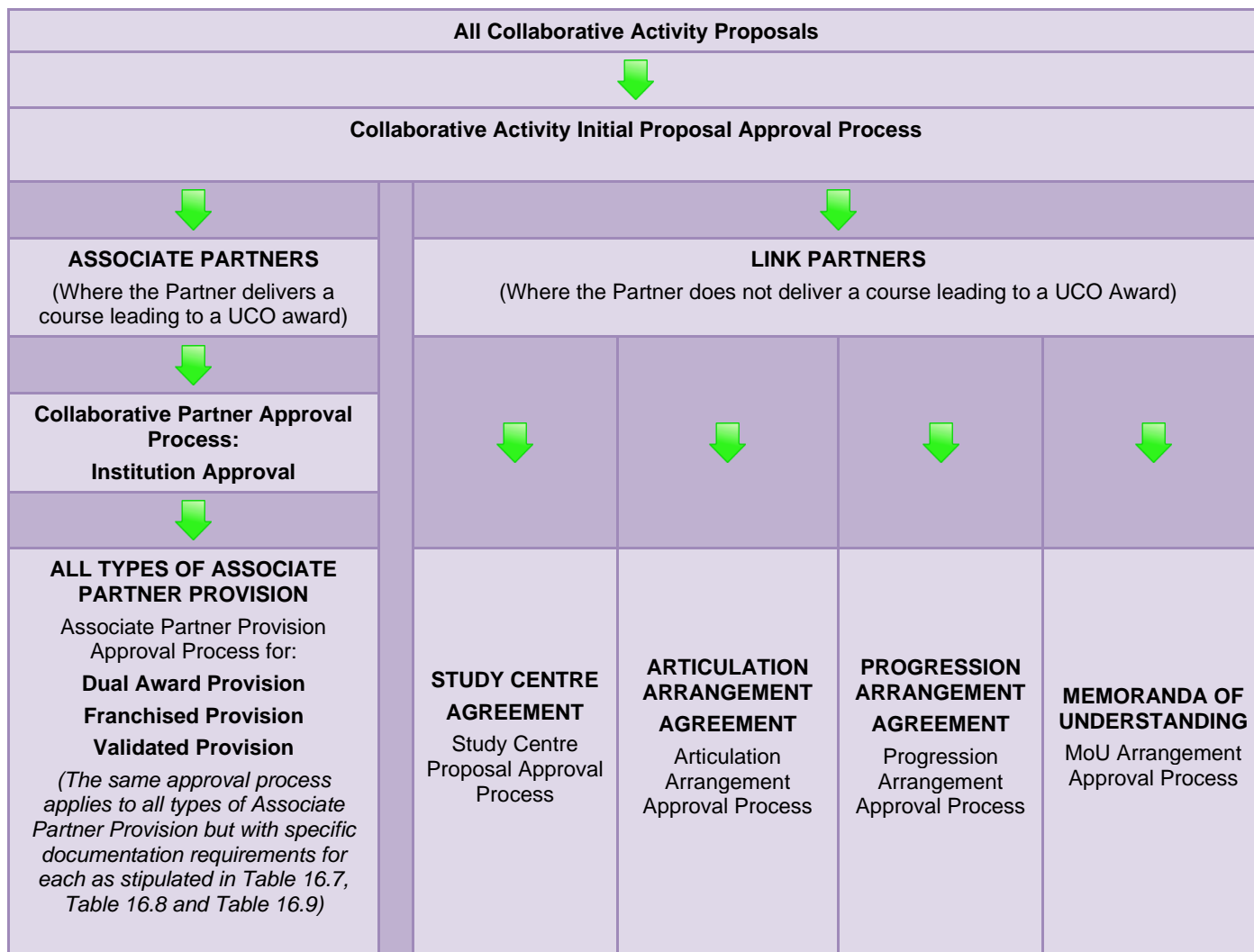
- 16.12.35 Link Partners are institutions that the UCO has a formal relationship with, but which do not involve the partner delivering a course leading to an award of the UCO. Subsequently they are not normally approved at an institutional level but are approved according to the type of collaborative provision that will be undertaken with them (see [Section 16.17](#)). Therefore, potential Link Partners do not engage in Part 3, instead moving directly to the relevant section of Part 4, depending on whether the provision sought is an articulation arrangement, progression arrangement, memorandum of understanding, or study centre arrangement.
- 16.12.36 If a Link Partner wishes to progress to a relationship where they deliver a course leading to an award of the UCO, they will be required to follow the Associate Partner Approval process detailed in Part 3 and the Associate Partner Provision process detailed in Part 4.

PART 4: COLLABORATIVE PROVISION APPROVAL

16.13 OVERVIEW OF COLLABORATIVE PROVISION APPROVAL PROCESSES

16.13.35 For clarity there is an approval process for each type of collaborative provision that is proportionate to the provision being approved as outlined in [Diagram 16.1](#).

DIAGRAM 16.1A: COLLABORATIVE PROVISION APPROVAL PROCESS OVERVIEW



16.14 QUALITY ASSURANCE & MANAGEMENT OF COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

16.14.35 Whilst different types of collaborative provision will involve differences in the ongoing quality assurance and management of the collaboration, there are certain elements which are relevant to all circumstances which include:

- a) **Assurance of Quality and Standards:** In accordance with the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Partnerships⁹, the UCO is responsible for securing and maintaining the academic standards of all credit and qualifications granted in its name; these responsibilities are never delegated to the partner institution.
- b) **Confirmation of Academic Regulations:** Unless variations are expressly confirmed through collaborative provision and course approval, the UCO's Academic Regulations will apply in all circumstances (see AQF Section 7: Academic Regulations). A rationale will be required for any variance, e.g., the need to adhere to requirements of a professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB).
- c) **Appointment of External Examiners:** The UCO retains full responsibility for the selection and appointment of External Examiners for all collaborative provision as documented in AQF Section 11: External Examining. For all collaborative arrangements it additionally requires that:
 - i. Prospective External Examiners must have had no connection in the previous five years with the UCO or partner institution.
 - ii. Where the Academic Council has exceptionally approved that the language of instruction and/or assessment is not English, that External Examiners have the necessary language skills.
 - iii. Where the provision is franchised, it will normally be the case that the current External Examiner is also asked to cover the collaborative iteration of the course.
 - iv. Where the provision is validated, the UCO may agree a procedure with the partner whereby they are able to nominate External Examiners for approval by the UCO. In such cases this will be recorded in the Collaborative Agreement for the partnership. However, in all cases it will be the UCO's responsibility to issue contracts to External Examiners and to pay their fees and expenses.
 - v. The UCO will prepare the External Examiner to undertake their role. Where the provision contains a specialist form of assessment, supplementary preparation may be provided by the partner, in conjunction with the UCO. The UCO will also hold an annual training day for new and continuing External Examiners.
 - vi. On appointment, the External Examiner will receive a contract, a letter detailing requirements and expectations and a copy of the UCO's Academic Quality Framework and other necessary regulations.
 - vii. Any request to extend an External Examiner's duties beyond the normal requirements must be expressly approved by the Academic Council.
 - viii. The arrangements for responding to External Examiners' reports regarding collaborative provision are described at [Section 16.37](#).

⁹ <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/partnerships>

- d) **Student Conduct & Discipline:** In all matters of conduct and discipline (other than matters included within the UCO's policy on academic conduct) students are subject to the relevant rules and procedures of the partner institution. Where a disciplinary matter has implications for quality and standards (in the case of assessment irregularities, for example) the matter will normally be referred to the UCO for consideration under its Academic Discipline Policy & Procedures¹⁰.
- e) **Student Complaints:** All complaints should be addressed through the student complaints procedure of the partner in the first instance. If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the partner's complaints procedure, they may bring the complaint to the attention of the UCO. The UCO will only consider complaints in relation to issues concerning the delivery or assessment of the course of study or the resources provided directly to support study on the course. Other issues, including non-academic matters, may not normally be referred to the UCO.
- f) **Academic Offences:** Cases of academic offences (collusion, fabrication, cheating, impersonation, and plagiarism) will normally be dealt with under the UCO's Academic Discipline Policy & Procedures. Academic offences will normally be investigated jointly by the UCO and the partner and considered by the UCO's Academic Conduct Panel unless exceptionally agreed at collaborative partner and / or provision approval. Where appropriate, responsibility for investigating and managing academic offences may be delegated to the partner. Irrespective of this, students will still be able to request a review of the judgement of the academic offence which shall be included within the partner's academic offence procedure.
- g) **Academic Appeals:** Academic appeals against a Board of Examiners' decision submitted by students at a partner institution will be processed according to the UCO's Academic Appeals Policy¹¹, unless exceptionally agreed at collaborative partner and / or provision approval. Where appropriate, responsibility for undertaking Stage One investigations under the policy and responding to the appellant may be delegated to the partner, and this will be confirmed at partner / provision approval. Irrespective of this, students will still be able to request a review of the initial judgement via the UCO's Appeal Review Board, as described in Stage Two of the policy.
- h) **Approval of Partner Staff:** At events to approve and review delivery of collaborative provision the approval of partner staff will be required as follows:
- Partners will be required to submit CVs of all staff teaching on the course(s) along with confirmation from the appropriate senior UCO faculty that they have all been approved as appropriate to deliver the approved course(s) of study.
 - It is recognized that between approval and review events staff at the partner may change and that the UCO must continue to assure itself that new members of staff are suitability qualified.
 - In these circumstances the partner will submit a copy of the new member of staff's CV plus information regarding which units they will teach on to the Quality Team using the Collaborative Partner Staff CV Coversheet (AQF-16-11).
 - The Partnerships Quality Manager will then confirm with the CPSC the suitability of the new partner staff member and the partner will be informed of this decision.
 - Partner staff who have not been approved will not be eligible to teach on the course of study leading to an award of the UCO.

¹⁰ <https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy>

¹¹ <https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy>

- i) **Collaborative Partner Staff Development:** The UCO aims to ensure that, wherever practicable, staff teaching on courses leading to an award of the UCO at partner institutions are invited to participate in its subject-based and pedagogical staff development courses, and that they are engaged in the business of the relevant department. Partner staff are therefore provided with the following development opportunities:
- i. Staff at Collaborative Partner institutions have open access to relevant procedural documents, useful web links and guidance produced by the UCO. They may also be provided with relationship-specific information, including the Collaborative Provision Operations Manual (CPOM).
 - ii. Transnational education (TNE) partners (i.e., those based overseas) will be provided with an intensive set of development and assimilation sessions at the beginning of the collaboration. Members of partner staff will meet with the Quality Team, Academic Registry, and relevant faculty to familiarise them with key UCO processes.
 - iii. Depending on the precise nature of the collaborative relationship, Link Tutors (or their equivalent) are charged with continuing to provide appropriate staff development and with facilitating the attendance of staff at collaborating institutions at departmental and Faculty events. This may include providing staff development and instruction with regard to academic policy and procedures, moderation and assessment etc. Reporting structures are in place which, where appropriate, feed into the UCO's Annual Monitoring Reporting cycle (see AQF Section 5: Annual Monitoring & Reporting).
 - iv. The UCO also provides opportunities for professional and personal development during the course of the relationship. Fee waivers are available in most cases to promote and encourage engagement. These opportunities include:
 - a) Relevant activity-specific training sessions for staff in associate partner institutions, such as training on the use of relevant electronic platforms.
 - b) Professional development courses such as the Post Graduate Certificate in Academic and Clinical Education and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses.
 - c) Support for developing the curriculum through the CPSC and TQSC.
 - d) Support through Course Teams, the CPSC and the Quality Team, where needed, typically covering subjects such as assessment, moderation, and changes to quality assurance processes.
 - e) Partner representation on UCO committees, participating and contributing to enhancement and development.
 - f) Access to other academic courses run by the UCO not linked to their role.
 - v. In addition, staff development is provided where needed to align partner institutions with the implementation of strategic initiatives, such as the use of learning technologies.
 - vi. Other, specific, staff development requirements may need to be addressed as a result of approval / review events, feedback from students and through the outcomes of annual reporting processes (see AQF Section 5: Annual Reporting and Monitoring).
- j) **Certificates and Transcripts:** As the awarding body, the UCO retains sole responsibility for issuing award certificates. The responsibility for providing students with transcripts may be devolved to the partner. In the case of dual awards, the UCO will retain responsibility for the production of certificates. If it is agreed that the UCO will not produce both, this will be explicitly agreed and incorporated into the Collaborative Provision Operations Manual. In all circumstances it is the UCO's responsibility to ensure that certificates and transcripts are

only issued to students who have satisfied the assessment and examination requirements for the award. The following will also apply:

- i. Student information which appears on the certificate and transcript will only be taken from that formally recorded on the UCO's student record system. Partners must ensure that the information they provide to the UCO regarding students is accurate and must inform the UCO immediately if any details change, for example if a student changes their name upon marriage.
 - ii. The wording on the certificate or transcript will be consistent with the UCO's general words and terms for these documents. For transcripts issued to students studying with collaborative partners this will also record the name of the partner institution.
 - iii. Where an exceptional variation has been approved to the language of instruction and/or assessment from English, this will also be stated.
- k) The location of the awards ceremony for graduands from partners will be a matter for negotiation between the partner and the UCO in the light of preferences expressed by the graduands and financial considerations.

16.15 ASSOCIATE PARTNER PROVISION: TYPES OF PROVISION

16.15.35 The types of collaborative provision that may be undertaken by Associate Partners are:

- a) Dual Award Provision – where the UCO and the partner institution, which has its own degree awarding powers, collaborate to provide a course at the partner institution, which leads to successful students achieving an award from both.
- b) Franchised Provision – where the UCO authorizes the delivery of its own approved course/s wholly by a partner institution, while retaining oversight of the course's content, delivery method and pattern, assessment, and quality assurance arrangements
- c) Validated Provision – where the UCO has judged that a course developed and delivered by another institution without degree awarding powers is of an appropriate quality and standard to lead to a UCO award.

16.16 ASSOCIATE PARTNER PROVISION: MODES OF DELIVERY

16.16.35 Different modes of delivery may be considered when proposing associate partner provision as shown in [Table 16.5](#). The modes of delivery and requirements for the approval of each and are described in detail below.

16.16.36 The approval of modes of delivery is undertaken as part of the provision approval process described below.

TABLE 16.5: ASSOCIATE PARTNER PROVISION: MODES OF DELIVERY

Mode of Delivery	Definition & Requirements
a) Partner Delivery	Where partner staff deliver the provision at the partner institution (on their premises).
b) Flying Faculty	Where UCO staff deliver the provision at the partner institution (on their premises) as a "flying faculty", with an element of support (i.e. resources, pastoral and academic support) provided by partner staff.

A) PARTNER DELIVERY

- 16.16.37 Partner Delivery – whether dual award, franchise, or validation provision – is the most common form of delivery mode.
- 16.16.38 Approval will be considered under the standard provision approval processes.
- 16.16.39 For UK-based collaborations what must also be considered is how any funding through the Office for Students associated with the provision is attributed, i.e., whether the partner has their own number of students which are directly funded by the Office for Students or whether the funding (and therefore the student numbers) belongs to the UCO.
- 16.16.40 Although the UCO's responsibilities in relation to quality assurance will remain the same, partners will normally be responsible for the following:
- a) The recruitment and selection of students.
 - b) The admission, guidance, and induction of students.
 - c) The provision of all necessary learning resources.
- 16.16.41 As the awarding body the UCO must assure itself that the partner has the necessary staff resources and processes in place to administer (a) and (b), and that these processes are aligned with the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Participation¹².
- 16.16.42 Regarding (c) the UCO must assess and confirm whether the learning resources available at the partner are sufficient to replace any formerly offered by the UCO, or whether the partner will 'buy in' to use the UCO's resources. 'Buying in' to use the UCO's resources should be negotiated and confirmed between the UCO and the partner during the Proposal and Development Stage (Stage One) of the provision approval process.
- 16.16.43 It is advised that if a partner wishes to pursue the Partner Delivery mode using their own student numbers, the provision approval process is initiated as early as possible in the academic year, as the results of core / margin funding bids are usually not known until late in the session; the UCO reserves the right to decline to undertake an associate partner provision approval event where there are concerns as to whether due process can be followed in the timeframe available.

B) FLYING FACULTY

- 16.16.44 Where a partner wishes UCO staff to deliver the provision at the partner institution (on their premises) as a "flying faculty" with an element of support (i.e., resources, pastoral, and academic support) provided by partner staff, a standard Associate Partner provision approval event should be convened, following the same stages with the same documentation requirements.
- 16.16.45 Given the students' geographical separation from the teaching staff and the mode of delivery (which may often be by block teaching), the panel's questions at the approval event should focus on:
- a) The suitability and availability of the learning materials.
 - b) The provision of student support.
 - c) The efforts taken by the course team to safeguard the student experience.
 - d) The way in which the course will be delivered.

¹² <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/admissions-recruitment-and-widening-access>

16.17 ASSOCIATE PARTNER PROVISION APPROVAL PROCESS

- 16.17.35 All new provision (i.e. a new course) proposed by an Associate Partner will be considered for approval using the process set out in AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modification.
- 16.17.36 Additional paperwork is required for proposed Dual Award provision which will allow students to gain an award from the UCO and the partner on the basis of the same assessed work. Despite this duality, the UCO must ensure that the academic standards of the award given in its name are safeguarded. This additional paperwork ensures the panel has the opportunity to consider whether these safeguards are in place and is shown in [Table 16.8](#).

TABLE 16.8: REQUIRED ADDITIONAL APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION FOR DUAL AWARD PROVISION

Required Course Approval Document	Document Description
Legal Confirmation	Confirmation by the partner that it has the legal capacity to enter into a dual award partnership.
Dual Award Unit Mapping (AQF16-12)	Mapping at unit level, prepared by the Partner, confirming that the partner's course is equivalent to the UCO's in terms of curriculum, FHEQ level, notional effort, and assessment load. The mapping should clearly identify where there are discrepancies.
Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy.	A copy of the partner's learning, teaching and assessment strategy.
Quality Assurance Handbook & Mapping	A copy of the partner's Quality Assurance Handbook (or equivalent) and a mapping, prepared by the partner, comparing this against the UCO's Academic Quality Framework.
Academic Regulations & Mapping	A copy of the partner's Academic Regulations and a mapping, prepared by the staff team, comparing this against the UCO's Academic Regulations (AQF Section 7).
PSRB Confirmation (if appropriate)	Confirmation of approval from relevant Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies for the dual award of a qualification for successful completion of the programme.

- 16.17.37 The Partner may wish to hold a rehearsal event for partners before the formal approval event, particularly if they are new partners, to focus on the partner's understanding of the delivery requirements of the course.
- 16.17.38 Following formal approval of partner provision by the Academic Council, the legal agreement with the partner will be updated as will the Collaborative Provision Operations Manual to reflect the approved provision. Updates to the Agreement should include details of the financial arrangements agreed with the partner, which must:
- Be compliant with statutory and funding council requirements (including the requirement that Office for Students funded provision should not cross-subsidise non-funded provision).

- b) Contain safeguards so that, should the economic climate change, academic quality and standards, and the interests of students are not compromised.
- c) Have contingencies in place to deal with currency fluctuations where necessary.
- d) Specify which party will be responsible for expenses incurred as a result of undertaking collaborative activity.

A) FINAL APPROVAL EVENT MONITORING OUTCOMES

- 16.17.39 Monitoring of ongoing approval conditions will be overseen by the CPSC on behalf of the TQSC in respect of educational matters and on behalf of the Senior Management Team in respect of institutional matters.
- 16.17.40 Review of Dual Award and Validated provision will be undertaken as outlined in [Table 16.25](#).
- 16.17.41 Review of Franchised Provision will be carried out as part of an internal UCO event in accordance with the process set out in AQF Section 5: Periodic Review in addition to [Section 16.47](#).

16.18 ASSOCIATE PARTNER PROVISION: APPROVAL CRITERIA

- 16.18.35 [Table 16.13](#) shows the criteria that should be met for each type of partner provision that may be proposed.
- 16.18.36 Outcomes of Associate Partner Provision approval events should be based on the full consideration of these criteria.

TABLE 16.9: ASSOCIATE PARTNER PROVISION APPROVAL CRITERIA

Type of Provision	Criteria for Approval
Franchised	a) As detailed in AQF Section 4: Course Approval & Modification (Section 4.14: Criteria for the Approval of New Courses)
Validated	As detailed in AQF Section 4: Course Approval & Modification (Section 4.14: Criteria for the Approval of New Courses)
Dual Award	<p>As for Franchised Provision, plus:</p> <p>Equivalency to UCO Awards</p> <p>a) The partner's course/s is equivalent to that of the UCO's in terms of the level of study (taking into account the FHEQ), the content of the curriculum, the unit assessment load and the notional effort involved in obtaining the awards.</p> <p>Compatibility to the UCO's Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy</p> <p>b) The partner's Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy is comparable to the UCO's.</p> <p>Compatibility with UCO Quality Assurance Processes & Regulations</p> <p>c) Quality assurance handbook and regulations are appropriate and in line and compatible with the UCO's.</p> <p>Mitigation of Differences</p> <p>d) Partner and UCO documents and methods to mitigate differences where appropriate are comparable.</p>

All	<p>Where a “Partner Delivery” Mode of Delivery is proposed and the partner (receiving direct funding from HEFCE) intends to use its own student numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The partner is able to take on the responsibilities for the recruitment, selection, admission and induction of students in line with the UK Quality Code. b) The partner is able to provide students all necessary learning resources that are equivalent and comparable to those of the UCO (given that automatic access to UCO resources will no longer be available) or that sufficient arrangements have been made for the partner to ‘buy in’ to necessary resources that will be provided by the UCO.
	<p>Where a “Flying Faculty” Mode of Delivery is proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Given the students’ geographical separation from the teaching staff and the mode of delivery (which may often be block teaching): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The learning materials provided at and by the partner are suitable and available as appropriate. ii. The student support facilities provided at and by the partner are suitable and available as appropriate. iii. The efforts taken by the course team to safeguard the student experience are clearly articulated and appropriate. iv. The way in which the course will be delivered is appropriate.

16.19 LINK PARTNER PROVISION: TYPES OF PROVISION

- 16.19.35 Link Partners and their provision is approved according to the type of provision being proposed which may include:
- a) A Study Centre Agreement – where an approved partner’s premises are used to deliver a UCO approved course by UCO staff through a ‘flying faculty’ arrangement.
 - b) An Articulation Agreement – where a course provided by an approved partner institution is formally recognized by the UCO and grants guaranteed admission with advanced standing to a UCO award (subject to the availability of places).
 - c) A Progression Arrangement – where the successful completion of a course provided by an approved partner institution is formally recognized as an entry qualification for a specified UCO course.
 - d) A Memorandum of Understanding – where the UCO has a non-binding written agreement with a partner institution to promote cooperation, detailed discussions, and collaborative activities.

16.20 LINK PARTNER PROVISION: STUDY CENTRE APPROVAL PROCESS

- 16.20.35 In certain circumstances the UCO may wish to contract with another institution (within the UK or abroad) to use their premises and, in some cases, their on-site learning resources as a study centre for the delivery of a pre-existing UCO course.
- 16.20.36 It must always be the case that the teaching, academic and pastoral support is carried out by UCO staff.
- 16.20.37 Students will be registered with the UCO and shall therefore have full access to the UCO’s online learning resources.
- 16.20.38 As the awarding body the UCO must assure itself through the approval of the study centre that the institution’s premises are a suitable learning environment for teaching at HE level.

- 16.20.39 In addition, it must be established that students studying at the external site are not disadvantaged in comparison to those studying at the UCO's site in terms of:
- The appropriateness of learning resources available locally (where used), supported by those available through the UCO's online system.
 - The suitability of opportunities for students to access support mechanisms (both academic and pastoral) that are in place.
- 16.20.40 Approval of Study Centre provision consists of the following stages:
- Stage One: Proposal Approval
 - Stage Two: Convening Approval Events and Panels
 - Stage Three: Approval Event Documentation
 - Stage Four: The Approval Event & Approval Criteria
 - Stage Five: Approval Event Outcomes
 - Stage Six: After the Approval Event

A) STAGE ONE: PROPOSAL APPROVAL

- 16.20.41 All new Link Partner Study Centre provision proposals must be approved in line with the Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process outlined in Part 2 before Stage Two of the Study Centre Approval Process may be initiated.

B) STAGE TWO: CONVENING APPROVAL EVENT AND APPOINTING THE PANEL

- 16.20.42 Following approval of the Study Centre proposal, the Partnerships Quality Manager will convene a Study Centre Approval Event and appoint members to the approval panel in consultation with the Head of Quality & Partnerships and other relevant UCO senior staff.
- 16.20.43 The panel for this event is shown in [Table 16.13](#) (as a pre-existing and approved course would be delivered by UCO staff at the Study Centre an external panel member is not normally required).
- 16.20.44 Any changes to the panel must be approved by the TQSC Chair.

TABLE 16.10: MEMBERSHIP OF THE STUDY CENTRE APPROVAL PANEL

Panellist	Criteria for Appointment	Panel Role
Chair	A senior member of staff.	To lead discussions.
Two Internal Academic Representatives	Senior Academics from other Course Teams.	To give an internal but independent view about the proposed Study Centre.
A Quality Assurance Representative	Normally the Head of Quality & Partnerships or Partnerships Quality Manager	To act in an advisory capacity.
Secretary	A suitable nominee identified by the Head of Quality & Partnerships.	To record the proceedings and produce minutes and outcome reports of the event.

C) STAGE THREE: APPROVAL EVENT DOCUMENTATION

- 16.20.45 The approval event documentation required to be considered by the approval panel is shown in [Table 16.14](#) and will be confirmed with the proposing faculty by the Partnerships Quality Manager in liaison with the Head of Quality & Partnerships.
- 16.20.46 The Course Leader of the course to be delivered at the study centre is responsible for producing and submitting the approval event documentation to the Quality Team in electronic format at least three weeks prior to the event.
- 16.20.47 The Quality Team will be responsible for circulating the approval event documentation to the panel members three weeks prior to the event to provide sufficient time for them to review the documentation and form lines of enquiry.

TABLE 16.11: REQUIRED STUDY CENTRE APPROVAL EVENT DOCUMENTATION

Document No.	Documentation Required
AQF16-13	<p>A Study Centre Statement (AQF16-13) providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background information on the proposed study centre. Learning Resources & Student Support Statements which should describe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The required learning resources for the courses/units, confirming how students are able to access them – whether through the study centre and/or through the UCO's online resources. The access to academic and pastoral support in respect of the geographical separation from the UCO.
AQF04-17 AQF04-18	<p>A Course & Unit Modification Form/s outlining the proposal for delivery at the new study centre.</p> <p>(See AQF Section 4: Course Approval & Modification, Part 3: Course & Unit Modifications)</p>
AQF04-04a AQF04-05a	<p>Amended CIF(s) and/or UIF(s) for the courses/units to be delivered at the study centre that includes Tracked Changed where amendments have been made to reflect the new delivery site, resources and support facilities / arrangements.</p>
AQF04-06	<p>A Course Handbook tailored to the delivery site.</p>

D) STAGE FOUR: THE APPROVAL EVENT & APPROVAL CRITERIA

I. THE APPROVAL EVENT

- 16.20.48 The Study Centre Approval Event should be held at the proposed Study Centre to enable panel members to tour the facilities in person. Where this is not possible a virtual tour of the Study Centre should be provided.
- 16.20.49 A standard agenda for the event is shown in [Table 16.15](#); the start time may be tailored as appropriate.
- 16.20.50 The relevant Course Leader, key members of the teaching team of the course to be delivered at the study centre and relevant staff from the external organization should be present at the approval event to discuss the proposal with the panel.

- 16.20.51 The Partnerships Quality Manager in liaison with the Head of Quality & Partnerships will advise and confirm with the Course Leader which key staff will be attending the approval event.
- 16.20.52 The Quality Team will be responsible for confirming the date, time, agenda and location of the approval event with the panel and key staff.
- 16.20.53 Panel members and key staff are expected to attend for the entire event.

TABLE 16.12: STANDARD AGENDA FOR STUDY CENTRE APPROVAL EVENTS

Time	Item
10:00	Private meeting of the panel to allocate lines of questioning.
10:30	Tour of the facilities at the proposed study centre.
11:30	Discussion regarding the facilities and availability of student support between the panel and representatives from both the teaching team and the external organization.
12:00	Private meeting of the panel to discuss and agree outcomes.
12:30	Feedback to the teaching team.

II. THE APPROVAL CRITERIA

- 16.20.54 The panel is responsible for assessing the approval event documentation and for providing assurance to the UCO that the proposal fulfils the following criteria:
- The proposal aligns with the UCO's Strategic Plan, mission and aims.
 - The partner institution is of good standing.
 - Appropriate learning resources at the study centre are in place and comparable with those of the UCO.
 - Appropriate student support arrangements are in place and comparable with those of the UCO.
 - Management of the on-going relationship is clearly articulated, with particular reference to periodically assuring that the learning resource and student support arrangements are maintained as comparable with those of the UCO.
- 16.20.55 In summary, the UCO will seek to assure itself that the students studying at the proposed Study Centre are provided with appropriate learning and student support facilities comparable with those provided by the UCO.

E) STAGE FIVE: APPROVAL EVENT OUTCOMES

- 16.20.56 The possible outcomes from Study Centre Approval Events are:
- Approval with no delivery or approval conditions.
 - Approval with delivery conditions (where the additional work required is related to documentation).
 - Approval with approval conditions (where the additional work required is necessary to secure academic standards and/or quality).

- d) Non-approval (either with a recommendation to resubmit at a later date or to withdraw the proposal).

- 16.20.57 Recommendations for enhancements to the Study Centre may also be made by the panel, and although these are not required to be met it is expected that they will be considered by the Study Centre and that action or comment on them will be given as appropriate in the response.
- 16.20.58 The Chair of the Study Centre Approval Panel will normally report outline feedback orally to the Course Leader and key staff at the event's final feedback session. However, confirmation of event outcomes is formally provided in the Study Centre approval event outcome report following the event.

F) STAGE SIX: AFTER THE APPROVAL EVENT

- 16.20.59 Following the approval event, a Study Centre approval event outcome report will be produced by the panel Secretary normally within two weeks after the event. This will contain a brief narrative of the event and detail the event outcomes together with the requisite deadlines and any recommendations for enhancement. Reasons for the panel's decisions should also be included.
- 16.20.60 The Secretary will circulate the outcome report to the panel for agreement following which the Chair should sign the report to verify approval.
- 16.20.61 The Secretary will then disseminate the approved report to the Vice-Chancellor Partnerships Quality Manager, Head of Quality & Partnerships, Course Leader and key staff who attended the event with a Study Centre Event Conditions and Response Form (AQF16-14) with a deadline for its completion by the Course Leader.
- 16.20.62 The Course Leader, in consultation with the study centre staff, should complete the response form, and return it to the panel Secretary within the requisite timeline.
- 16.20.63 The Secretary will circulate the response form to the panel for their consideration and approval. The panel is responsible for ensuring that the responses to the conditions are satisfactory; all approval conditions are required to be addressed before any teaching can take place. The chair of the panel should then sign the response form on behalf of the panel to indicate approval of the response and forward this to the panel Secretary.
- 16.20.64 The panel Secretary will then circulate the approved and signed response form to the Panel Chair for authorisation prior to being shared with the Course Leader and key staff.
- 16.20.65 The authorized response form, together with the event outcome report, will be submitted to the TQSC for sign-off by this committee's chair and to recommend the outcome to the Academic Council.
- 16.20.66 The Academic Council will then consider the approved Study Centre approval event outcome report and Study Centre Approval Event Conditions and Response Form and will confirm formal approval of the Study Centre; the Chair of the Academic Council shall sign off the Study Centre Approval Event Conditions and Response Form as confirmation of approval.
- 16.20.67 Once approved by the Academic Council:
 - a) Confirmation of approval will be communicated to the Course Leader and key staff by the Head of Quality & Partnerships in writing.
 - b) A contract / agreement must be drawn up and signed (or an existing contract added to) describing the nature of the relationship; there should be a requirement in the contract for the external organisation to commit to making all reasonable upgrades

to facilities in order to retain its study centre status and this should be for a fixed period of time not normally longer than five years.

- c) The Study Centre will be entered into the Collaborative Activity Register by the Quality Team.

16.20.68 No teaching should commence at the Study Centre until the contract has been signed by the UCO and partner.

16.21 LINK PARTNER PROVISION: ARTICULATION ARRANGEMENT APPROVAL PROCESS

- 16.21.35 An articulation arrangement recognises the study completed by a student elsewhere (the 'originating course') as equivalent – in terms of level, curriculum and 'effort' – to a specified amount of credit on a named course at the UCO.
- 16.21.36 Entry with advanced standing to a course leading to an award of the UCO (the 'destination course') is guaranteed, subject to the UCO's English language requirements and the issuance of an appropriate visa.
- 16.21.37 The originating course should be taught and assessed in English in line with the UCO's Academic Regulations (see AQF Section 7: Academic Regulations).
- 16.21.38 Articulation arrangements may be agreed from an originating course at a partner institution onto a destination course running at the UCO.
- 16.21.39 It is expected that institutions seeking articulation arrangements have their own quality assurance procedures with many also having their own degree-awarding powers.
- 16.21.40 Initial enquiries about proposing an articulation arrangement should be directed to the Head of Quality & Partnerships as appropriate for consideration and discussion.
- 16.21.41 Articulation arrangements should only be set up where a reasonable number of students are expected to enter the UCO via that route on a regular basis, and where this entry will be guaranteed. Individual students, or small numbers of students wishing to enter (with advanced standing), should be dealt with through the UCO's Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy¹³.
- 16.21.42 Contracts associated with articulation arrangements should last for no more than five years to allow the arrangement to lapse unless a review of the collaboration is undertaken.
- 16.21.43 Wherever possible, the UCO will endeavour to simplify articulation arrangements with partners who do not use a recognised credit transfer system such as the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)¹⁴ by translating their non-traditional credit system into an ECTS equivalent to the best extent possible.
- 16.21.44 Students on originating courses are not registered with the UCO and have no entitlement to UCO services unless written into the collaborative activity contract by exception. The course offered by the partner as the initial stage in the articulation does not lead to an award of the UCO.
- 16.21.45 The maximum amount of credit a student can bring to the UCO under an articulation arrangement will be in line with that permitted under the UCO's Academic Regulations regarding Recognition of Prior Learning (see AQF Section 7); these credits will not

¹³ <https://www.uco.ac.uk/courses/how-apply/recognition-prior-learning-rpl>

¹⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/european-credit-transfer-and-accumulation-system-ects_en

normally be recorded at unit level on transcripts but will document what amount and level of credit has been accepted from the other institution.

16.21.46 The approval process for Articulation arrangements consists of the following stages:

- Stage One: Proposal Approval
- Stage Two: Convening Approval Events and Panels
- Stage Three: Approval Event Documentation
- Stage Four: The Approval Event & Approval Criteria
- Stage Five: Approval Event Outcomes
- Stage Six: After the Approval Event

A) STAGE ONE: PROPOSAL APPROVAL

16.21.47 All new Link Partner Articulation Arrangement proposals must be approved in line with the Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process outlined in Part 2 before Stage Two of the Approval Process may be initiated.

B) STAGE TWO: CONVENING APPROVAL EVENTS AND PANELS

16.21.48 Following authorization of the articulation arrangement proposal, the Partnerships Quality Manager will convene an Articulation Approval Event and appoint members to the approval panel in consultation with the Head of Quality & Partnerships.

16.21.49 The panel for this event is shown in [Table 16.16](#).

16.21.50 Any changes to the panel must be approved by the Head of Quality & Partnerships.

TABLE 16.13: MEMBERSHIP OF THE ARTICULATION APPROVAL PANEL

Panellist	Criteria for Appointment	Panel Role
Chair	A senior academic member of staff.	To lead discussions.
Two Internal Academic Representatives	Two senior academics.	To give an internal academic view about the proposed articulation arrangement for the course being articulated to.
A Quality Assurance Representative	Normally the Head of Quality & Partnerships or Partnerships Quality Manager	To act in an advisory capacity.
Secretary	A suitable nominee identified by the Head of Quality & Partnerships.	To record the proceedings and produce minutes and outcome reports of the event.

C) STAGE THREE: APPROVAL EVENT DOCUMENTATION

16.21.51 The approval event documentation required to be considered by the approval panel is shown in [Table 16.17](#).

16.21.52 Documentation for the event should be prepared by the Partner and submitted to the Quality Team in electronic format at least three weeks prior to the event.

- 16.21.53 The Quality Team will be responsible for circulating the approval event documentation to the panel members three weeks prior to the event to provide sufficient time for them to review the documentation and form lines of enquiry.

TABLE 16.14: REQUIRED ARTICULATION APPROVAL EVENT DOCUMENTATION

Document No.	Documentation Required
AQF16-15	<p>An Articulation Rationale produced using the template provided (AQF16-15) or other agreed format.</p> <p>This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The rationale for the proposal. b) Information about the articulation model (how much credit is being requested against which course). c) An overview of the originating course. d) Information regarding the partner's teaching, learning and assessment strategy. e) A critical description of the partner's physical and human resources (whether there are sufficient learning resources in place to support the originating course and whether staff are appropriately qualified). f) Confirmation of arrangements for the operational and quality assurance management of the articulation. g) Details of how progression will be managed and how students will be supported on their entry to the course (i.e. through induction and provision of academic and pastoral support, etc.).
AQF16-16	<p>Articulation Mapping using the template provided (AQF-16-16) or other agreed format:</p> <p>This should consider the equivalency of the originating course to an amount of credit on the destination course in terms of the level of study expressed through Learning Outcomes (with reference to the FHEQ), the content of the curriculum and the amount of 'effort' required to successfully complete the originating course.</p> <p>This should be carried out at a unit level.</p>

D) STAGE FOUR: THE APPROVAL EVENT

I. THE APPROVAL EVENT

- 16.21.54 A standard agenda for the event is shown in [Table 16.18](#); the start time may be tailored as appropriate.
- 16.21.55 The Quality Partnerships Manager in liaison with the Head of Quality & Partnerships will advise and confirm with the Course Leader / Partner of the destination course which staff will be attending the approval event.
- 16.21.56 The Quality Team will be responsible for confirming the date, time, agenda and location of the approval event with the panel and staff.
- 16.21.57 Panel members and staff are expected to attend for the entire event.

TABLE 16.15: STANDARD AGENDA FOR ARTICULATION ARRANGEMENT APPROVAL EVENTS

Time	Item
10:00	Discussion of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The rationale for the proposal. b) The equivalency between the initial years of study at the partner and the levels for which credit is being sought. c) The coherence of the curriculum when viewed as a single entity rather than two separate courses. d) The preparedness of students upon transfer to the final year(s) of the destination course at the UCO. e) Arrangements for liaison between the partner and the UCO going forward, with particular emphasis on curriculum drift, ensuring student preparedness, staff development.
12:00	Agreement of outcomes.

II. THE APPROVAL CRITERIA

16.21.58 The panel is responsible for assessing the approval event documentation and for providing assurance to the UCO that the proposal fulfils the following approval criteria:

- a) The proposal aligns with the UCO's Strategic Plan, mission and aims.
- b) The partner institution is of good standing.
- c) Management of the on-going relationship is clearly articulated, with particular reference to periodically review the arrangement to ensure that course curricula remain compatible.
- d) The academic level of the originating course curriculum is aligned with the UCO's level descriptors and the FHEQ.
- e) The subject coverage at the collaborating institution is comparable with that which students would have experienced at the UCO (which is in turn mapped on to Subject Benchmark Statements).
- f) The teaching and learning methods prepare students for a 'student-centred' learning experience characteristic of higher-level academic work.
- g) The quality of learning opportunities and the educational experience students will have on the originating course are satisfactory.
- h) Appropriate learning resources at the partner institution are in place and comparable with those of the UCO.

16.21.59 In summary, the UCO will seek to assure itself that the students it admits through articulation arrangements are likely to succeed if they transfer to the UCO.

E) STAGE FIVE: APPROVAL EVENT OUTCOMES

16.21.60 The possible outcomes from articulation approval events are:

- a) Approval of the proposed articulation arrangement without conditions.

- b) Approval of the proposed articulation arrangement subject to conditions and / or additional information.
 - c) Non-approval (either with a recommendation to resubmit at a later date or to withdraw the proposal).
- 16.21.61 Recommendations for enhancements to the articulation arrangement may also be made by the panel, and although these are not required to be met it is expected that they will be considered by the Course Leader / Partner and that action or comment on them will be given as appropriate in the response.
- 16.21.62 The Chair of the approval panel will normally report outline feedback orally to the Course Leader and key staff at the event's final feedback session. However, confirmation of event outcomes is formally provided in the Articulation approval event outcome report following the event.

F) STAGE SIX: AFTER THE APPROVAL EVENT

- 16.21.63 Following the approval event an Articulation approval event outcome report will be produced by the panel Secretary normally within two weeks after the event. This will contain a brief narrative of the event and detail the event outcomes together with the requisite deadlines and any recommendations for enhancement. Reasons for the panel's decisions should also be included.
- 16.21.64 The Secretary will circulate the outcome report to the panel for agreement following which the Panel Chair should sign the report to verify approval.
- 16.21.65 The Secretary will then disseminate the approved report to the Vice-Chancellor, Partnerships Quality Manager, Head of Quality & Partnerships, Course Leader / Partner and key staff who attended the event with an Articulation Approval Event Conditions Response Form (AQF16-17) with a deadline for its completion by the Course Leader.
- 16.21.66 The Course Leader, in consultation with partner staff, should complete the response form and return it to the panel Secretary within the requisite timeline.
- 16.21.67 The Secretary will circulate the response form to the panel for their consideration and approval. The panel is responsible for ensuring that the responses to the conditions are satisfactory. The chair of the panel should then sign the response form on behalf of the panel to indicate approval of the response and forward this to the panel Secretary.
- 16.21.68 All approval conditions are required to be addressed before the articulation arrangement can be implemented.
- 16.21.69 The panel Secretary will then circulate the approved and signed response form to the Panel Chair for authorization and sign-off prior to being shared with the Course Leader / Partner and other key staff.
- 16.21.70 The authorized response form, together with the event outcome report, will be submitted to the TQSC for approval and sign-off by this committee's chair, and then to the Academic Council to note.
- 16.21.71 Once approved by the TQSC:
 - a) Confirmation of approval will be communicated to the Course Leader / Partner and key staff by the Head of Quality & Partnerships in writing.
 - b) A contract must be drawn up (or an existing contract added to) describing the nature of the relationship; approval of the level and volume of credit for a fixed period of time not normally longer than five years should be reflected in the validity period of the contract.

- c) The partner institution will be entered into the Collaborative Activity Register by the Quality Team.

16.21.72 The articulation arrangement should not be implemented until the contract has been signed by the UCO and partner.

16.22 LINK PARTNER PROVISION: PROGRESSION ARRANGEMENT

APPROVAL PROCESS

16.22.35 A progression arrangement is where the UCO recognizes the award a student receives at another institution having successfully completed a course of study (the 'originating' course) as an entry qualification for specified UCO courses ('destination' courses), thereby creating a formal link between the UCO and the other institution.

16.22.36 Progression arrangements:

- a) Guarantee students' admission to the destination course as long as they meet specified conditions listed in the agreement (e.g., minimum grades in the originating course) and meet published UCO admissions requirements.
- b) Do not recognise and grant specific credit to applicants from the partner institution.
- c) Normally specify a maximum number of students per year who may progress under the terms of the agreement, with progression agreement candidates nominated by the partner institution.

16.22.37 Under progression arrangements, final admissions decisions are made by an appropriate academic staff member on the basis of evidence of the student's achievement in line with the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access¹⁵ and through the UCO's Recognition of Prior Learning processes, specifically the accreditation of certificated learning.

16.22.38 The approval process for Articulation arrangements consists of the following stages:

- Stage One: Outline Approval
- Stage Two: Convening Approval Events and Panels
- Stage Three: Approval Event Documentation
- Stage Four: The Approval Event & Approval Criteria
- Stage Five: Approval Event Outcomes
- Stage Six: After the Approval Event

A) STAGE ONE: PROPOSAL APPROVAL

16.22.39 All new Link Partner Progression Arrangement proposals must be approved in line with the Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process outlined in Part 2 before Stage Two of the Approval Process may be initiated.

B) STAGE TWO: CONVENING APPROVAL EVENTS AND PANELS

16.22.40 Following authorization of the progression arrangement proposal, the Quality Partnerships Manager will convene a Progression Approval Event and appoint members to the approval panel in consultation with the Head of Quality & Partnerships.

¹⁵ <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/admissions-recruitment-and-widening-access>

16.22.41 The panel for this event is shown in [Table 16.19](#).

16.22.42 Any changes to the panel must be approved by the Head of Quality & Partnerships.

TABLE 16.16: MEMBERSHIP OF THE PROGRESSION ARRANGEMENT APPROVAL PANEL

Panellist	Criteria for Appointment	Panel Role
Chair	A senior academic member of staff.	To lead discussions.
Two Internal Academic Representatives	Two senior academics from the destination course.	To give an internal academic view about the proposed progression arrangement.
A Quality Assurance Representative	Normally the Head of Quality & Partnerships or Partnerships Quality Manager	To act in an advisory capacity.
Secretary	A suitable nominee identified by the Head of Quality & Partnerships.	To record the proceedings and produce minutes and outcome reports of the event.

C) STAGE THREE: APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION

16.22.43 The approval event documentation required to be considered by the approval panel is shown in [Table 16.20](#).

16.22.44 Documentation for the approval event should be prepared by the Partner in consultation with relevant staff of the destination course and submitted to the Quality Team in electronic format at least three weeks prior to the event.

16.22.45 The Quality Team will be responsible for circulating the approval event documentation to the panel members three weeks prior to the event to provide sufficient time for them to review the documentation and form lines of enquiry.

TABLE 16.17: REQUIRED PROGRESSION ARRANGEMENT APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION

Document No.	Documentation Required
AQF16-18	<p>Progression Arrangement Rationale completed using the template provided (AQF16-18). This should include information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A statement outlining the strategic rationale for the proposal with reference to the UCO's Strategic Plan. b) Details of the partner(s) from which progression is sought and the course(s) offered by the partner(s) which are involved. c) For overseas agreements evidence of the general level of the partner(s) course(s) against UK HE qualifications as established by Ecctis¹⁶ or other external benchmarks. d) An indication of any minimum entry requirements (e.g. GPA) consistent with UK expectations and any available pre-entry support and details of entry and exit requirements of such support to allow progression onto the UCO's course. e) A brief record of communication (e.g. visits, physical and electronic meetings) undertaken by key staff with the partner(s) and the purpose of those meetings.

¹⁶ <https://www.ecctis.com/>

	<p>f) A description of how the on-going relationship will be managed, with particular reference to periodically assuring that the mapping of the curriculum remains appropriate.</p> <p>g) A statement supporting the proposal from the Course Team of the destination course.</p>
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D) STAGE FOUR: THE APPROVAL EVENT & APPROVAL CRITERIA

- 16.22.46 A standard agenda for the event is shown in [Table 16.21](#); the start time may be tailored as appropriate.
- 16.22.47 The Quality Partnerships Manager in liaison with the Head of Quality & Partnerships and other relevant UCO staff will advise and confirm with the Course Leader / Partner of the destination course which staff will be attending the approval event.
- 16.22.48 The Quality Team will be responsible for confirming the date, time, agenda and location of the approval event with the panel and staff.
- 16.22.49 Panel members and staff are expected to attend for the entire event.

TABLE 16.18: STANDARD AGENDA FOR PROGRESSION ARRANGEMENT APPROVAL EVENTS

Time	Item
10:00	<p>Discussion of:</p> <p>a) The rationale for the proposal.</p> <p>b) The preparedness of students upon admission to the destination course.</p> <p>c) Arrangements for liaison between the partner and the UCO going forward, with particular emphasis on curriculum drift, ensuring student preparedness, staff development.</p>
12:00	Agreement of outcomes.

- 16.22.50 The panel is responsible for assessing the approval event documentation and for providing assurance to the UCO that the proposal fulfils the following approval criteria:
- a) The proposal aligns with the UCO's Strategic Plan, mission and aims.
- b) The partner institution is of good standing.
- c) The general level of the originating course is benchmarked against UK HE qualifications as established by Ecctis¹⁷ and other appropriate external benchmarks.
- d) The minimum entry requirements (e.g. GPA) of the originating course are consistent with UK expectations.
- e) Any available pre-entry support and details of entry and exit requirements of such support allowing progression onto the UCO's course are clearly articulated and appropriate.
- f) Management of the on-going relationship is clearly articulated, with particular reference to periodically assuring that the mapping of the curriculum remains appropriate.
- 16.22.51 In summary, the UCO will seek to assure itself that the students it admits through progression arrangements are likely to succeed if they are admitted onto a destination course at the UCO.

¹⁷ <https://www.ecctis.com/>

E) STAGE FIVE: APPROVAL EVENT OUTCOMES

- 16.22.52 The possible outcomes from progression approval events are:
- a) Approval of the proposed progression arrangement without conditions.
 - b) Approval of the proposed progression arrangement with conditions and / or request for additional information.
 - c) Non-approval (either with a recommendation to resubmit at a later date or to withdraw the proposal).
- 16.22.53 The chair of the approval panel will normally report outline feedback informally to the Course Leaders of the destination and originating course and key staff immediately after the event. However, confirmation of event outcomes is formally provided in the Progression approval event outcome report following the event.

F) STAGE SIX: AFTER THE APPROVAL EVENT

- 16.22.54 Following the approval event, a Progression approval event outcome report will be produced by the panel Secretary normally within two weeks after the event. This will contain a brief narrative of the event and detail the event outcomes together with the requisite deadlines and any recommendations for enhancement. Reasons for the panel's decisions should also be included.
- 16.22.55 The panel Secretary will circulate the outcome report to the panel for agreement following which the Chair should sign the report to verify approval.
- 16.22.56 The Secretary will then disseminate the approved report to the Vice-Chancellor, Quality Partnerships Manager, Head of Quality & Partnerships, Course Leader and key staff who attended the event.
- 16.22.57 The Course Leader is required to complete a Progression Approval Event Conditions Response Form (AQF16-19) to address approval conditions and recommendations. All approval conditions are required to be addressed before the progression arrangement can be implemented. The response form shall be authorized by the Panel Chair.
- 16.22.58 The authorized response form, together with the event outcome report, will be submitted to the TQSC for approval and sign-off by this committee's chair, and then to the Academic Council to note.
- 16.22.59 Once approved by the TQSC:
- a) Confirmation of approval will be communicated to the Course Leader and key staff by the Head of Quality & Partnerships in writing.
 - b) A contract must be drawn up (or an existing contract added to) describing the nature of the relationship; approval of the fixed period of time not normally longer than three years should be reflected in the validity period of the contract.
 - c) The partner institution will be entered into the Collaborative Activity Register by the Quality Team.
 - d) Course and publicity documentation should be amended to inform students that a progression agreement exists between the UCO and the partner.
- 16.22.60 The progression arrangement should not be implemented until the contract has been signed by the UCO and partner institution.

16.23 LINK PARTNER PROVISION: MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING APPROVAL PROCESS

- 16.23.35 The UCO recognizes that there may be opportunities for collaboration and positive academic engagement with other institutions that benefit both parties without establishing a formal legal relationship between the two institutions. To enable such collaboration, the UCO may enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with another institution.
- 16.23.36 Memoranda of Understanding are intended to promote cooperation, detailed discussions and collaborative activities between the UCO and other institutions and to establish a commitment to explore the potential for:
- a) Co-operation on new or existing academic courses.
 - b) The development of joint research activities, including joint supervision of research students, collaboration on research investigations and doctoral student training and development.
 - c) Staff exchange or mutual visits to both institutions.
 - d) Student exchange or mutual visits to both institutions.
 - e) The exchange of information in the form of publications and journals, reference materials and other results of teaching and research.
 - f) Joint organisation of meetings, conferences and seminars.
 - g) Any other activities viewed to be potentially beneficial.
- 16.23.37 In addition, a Memorandum of Understanding may be entered into during the development of a more formal relationship with another institution, for instance with overseas institutions, where a Memorandum of Understanding may be entered into at an initial stage where it sets out a basis for working towards a more formal agreement without committing the UCO to any legal obligations or financial transactions.
- 16.23.38 The UCO acknowledges that entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with another institution can have several potential effects on the UCO, including:
- a) Legal
 - b) Financial
 - c) Reputational
- 16.23.39 Although the UCO should not be exposed to binding legal relations on entry into a Memorandum of Understanding with another party, any individual who is contemplating negotiating or entering the UCO into a Memorandum of Understanding must ensure they have appropriate delegated authority to be able to negotiate and/or enter the UCO into any such proposed arrangement before they commence negotiations and/or reach agreement. Subsequently it is important that Memoranda of Understanding are approved through an appropriately robust process.
- 16.23.40 Memoranda of Understanding require the approval and oversight of the UCO, which is exercised through the Senior Management Team on behalf of the Academic Council, to ensure that partner institutions share the UCO's mission and vision and align with its strategic aims and objectives.
- 16.23.41 Approval of Memoranda of Understanding consist of three Stages:
- a) Stage 1: Proposal Approval

- b) Stage 2: Formal Approval
- c) Stage 3: Following Approval

A) STAGE ONE: PROPOSAL APPROVAL

- 16.23.42 The Vice-Chancellor and / or other relevant senior UCO staff are normally the first points of contact in relation to any new Memoranda of Understanding, who will provide advice on the proposal and approval processes.
- 16.23.43 All new Link Partner provision proposals must be approved in line with the Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process outlined in Part 2 before Stage Two of the Approval Process may be initiated.

B) STAGE TWO: FORMAL APPROVAL

- 16.23.44 Following approval of the Memorandum of Understanding proposal, the Partnerships Quality Manager in liaison with the Head of Quality & Partnerships shall confirm the documentation requirements for Formal Approval with the proposing party.
- 16.23.45 A draft Memorandum of Understanding (AQF16-02) should be developed by the relevant senior staff member in liaison with the Head of Quality & Partnerships and the Vice-Chancellor and submitted for consideration by the Senior Management Team.
- 16.23.46 The Senior Management Team may make recommendations to enhance or request further information to clarify the proposed Memorandum of Understanding. In these instances, the sponsor of the proposal is responsible for addressing any recommendations and re-submitting the approval form to the Senior Management Team until the proposal is signed off by the chair, indicating approval of the proposal.
- 16.23.47 The Senior Management Team will then recommend the proposed Memorandum of Understanding for formal approval by the Academic Council.

C) STAGE THREE: FOLLOWING APPROVAL

- 16.23.48 Following formal approval by the Academic Council the Memorandum of Understanding is agreed and signed by the appropriate authorised signatories of the UCO. Memoranda of Understanding may only be signed by the Vice-Chancellor or a Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the UCO and should not be implemented until sign-off by both UCO and partner parties have been completed.
- 16.23.49 Two copies of the Memorandum of Understanding should be signed; one will be lodged with the Quality Team, the other with the partner institution.
- 16.23.50 Once the Memorandum of Understanding has been signed, the partner institution will be added to the Collaborative Activity Register by the Quality Team.
- 16.23.51 A Memorandum of Understanding should be signed for a maximum of 5 years.

PART 5: MANAGEMENT OF COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

16.24 INTRODUCTION

- 16.24.35 Where the partner is responsible for the delivery of provision, they will also undertake most of its day-to-day management. To maintain oversight of this, and to act as the liaison point for a particular course or courses, the UCO will normally appoint a Link Tutor.
- 16.24.36 Matters of concern regarding quality, standards or the student experience of collaborative partnerships or provision should be raised with the Link Tutor, Partnerships Quality Manager or the Head of Quality & Partnerships. A review of the risk assessment for the partnership may be recommended, on which basis further action may be required.

16.25 THE LINK TUTOR ROLE

- 16.25.35 All collaborative partnerships will have a Link Tutor appointed to act as the main line of communication between the UCO and partner. Link Tutors are assigned to oversee the relationship at an institutional level and to provide liaison across UCO portfolios; they will act as a single point of contact internally and for the partner.
- 16.25.36 Link Tutors will manage the relationship to help ensure that academic standards, the quality of learning opportunities and the equivalency of the student experience are maintained and enhanced. This involves two-way communication and exchange of good practice. Link Tutors will provide the UCO with the assurance that standards are being maintained.
- 16.25.37 The Link Tutor role is predominantly one of customer relationship management, and it is expected that the Link Tutor will maintain regular contact with the partner electronically and through visits to the partner in person (at least once per academic year).
- 16.25.38 It is expected that Link Tutors have experience of course management, knowledge of the UCO's quality assurance processes and have a high level of inter-personal skills. They will not have any formal affiliations to the partner, such as teaching on or being an External Examiner for the course or have a personal relationship with partner members of staff.
- 16.25.39 The main responsibility of the Link Tutor is to facilitate good working relationships between the UCO and the partner institution, maintaining regular contact with the course coordinator at the partner institution and supporting them in fulfilling their responsibilities.
- 16.25.40 The Link Tutor will normally produce an end-of year report per course and partnership as appropriate that are considered by the CPSC and the TQSC and Academic Council to note. The reports will assist in enabling effective monitoring of the relationship.
- 16.25.41 The specific responsibilities of the Link Tutor will depend on the category of partner and the type of provision involved and may involve:
- To support the partner and ensure that responsibilities assigned to them with regard to the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education are fulfilled, and that responsibilities allocated through the approval / review process as stated in the Academic Quality Framework are discharged.
 - Maintenance and updating of the risk register associated with the partnership.
 - Undertaking regular reporting on the health of the partnership to the CPSC and creating and monitoring associated action plans.
 - Carrying out reviews of public information presented on the partner's website.
 - Monitoring the implementation of arrangements for admissions and progression.

- f) Coordinating the assessment process – which includes the approval of assessment tasks, marking and moderation of work, and feedback to students – in line with the UCO's Academic Regulations and policies.
- g) Receiving reports on unit feedback from students where partners operate an in-house system and providing these to the Partnerships Quality Manager to allow for central monitoring and action through the CPSC.
- h) Coordinating approval of CVs of new staff teaching on UCO courses at the partner and providing the Partnerships Quality Manager with a copy of approved documentation.
- i) Acting as a critical friend in relation to institutional review.
- j) Supporting the partner and ensuring that responsibilities assigned to them are discharged and that UCO regulations and policies are applied correctly.
- k) Ensuring that existing provision is operating as agreed and delivered according to the Course Information Form.
- l) Liaising with UCO appointed External Examiners and providing the partner with copies of External Examiner Reports.
- m) Coordinating the transfer of data from the Partner to the UCO for the production of award certificates and transcripts, and for the preparation of funding and other statutory returns.
- n) Assisting with the induction of staff at new partners, undertaking ongoing course-specific staff development for partner staff and hosting visits at the UCO whenever required, including inviting staff from partner institutions to relevant staff development events.
- o) Assisting in procedures regarding the proposal and approval of new provision.
- p) Reviewing marketing and publicity materials and information provided to students regularly to ensure that the relationship with the UCO and the information regarding the course(s) and is portrayed accurately and that standards regarding the use of the UCO's name and logos are adhered to, and where this is not the case, reporting issues to the Quality Partnerships Manager or Head of Quality & Partnerships.
- q) Keeping other relevant UCO colleagues informed of activities, successes and problems, as appropriate on a timely basis.

16.25.42 Responsibilities assigned to Link Tutors for franchise and validated provision may also include:

- a) Participating, wherever possible, in student induction procedures at the partner to facilitate new students' understanding of the expectations, values and ethos of the UCO so that new students feel part of the UCO and its student body.
- b) Attending course committee meetings at the partner institution whenever possible and providing guidance on effective methods of eliciting student feedback and closing the feedback loop to ensure that the student voice is heard.
- c) To liaise with UCO-appointed External Examiners.
- d) Ensuring that staff at the partner fully consider issues raised within External Examiner Reports with the input of student representatives.
- e) Attendance at Boards of Examiners as Member/Chair.
- f) Ensuring that students have the opportunity to view External Examiner Reports and approve responses for their course.

- g) Keeping course delivery staff in partner institutions updated with relevant changes within the course and at the UCO.
- h) Where provision is franchised, keeping the partner advised as to changes to the curriculum at the UCO and the transition arrangements. Where the provision is validated, ensuring that changes to the curriculum are processed appropriately (particularly where partners have been granted delegated responsibility for minor modifications).
- i) Providing advice and guidance on course and unit modification and review processes as appropriate for the type of provision and acting as a critical friend when required.

16.25.43 For Link Tutors appointed to articulation agreements the responsibilities may also include:

- a) Ensuring that any adjustments to curricula at both institutions are closely managed and clearly communicated, and that the curricula and assessment regimes continue to be matched. Where adjustments jeopardise the mapping exercise carried out through the approval/review process, alerting the Partnerships Quality Manager or Head of Quality & Partnerships that an additional review of the provision may be required.

16.26 REPORTING ON PARTNERSHIPS

A) PARTNERSHIP VISIT LOGS & REPORTS

- 16.26.35 The Link Tutor is responsible for developing and overseeing an annual schedule of visits to a partner in any given academic year in line with the Link Tutor Handbook and Appendices (AQF16-20a-d). This schedule will be approved by the CPSC on behalf of the TQSC and will ensure that visits are coordinated to confer maximum benefit to the partnership and its students, while minimising the burden placed on them. Deviations from the schedule will be noted and justified through reporting to the CPSC.
- 16.26.36 Following a visit made by a Link Tutor (or other member of academic or administrative staff in connection with a specific course) or any other specific contact with the partner regarding provision, the Link Tutor must update the Partnership Visit Log (AQF16-21). This must be submitted to Partnerships Quality Manager within two weeks of return, to ensure that any issues are picked up and addressed in a timely fashion.
- 16.26.37 The Link Tutor will produce a summary report based on the visit logs and any issues which will be presented to the CPSC for information and / or discussion.
- 16.26.38 A record of visit logs submitted will be maintained by the Quality Team.

B) PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORTS

- 16.26.39 Drawing on visit logs, the Link Tutor, in consultation with relevant UCO and partner staff, produces a Partnership Annual Report (one per collaborative partnership) (AQF16-22). This provides an overview of the year's activity, allows for confirmation that annual duties have been undertaken, and enables the reporting of any issues and good practice and opportunities for enhancements.
- 16.26.40 Partnership annual reports should be considered by the CPSC and TQSC for endorsement and recommendation for approval by the Academic Council.

16.27 COLLABORATIVE PROVISION OPERATIONS MANUAL

- 16.27.35 A Collaborative Provision Operations Manual (CPOM) (AQF16-23) may be produced for some associate partners. The CPOM will clearly describe the roles and responsibilities of both the UCO and partner regarding the management of the partnership and expectations

- regarding quality assurance matters and will generally build on the information contained in the contract as required.
- 16.27.36 The CPOM will also contain information regarding the approved provision that the partner delivers and contact details for both parties.
- 16.27.37 CPOMs will be updated on an annual basis by the relevant Link Tutor, partner, Partnerships Quality Manager and Head of Quality & Partnerships to ensure that the information presented within them remains current.
- 16.27.38 Updates to CPOMs will be considered by the CPSC and endorsed by the TQSC on behalf of the Academic Council.

PART 6: QUALITY ASSURANCE & ENHANCEMENT PROCESSES

16.28 INTRODUCTION

- 16.28.35 Following the approval of a partner, provision, and mode of delivery there are a number of activities undertaken to ensure the smooth management (see Part 3) and the fulfilment of quality assurance and enhancement processes of the partnership.
- 16.28.36 UCO and partner staff should familiarise themselves with these activities. Clarification regarding their applicability should be sought from the Partnerships Quality Manager at the earliest opportunity.
- 16.28.37 To manage the quality assurance, enhancement and management activities on an ongoing basis, there must be appropriate academic and administrative resources in place for the smooth operation of the collaborative provision portfolio. While the UCO maintains ultimate control and oversight through the monitoring and review procedures appropriate to the relationship, certain operational processes may be delegated to the partner.
- 16.28.38 The activities set out in this section may be relevant to all circumstances or may be differentiated as a consequence of the level of relationship with the partner, the provision or mode of delivery.

16.29 CONFIRMATION OF REGULATIONS

- 16.29.35 Unless variations to the UCO's Academic Regulations are expressly confirmed by the Academic Council through the collaborative partner and provision approval processes, the UCO's Academic Regulations will apply in all circumstances.
- 16.29.36 A rationale will be required for any variance, the most common being the need to adhere to requirements of a professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB), which should be submitted through the Link Tutor for action through the UCO's Course and Unit Modification Process (see AQF Section 4).

16.30 STUDENT ADMISSIONS

- 16.30.35 Responsibility for the admittance of students may be delegated to the partner, based on the UCO's standard entry criteria (see AQF Section 7: Academic Regulations) and decided on a case-by-case basis depending on the type of partner, provision, and maturity of the relationship with the UCO.
- 16.30.36 Where responsibility is delegated to the partner, the UCO will remain the final arbiter of admissions decisions and there may be additional measures put in place by the UCO to ensure entry criteria are applied consistently, such as the screening of applications by an appropriate member of staff at the UCO.
- 16.30.37 Where delegation has been agreed this will be detailed in the CPOM for the partnership.
- 16.30.38 Candidates may be admitted to courses provided through collaborative partners using either a defined articulation route set up by the UCO or through standard UCO RPL procedures (see AQF Section 7: Academic Regulations) with the UCO determining the point for admission of potential students.

16.31 STUDENT REGISTRATION

- 16.31.35 Any student being taught on a course leading to an award of the UCO must be registered with the UCO at the start of their course. The partner is not permitted to allow students who are not registered with the UCO to attend classes in any capacity.
- 16.31.36 Student registration is managed within the UCO using information provided by the partner, which must be accurate and complete to ensure that students' certificates and transcripts are correct.
- 16.31.37 To ensure ongoing accuracy the partner is required to communicate regularly with the UCO regarding matters affecting students' registration details and status, for example:
- a) Suspension of registration or permanent withdrawal.
 - b) Extensions of registration period or repeat periods of study.
 - c) Change of student's name or title.
- 16.31.38 In registering for a UCO award, students confirm that they undertake to observe the UCO's Academic Regulations as applicable for their course of study and any regulations in force at the partner institution; the collaboration contract and Course Handbook should clearly state under which circumstances each set of regulations take precedence.

16.32 INFORMATION PROVIDED TO STUDENTS

- 16.32.35 The UCO ensures that students are given accurate and comprehensive information about their course, which is comparable to that given to students studying courses at the UCO; this is particularly important for franchised provision where the course will be taught at the UCO as well as through the partner.
- 16.32.36 Course information is confirmed as accurate through approval and review events, and the Link Tutor will also be responsible for making these assurances on an ongoing basis.
- 16.32.37 Procedures relating to publicity, marketing and publicly available information are detailed below.
- 16.32.38 The UCO requires that all students at partners studying for a UCO award have access to a copy of the approved Course Information Form (or equivalent).
- 16.32.39 In addition, it is expected that students on franchised or validated courses have access to:
- a) A student / course handbook which explains the students' relationship with the UCO and provides information about complaints and appeals procedures, how they can contact the UCO and key contacts at the partner.
 - b) Unit Information Forms.
 - c) Information regarding the opportunities for students to use the UCO's learning resources and entitlement to use other resources (as agreed in the contract).
- 16.32.40 A Course Handbook template (AQF04-06) is produced by the UCO to ensure that standard course-specific information is included for all courses and which Course Leaders can populate as necessary. For partnerships there will also need to be some contextualisation of the information to make it relevant for the relationship, particularly around student support. It is expected that, wherever possible, course handbooks for collaborative provision will be produced in this way.
- 16.32.41 In the case of articulation agreements, this information will also include:

- a) Information about the progression to the specified UCO degree, including any relevant terms and conditions.
- b) Information about fees and any other expenses payable to the UCO and when these are to be paid.

16.33 FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS

- 16.33.35 The UCO recognises the importance of providing students studying at partners with the opportunity to comment on their experience, but also that there are challenges inherent in making this representation effective.
- 16.33.36 The UCO's standard mechanisms for obtaining student feedback are described in AQF Section 10: The Student Voice, which should be read in conjunction with this section.
- 16.33.37 Partners are expected to implement the UCO's student survey process with the help of their Link Tutor. An exception may be made to the implementation of this where it can be demonstrated that the partner's in-house measures provide the same opportunities for feedback. If this is approved, then the Link Tutor will be responsible for ensuring that feedback is considered centrally by the UCO by providing results to the Partnerships Quality Manager for consideration by the CPSC and TQSC. Any exceptions to the student survey process will be written into the CPOM or noted as a variance to UCO regulations.
- 16.33.38 Link Tutors are required to take the opportunity to meet with students whenever possible to gain their feedback. A report of these discussions is expected to be captured in course visit logs.
- 16.33.39 One of the ways for partners to seek comment from students is to have in place a course committee system which includes representation from the student body. Although this system is recommended by the UCO it recognises that these will not always be the most effective way of hearing the student voice, particularly where the numbers on the provision are small. In these cases, staff-student committees or focus groups may be more appropriate.
- 16.33.40 The system of student representation, and the methods for closing the feedback loop, will be considered as part of the approval / review process and be described in the CPOM.

16.34 ACADEMIC OFFENCES, ACADEMIC APPEALS, CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE AND COMPLAINTS

A) ACADEMIC OFFENCES

- 16.34.35 Academic offences (collusion, fabrication, cheating, impersonation and plagiarism) will normally be dealt with under the UCO's Academic Discipline Policy and Procedures¹⁸, and involve joint investigations by the UCO and the partner unless exceptionally agreed at collaborative partner / provision approval or review and formally approved through the Academic Council via the TQSC.
- 16.34.36 Academic offences will be considered by the UCO's Academic Conduct Panel.
- 16.34.37 Variations to this will be considered at collaborative partner / provision approval or review, and formally approved through the Academic Council via the TQSC. These will be recorded in the CPOM.

¹⁸ <https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy>

B) ACADEMIC APPEALS

- 16.34.38 Academic appeals submitted by students at associate partners against a decision of a Board of Examiners will be dealt with under the UCO's Academic Appeals Policy¹⁹, unless exceptionally agreed at collaborative partner / provision approval or review and formally approved through the Academic Council via the TQSC.
- 16.34.39 Where appropriate, responsibility for undertaking Academic Appeal Policy Stage 1 investigations and responding to the appellant may be delegated to the partner. This will be agreed at collaborative partner / provision approval or review and formally approved through the Academic Council via the TQSC and recorded in the CPOM. Irrespective of this, students will still be able to request a review of the initial judgement via the UCO's Appeals Review Board as described in Stage 2 of the policy.
- 16.34.40 Students studying at a collaborative partner where their course of study does not lead to an award of the UCO will have the ultimate right of appeal to that partner institution.

C) CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE

- 16.34.41 In all matters of conduct and discipline (other than matters included within the UCO's Academic Discipline Policy) students are subject to the relevant rules and procedures of the partner institution.
- 16.34.42 Where a disciplinary matter has implications for quality and standards (in the case of assessment irregularities for example), the matter will normally be referred to the UCO for consideration under its Academic Discipline Policy.

D) COMPLAINTS

- 16.34.43 All complaints raised by students studying at the partner institution should be addressed through the procedure of the partner in the first instance.
- 16.34.44 If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, they may bring the complaint to the attention of the UCO.
- 16.34.45 The UCO will only consider complaints in relation to issues concerning the delivery or assessment of the programme or the resources provided directly to support study on the programme.
- 16.34.46 Students studying at a collaborative partner where their course of study does not lead to an award of the UCO will have the ultimate right of complaint to that partner institution.

16.35 ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS

- 16.35.35 Depending on the type of collaborative relationship and provision there may be instances when partners are delegated responsibility for particular aspects of the assessment or examination process.
- 16.35.36 In all cases the lines of responsibility for assessment and examination processes must be made clear through the contract and / or CPOM.
- 16.35.37 The initial stages of a collaborative relationship provide an opportunity for ongoing development of partner staff, including support regarding development of the capacity to undertake marking duties.

¹⁹ <https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy>

- 16.35.38 External Examiners must approve assessment tasks prior to them taking place (see AQF Section 11: External Examining).
- 16.35.39 The UCO's standard assessment and examination procedures are detailed in AQF Section 7: Academic Regulations (Section C: Assessment Regulations), which includes the setting and approval of assessments, marking and moderation protocols and the provision of formative and summative feedback.
- 16.35.40 Any deviation from standard practice must be formally approved and written into the collaboration contract.
- 16.35.41 The responsibility for the setting of assessments, the development of marking schemes and assessment criteria, and the marking and moderation of assessments is dependent on the type of provision as follows:
- a) For franchised provision this responsibility is taken by the UCO's Course Team.
 - b) For validated provision this will normally be devolved to the partner, although it is expected that the Link Tutor provides oversight to ensure that the standard procedures referred to in the AQF are adhered to.
- 16.35.42 Unless these responsibilities are determined otherwise at approval or review (or exceptionally approved outside of these timeframes) and incorporated into the CPOM for the partnership it will always be assumed that responsibility follows this format.
- 16.35.43 Feedback on assessments will be given to students by the party responsible for marking.
- 16.35.44 It is expected that, wherever possible, students will submit their assessments through the UCO's virtual learning environment as appropriate.
- 16.35.45 Written submissions are processed through the UCO's plagiarism detection software. Where the use of the UCO's virtual learning environment is not possible, the partner will be required to demonstrate to the UCO the mechanism it uses to ensure that students' work is their own.
- 16.35.46 In all cases the External Examiner/s assigned to the course will be expected to receive samples of assessed work in line with the requirements described in Section 11: External Examiner of the AQF. Liaison with the External Examiner on this matter will be undertaken by the Link Tutor.
- 16.35.47 Where necessary the Link Tutor must ensure that partners are supported in developing appropriate systems for the collation and storage of any examination papers, scripts, assessment data etc. to ensure the integrity of assessment.
- 16.35.48 Partners should also be advised by the Link Tutor on the legal implications of Data Protection legislation and the Freedom of Information Act.
- 16.35.49 The Link Tutor will also ensure that assessment and examination procedures are monitored on a regular basis, and the UCO reserves the right to attend any examination sessions at their collaborative partners to ensure that procedures are being followed.

16.36 APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

- 16.36.35 As the awarding body, the UCO retains responsibility for the selection and appointment of External Examiners for all collaborative provision in line with the selection criteria and appointment process detailed in AQF Section 11: External Examining).
- 16.36.36 For collaborative arrangements it additionally requires that:

- a) Prospective External Examiners must have had no connection in the previous five years with the UCO or partner institution.
 - b) Where the Academic Council has exceptionally approved that the language of instruction and/or assessment is not English, that External Examiners have the necessary language skills.
- 16.36.37 Where provision is franchised, it will normally be the case that the External Examiner(s) currently assigned to the course / course units are also asked to cover the collaborative iteration of the units.
- 16.36.38 For validated courses the UCO may agree a procedure with the partner whereby they are able to propose potential External Examiners to the UCO, such as nomination by partner faculty and approval by the UCO. This will be recorded in the CPOM.
- 16.36.39 In all cases the UCO will be the institution to contract with the External Examiner and prepare the External Examiner to undertake their role.
- 16.36.40 Where the provision contains a specialist form of assessment, supplementary preparation may be provided by the partner, in conjunction with the UCO.
- 16.36.41 Arrangements for responding to External Examiners reports are described below.

16.37 RESPONDING TO EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

- 16.37.35 External Examiners for collaborative provision will prepare a formal Annual Report (see AQF11) and submit this to the Quality Team of the UCO regarding the course to which their appointment relates in accordance with the standard time scales set out in Section 11 of the AQF.
- 16.37.36 The Quality Team will disseminate the reports to the Vice-Chancellor, , Partner and Link Tutor.
- 16.37.37 The Link Tutor is responsible for ensuring that the partner has received the report and that it is fully considered by staff and student representatives at the partner.
- 16.37.38 The responsibility for drafting and submitting responses to External Examiner reports for each type of collaborative partnership is detailed in [Table 16.24](#).
- 16.37.39 Arrangements for dealing with any concerns raised by External Examiners which relate to the provision delivered by a partner are normally facilitated through the Link Tutor. Progress with addressing these concerns will be noted through the course annual report.
- 16.37.40 The Link Tutor is also responsible for ensuring that students are provided with the opportunity to view External Examiner reports and responses for their courses.

TABLE 16.19: RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RESPONDING TO EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORTS FOR COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Type of Collaborative Partner	Type of Collaborative Provision	Responsibility for Responding to External Examiner Annual Reports
Associate Partner	Dual Award Provision	The Course Leader (or equivalent) at the partner institution.
	Franchised Provision	The Course Leader at the UCO.
	Validated Provision	The Course Leader at the partner institution.

Link Partner	Study Centre Agreement	The Course Leader at the UCO.
	Articulation Agreement	N/A
	Progression Agreement	N/A
	Memorandum of Understanding	N/A

16.38 BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

- 16.38.35 The UCO is responsible for making progression decisions relating to all students on collaborative provision courses that lead to an award of the UCO.
- 16.38.36 The UCO will maintain up-to-date records on student progression and achievement for review purposes. Subsequently the partner must inform the UCO of all cases of withdrawal or non-progression and the reasons for these.
- 16.38.37 Full details regarding Boards of Examiners are detailed in Section 12 of the AQF and should be read in conjunction with this section.
- 16.38.38 Boards of Examiners meetings will normally be held at the UCO unless, due to the category of partner and / or the type of provision delivered, it has been agreed that they will take place at the partner's premises or online. This will be agreed at collaborative partner / provision approval or review and formally approved through the Academic Council via the TQSC and recorded in the CPOM.
- 16.38.39 In all cases the UCO requires that Boards of Examiners considering collaborative provision are chaired by a senior member of UCO staff and that the terms of reference of the Board are approved as consonant with those of Boards of Examiners at the UCO.
- 16.38.40 External Examiners for the course/s under consideration should attend the relevant Board of Examiners with additional membership that will be agreed with the partner.
- 16.38.41 Award recommendations will be made on the basis of assessed work and decisions will be confirmed through the UCO's Boards of Examiners (see AQF Section 12: Boards of Examiners).

16.39 CERTIFICATES AND TRANSCRIPTS

- 16.39.35 As the awarding body, the UCO retains sole responsibility for issuing certificates to those students who have satisfied the assessment and examination requirements for awards.
- 16.39.36 The responsibility for providing students with transcripts may be devolved to the partner with the format of the transcript being the subject of agreement between the two parties. Delegation of this function will be agreed at collaborative partner / provision approval or review, formally approved through the Academic Council via the TQSC and recorded in the CPOM.
- 16.39.37 Student data which appears on the certificate and transcript will be taken from that formally recorded on the UCO's student record system. Partners must therefore ensure that the data they provide to the UCO regarding students is accurate and must inform the UCO immediately if any details change, for example if a student changes their name upon marriage.
- 16.39.38 The wording on the certificate and transcript will be consistent with the UCO's general words and terms for these documents, including the name and location of the partner

institution. Where an exceptional variation has been approved to the language of instruction and / or assessment from English, this will also be stated.

- 16.39.39 The location of the awards ceremony for graduands from partners will be a matter for negotiation between the partner and the UCO and will normally be written into the partnership agreement and/or the CPOM.

16.40 EVALUATION, REPORTING & MONITORING

- 16.40.35 Following approval to deliver provision collaborative partners enter into the UCO's monitoring and reporting cycle (AQF Section 5: Evaluation, Reporting & Monitoring) which covers a number of separate activities. The outcomes of these activities are reflected upon and drawn together in annual reports, to present an overall view of the collaboration. The standard monitoring and reporting cycle is described fully in in Section 5 of the AQF, which should be read alongside this section.
- 16.40.36 Evaluation, reporting and monitoring is a separate process from course and institutional review, the latter of which is normally a periodic event providing an opportunity for greater reflection over a longer timeframe.
- 16.40.37 The responsibility for the different monitoring and reporting activities is dependent on the nature of the collaborative partnership and will be documented in the CPOM. The processes that will typically apply to the different type of collaborative partner are detailed in [Table 16.24](#).

TABLE 16.20: TYPICAL ANNUAL MONITORING & REPORTING PROCESSES FOR DIFFERENT COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Type of Collaborative Partner	Type of Collaborative Provision	Typical Annual Monitoring & Reporting Process
Associate Partner	Dual Award Provision	<p>a) Course Team Minutes To record ongoing Course Team activities.</p> <p>b) UCO Course Annual Monitoring Reports (see AQF5) This report should cover all delivery locations of the course to allow for cross-site comparison and comments on the effectiveness of the sites where the courses are delivered should be included. These reports should be completed by relevant partner Unit and Course Leaders (or their equivalents) respectively. These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the relevant Course Team and the CPSC.</p> <p>c) UCO Partner Annual Monitoring Report (See AQF5). This should be completed by the partner staff member assigned to complete this report. These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the CPSC and TQSC on behalf of the Academic Council.</p>
	Franchised Provision	<p>a) Course Team Minutes To record ongoing Course Team activities.</p> <p>b) UCO Course Annual Monitoring Reports (see AQF5)</p>

		<p>This report should cover all delivery locations of the course to allow for cross-site comparison and comments on the effectiveness of the sites where the courses are delivered should be included.</p> <p>These reports should be completed by relevant partner Unit and Course Leaders (or their equivalents) respectively.</p> <p>These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the relevant Course Team and CPSC.</p> <p>c) UCO Partner Annual Monitoring Report (see AQF5)</p> <p>This should be completed by the partner staff member assigned to complete this report.</p> <p>These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the CPSC and TQSC on behalf of the Academic Council.</p>
	Validated Provision	<p>a) Course Team Minutes</p> <p>To record ongoing Course Team activities</p> <p>b) UCO Course Annual Monitoring Report (see AQF5)</p> <p>This should be completed by the partner Course Leader (or equivalent).</p> <p>These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the relevant Course Team and CPSC.</p> <p>c) UCO Partner Annual Monitoring Report (see AQF5)</p> <p>This should be completed by the partner staff member assigned to complete this report.</p> <p>These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the CPSC and TQSC on behalf of the Academic Council.</p>
Link Partner	Study Centre Agreement	<p>a) Course Team Minutes</p> <p>To record ongoing Course Team activities.</p> <p>b) UCO Course Annual Monitoring Reports (see AQF5)</p> <p>This report should cover all delivery locations of course to allow for cross-site comparison and comments on the effectiveness of the sites where the courses are delivered should be included.</p> <p>These reports should be completed by relevant partner Unit and Course Leaders (or their equivalents) respectively.</p> <p>These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the relevant Course Team and CPSC.</p> <p>c) UCO Partner Annual Monitoring Report (see AQF5)</p> <p>This should be completed by the partner staff member assigned to complete this report.</p> <p>These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the CPSC and TQSC on behalf of the Academic Council.</p>
	Articulation Agreement	<p>Brief annual summary of student numbers, other pertinent data, and any updates to the risk assessment prepared by the Link Tutor and sent to CPSC.</p>

	Progression Agreement	Brief annual summary of student numbers, other pertinent data, and any updates to the risk assessment prepared by the Link Tutor and sent to CPSC.
	Memorandum of Understanding	Brief annual summary of student numbers, other pertinent data, and any updates to the risk assessment prepared by the Link Tutor and sent to CPSC.

- 16.40.38 The Link Tutor will be responsible for coordinating the completion and submission of annual reports with partners and for forwarding completed reports on to the Partnerships Quality Manager which are then considered by the CPSC, TQSC and Academic Council.
- 16.40.39 Where processes for annual monitoring and reporting are reviewed and amended by the UCO, it is the responsibility of the Link Tutor to fully brief their partner in relation to the changes.
- 16.40.40 In cases where monitoring indicates that there is a potential risk to quality and / or standards, the UCO reserves the right to invoke an extraordinary institutional review event or to suspend the collaborative provision until it is satisfied that faults have been rectified and, if this does not prove to be the case, to terminate the provision in line with the processes described in Part 6.

16.41 COURSE AND UNIT MODIFICATIONS

- 16.41.35 All courses delivered through collaborative partners must be taught as approved by the UCO and information published to students must be drawn from the approved documentation only.
- 16.41.36 Any proposed modifications to courses or units delivered through partners must be processed through the UCO's standard course and unit modification procedures described in AQF Section 4: Course & Unit Approval & Modification.
- 16.41.37 Partners may also be permitted to make an amendment to the pattern of unit delivery. This must be discussed with the Link Tutor for the course to ensure that the new pattern remains appropriate. Any changes must be approved through the UCO's standard course and unit modification procedures and communicated to the Partnerships Quality Manager who will ensure that the course unit structure on the student record system is updated.

A) FRANCHISED PROVISION

- 16.41.38 In the case of Franchised Provision, the partner may make suggestions for improvements to the course to relevant UCO faculty. Where suggestions are agreed by the Course Team amendments to the course and / or units should be processed through the UCO's course and unit modification procedures described in AQF Section 4: Course & Unit Approval & Modification.
- 16.41.39 It may also be the case that UCO faculty initiates changes to a course / unit which requires implementation at the partner. In such circumstances transition arrangements for implementation at the partner will be considered through the UCO's standard course and unit modification procedures described in AQF Section 4: Course & Unit Approval & Modification.
- 16.41.40 In both cases it is the responsibility of the Partner Manager to communicate the approved changes to the partner.

B) VALIDATED PROVISION

- 16.41.41 In the case of Validated Provision, the partner may propose a course or unit modification.
- 16.41.42 Course and unit modifications will normally be discussed with partner faculty to ensure that the alterations are appropriate and then be processed through the UCO's standard course and unit modification procedures described in AQF Section 4: Course & Unit Approval & Modification.

16.42 APPROVAL OF PARTNER STAFF (ASSOCIATE PARTNERSHIPS)

- 16.42.35 At events to approve the delivery of provision, partners will be required to submit CVs of all staff teaching on the course(s) under consideration, a list of which units they will be teaching on, and confirmation from the UCO's TQSC that they have individually been approved as appropriate to deliver the unit(s).
- 16.42.36 It is recognised, however, that between approval and review events partner staff delivering provision may change. The UCO will continue to assure itself of the suitability of new members of staff by requesting the partner to submit to the UCO a copy of new partner staff CVs plus information as to which units they will teach on when such changes occur.
- 16.42.37 Approval of new partner staff must be sought from the TQSC, who will update and authorise the Collaborative Partner Staff CV Coversheet indicating approval, followed by confirmation of this to the partner.
- 16.42.38 Partner staff who have not been approved will not be eligible to teach on the course.
- 16.42.39 The Link Tutor will be responsible for receiving CVs from the partner and coordinating signature through the TQSC unless described otherwise in the relevant CPOM.
- 16.42.40 The Link Tutor will ensure that the TQSC is provided with a copy of the Collaborative Partner Staff CV Coversheet (AQF16-11) to note the update to this record.

16.43 COLLABORATIVE PARTNER STAFF DEVELOPMENT (ASSOCIATE PARTNERS)

- 16.43.35 The UCO aims to ensure that, wherever practicable, staff teaching on courses leading to an award of the UCO at partner institutions are invited to participate in its subject-based and pedagogical staff development courses, and that they are engaged in the business of the relevant course.
- 16.43.36 Partner staff have open access to relevant procedural documents, useful web links and help guides produced by UCO and will also be provided with relationship-specific information, which includes the CPOM.
- 16.43.37 Partners based overseas will be provided with a set of developmental sessions at the beginning of the collaboration through the portfolio with which they are linked. Members of partner staff may also have the opportunity to meet with key contacts from administrative departments to familiarise them with UCO processes.
- 16.43.38 The Link Tutor provides appropriate staff development opportunities and facilitates the attendance of partner staff at course team and portfolio and UCO events. This may include providing staff development and instruction with regard to academic policy and procedures, moderation and assessment, etc. Reporting structures on this activity are in place which, where appropriate, feed into the annual monitoring reporting cycle.

- 16.43.39 The UCO also provides opportunities for professional development during the course of the relationship. Fee waivers may be available to promote and incentivise engagement; these opportunities are negotiated on an individual basis and include:
- a) Relevant activity-specific training sessions such as training on the use of the UCO's VLE, data management and quality assurance workshops, etc.
 - b) Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses provided by the UCO.
 - c) Support through faculties and central services where needed, typically covering subjects such as assessment, moderation, and changes to quality assurance processes.
 - d) Access to other academic courses provided by the UCO.
 - e) Representation on UCO committees.
- 16.43.40 In addition, staff development may be accessed by partner institutions with the implementation of strategic initiatives, such as the use of learning technologies, on an individually negotiated basis.
- 16.43.41 Other, specific, staff development requirements may need to be addressed as a result of approval / review events, feedback from External Examiners and through the outcomes of the annual monitoring process. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 16.43.42 Unless otherwise agreed in advance and included in the CPOM, costs associated with staff development will be borne by the partner institution.

16.44 PUBLIC INFORMATION, PUBLICITY & MARKETING

- 16.44.35 The UCO aligns with guidance and advice regarding consumer law published by the Competition and Marketing Authority²⁰, ensuring that such information is valid, reliable, useful and accessible.
- 16.44.36 For all collaborative activity, the UCO ensures that it maintains effective control of public information as well as of recruitment, publicity and marketing materials, especially where these are published directly by a partner institution. The UCO specifically seeks to ensure that these materials, irrespective of the medium in which they are produced, avoid:
- a) Inaccurate information about the contents or status of the award or the relationship between the partner and the UCO.
 - b) Inappropriate or misleading comparisons with other providers.
 - c) Misleading statements about the recognition of awards by public or other authorised bodies.
 - d) Incorrect advice about the recognition of awards by professional bodies or bodies in other countries.
 - e) Bringing UK higher education into disrepute.
- 16.44.37 No marketing material will be produced by the partner regarding the beginning of a new collaboration with the UCO until the formal collaboration agreement has been signed.
- 16.44.38 Where new provision is in Phase 1 (Initial Proposal Approval), the partner will normally not be permitted to advertise the course either formally or informally in any manner.
- 16.44.39 Where the new provision is in Phase 2 (Partner/Provision Approval), the partner will normally only be permitted to advertise the course either formally or informally until an Initial Approval Event has been held successfully. At this point the course must be marketed as 'subject to

²⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-consumer-law-advice-for-providers>

- approval'. Once the Final Approval Event has been held successfully, all approval and delivery conditions have been signed off, and the confirmation letter has been produced, the partner may remove this caveat.
- 16.44.40 If the partner organisation is to produce publicity and marketing materials, they will ensure that they state that the course leads to an award of the UCO but is delivered by the partner. Where entry requirements are given for the course, this will include any English language requirements. Materials must always include the UCO logo in the approved format and refer to the UCO by its full and correct title.
- 16.44.41 Information presented by the partner through their public website will be verified as accurate by the Partner Manager, in conjunction with the Marketing, Admissions, Recruitment and Communications departments, following approval of the partner or a course, and thereafter on a periodic basis. This process will give assurance that the information conforms to the appropriate UCO policies.
- 16.44.42 A Published Information Report Forms (AQF16-24) verifying that information published on the partner's website will be completed, and details of any transgressions noted and evidenced. Partners will be required to correct or update information that has been found to be inaccurate or misleading.
- 16.44.43 The final draft of any hard copy materials must be checked by the UCO to ensure that all information presented is accurate and does not mislead a student as to the nature of the collaboration and the standing of the award offered. The CPSC (and where required the TQSC) shall be responsible for signing off all publicity information report forms.
- 16.44.44 Course information presented will be verified against the approved documents held by the Quality Team. The area of the UCO responsible for verification will be described in the CPOM and records of verification will be maintained by the Quality Team.
- 16.44.45 If as a result of this the partner is required to make any amendments to the materials, final versions must be copied to the UCO for final verification of their accuracy.
- 16.44.46 Additionally, the Marketing, Admissions, Recruitment and Communications departments will undertake a periodic web search to ensure that there are no institutions claiming to be in a collaborative partnership with the UCO that have not been approved.

PART 7: PERIODIC REVIEW OF COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS & PROVISION

16.45 INTRODUCTION

- 16.45.35 The UCO reviews collaborative partnerships and provision periodically (normally every five years) to review collaborative activity at a greater depth and over a longer timeframe than annual monitoring allows.
- 16.45.36 The process used for reviews is normally undertaken according to the type of collaborative partner and provision as detailed in [Table 16.25](#).

TABLE 16.21: THE NORMAL PERIODIC REVIEW PROCESSES FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF COLLABORATIVE PARTNER & PROVISION

Type of Collaborative Partnership / Provision		Normal Periodic Review Process
Associate Partner		Periodic Institutional Review (see Section 16.46)
Associate Partner Provision	Franchised	Periodic Course Review (see Section 16.47 & AQF Section 6: Periodic Review)
	Validated	Periodic Course Review (see AQF Section 6: Periodic Review)
	Dual Award	Periodic Course Review (see AQF Section 6: Periodic Review)
Link Partner		According to the type of provision as listed below.
Link Partner Provision	Articulation	Articulation Periodic Review (see Section 16.48b)
	Progression	Progression Periodic Review (see Section 16.48c)
	Study Centre	Study Centre Periodic Review (see Section 16.48a)
	Memorandum of Understanding	Memorandum of Understanding Periodic Review (see Section 16.48d)

- 16.45.37 Periodic Institutional Reviews may be scheduled alongside Periodic Course Reviews of collaborative provision where this is appropriate.
- 16.45.38 Schedules for collaborative partner and provision periodic review are considered annually by the CPSC, TQSC and the Academic Council.
- 16.45.39 The organisation of all collaborative partner and provision periodic reviews is the responsibility of the Quality Team.

16.46 ASSOCIATE PARTNER PERIODIC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

A) INTRODUCTION

- 16.46.35 All associate partners undergo periodic institutional review by the UCO once every five years as a minimum, unless an extraordinary periodic review is invoked by the UCO's Academic Council upon recommendation by the TQSC. This may be due to significant

concerns raised through monitoring and reporting processes, through External Examiners reports or where the nature of the relationship with the UCO changes significantly.

16.46.36 The main aims of periodic institutional review of associate partners are:

- a) To consider whether the partnership is operating in accordance with:
 - i. The relevant processes set out in the UCO's AQF and other overarching UCO policies, or approved variances to these.
 - ii. The procedures and responsibilities outlined in the Partner Agreement between the UCO and the partner and the Collaborative Provision Operations Manual (CPOM), paying particular attention to those aspects which have been delegated to the partner.
 - iii. Any requirements of the QAA (for example alignment with the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education) and PSRBs, as appropriate.
- b) To provide continued assurance to the UCO that the partner's governance, management and mechanisms for quality assurance and enhancement remain robust regarding the type of provision delivered.
- c) To assist partners in the evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses at an institutional level in regarding to teaching and learning and the strategic management of the provision.
- d) To draw on feedback from External Examiners and students to identify potential improvements to the management of the partnership that will enhance the student experience.
- e) To review the Partner Agreement and affirm the continuation of the collaborative partnership.

16.46.37 Periodic institutional review is intended to be a two-way process and to provide for greater reflection on the operation of the partnership than annual monitoring activity.

16.46.38 Aims of periodic subject and course review are detailed in Section 6: Periodic Review of the AQF.

B) SCHEDULES & MONITORING OF PROCESS OF ASSOCIATE PARTNER PERIODIC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEWS

16.46.39 The schedule and deadline dates for the institutional review process and documentation requirements will be confirmed by the Head of Quality & Partnerships in consultation with the Vice-Chancellor, the Partnerships Quality Manager, the Link Tutor and partner staff.

16.46.40 The partner will identify a coordinator to act as the point of contact with the UCO. The Partnerships Quality Manager will normally lead on the review from the UCO's perspective.

16.46.41 The CPSC and TQSC will be informed of periodic institutional review processes and their progress through regular updates at committee meetings.

C) ASSOCIATE PARTNER PERIODIC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW PROCESS

16.46.42 A risk-based approach is taken for the institutional periodic review process for Associate Partners and involves the review of the partnership from both the UCO's and Partner's perspectives using relevant documentary evidence and critical evaluation review reports submitted by both parties and, depending on a risk assessment of these reports either proceeds to a Periodic Institutional Review Meeting (if risks related to the partner or

partnership are identified) or a Periodic Institutional Review Event (if medium-high risks related to the partner or partnership are identified).

16.46.43 In all cases the Periodic Institutional Review process will normally take place sequentially as follows:

- a) The Partner produces a “Partner Periodic Institutional Review Report” using form AQF16-25a, appending relevant supporting evidence.
- b) The Head of Quality & Partnerships and Partnerships Quality Manager review the submitted Partner Periodic Institutional Review Report, requesting clarification or further supporting evidence from the Partner as required.
- c) The Head of Quality & Partnership and the Partnerships Quality Manager in liaison with relevant Link Tutors produce a critical evaluation of the partner’s report on behalf of the CPSC using form AQF16-25b, which also identifies and assesses any risks associated with the partner or partnership.
- d) The critical evaluation of the partner’s report and the risk assessment will be considered at an Extraordinary Partner Periodic Institutional Review CPSC meeting to discuss and agree the report and to recommend the next stage of the process to the TQSC which based on the agreed risk assessment will either be:
 - i. Progression to a Partner Periodic Institutional Review Meeting (where it has been determined that there are low-medium risks concerning the Partner and Partnership) with Partner and UCO Senior Staff to discuss the report and to pursue any lines of enquiry.
 - ii. Progression to a Partner Periodic Institutional Review Event (where it has been determined that there are medium-high risks concerning the Partner) which may be focussed on one or more areas of the partner or partnership where risks have been identified.
- e) A written report of Partner Periodic Institutional Review meetings and events will be produced summarising meeting / event discussions, outcomes, conditions and agreed actions as appropriate.
- f) Partner Periodic Institutional Review outcomes will be recommended to the CPSC, TQSC and Academic Council for formal re-approval of the Collaborative Partner and Partnership.

C) THE PARTNER PERIODIC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW REPORT (FORM AQF16-25A)

16.46.44 The first stage of the Partner Periodic Institutional Review process is the production of a review report by the partner using the Partner Periodic Institutional Review Form (AQF16-25a). This report provides the partner with the opportunity to provide a reflective narrative and evidence on the following over the review period:

- a) Nature, Ethos & Strategy
- b) PSRB Accreditation
- c) Partnership with the UCO
- d) Governance & Management Arrangements
- e) Quality Assurance & Enhancement Arrangements
- f) Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategies
- g) Feedback Arrangements

- h) Student Data
 - i) Student Experience
 - j) Student Complaints, Appeals, etc. Policies & Cases
 - k) Student Support Services
 - l) Staff Resources & Staff Development
 - m) Learning Resources.
 - n) Facilities.
 - o) Financial Resources, Stability & Viability
 - p) Major issues identified or experienced over the review period.
 - q) A SWOT Analysis / Risk Assessment at an Institutional Level and Action Plan.
- 16.46.45 The partner will be expected to provide supporting evidence in the form of appendices to support their review report.
- 16.46.46 Guidance and supporting evidence requirements are provided in form AQF16-25a.
- 16.46.47 Where a partner is based outside of the UK the report and supporting evidence must be provided in English.

D) THE CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE PARTNER PERIODIC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW REPORT (FORM AQF16-25B)

- 16.46.48 Further to receiving the Partner Periodic Institutional Review Report from the partner, the Head of Quality & Partnerships, and the Partnerships Quality Manager in liaison with relevant Link Tutors and other relevant UCO staff (for example, the Finance Director to review financial matters, and the Registrar to review registration and assessment processes) will critically review the report and complete form AQF16-25b.
- 16.46.49 The critical review will also include the following:
- a) A review of issues, enhancements and good practice identified from Institutional, Course, Unit, External Examiner and PSRB Annual Reports and how these have been addressed by the UCO and / or partner.
 - b) A review of issues, enhancements and good practice identified from the Partnership Log and interactions with the Partner.
 - c) A review of the Partner Agreement and Collaborative Provision Operations Manual.
 - d) A review of the Partner's Due Diligence (including the last three years of the Partner's accounts, financial forecast, and strategic plan).
 - e) A review of the Partnership Risk Assessment.
 - f) Production of an Action Plan identifying any proposed conditions for Partner re-approval or recommended enhancements to current Partner practice in response to issues or risks identified.
- 16.46.50 The Head of Quality & Partnerships and the Partnerships Quality Manager may where required liaise with the Partner to clarify the report or request additional supporting evidence to inform the review of the partner's report.
- 16.46.51 The Partner Periodic Institutional Review Report and the critical evaluation of the report will be considered at an extraordinary CPSC meeting where the outcome of the critical

evaluation will be agreed and recommended to the TQSC. The TQSC (electronically or by Chair's Action) will confirm whether the Periodic Institutional Review progresses to a Partner Institutional Review Meeting, or a Partner Institutional Review Event as recommended in the critical evaluation.

E) THE PARTNER PERIODIC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW MEETING

- 16.46.52 Where the TQSC agrees that the risk associated with the Partner and Partnership is low-medium, a Partner Periodic Institutional Review Meeting will take place between senior Partner and UCO staff to discuss the outcome of the critical evaluation, pursue any lines of enquiry and agree the outcome of the Periodic Institutional Review, including any conditions for re-approval of the partnership.
- 16.46.53 Senior partner staff will normally include the Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent) and heads of departments covered in the Partner Periodic Institutional Review Report. Senior UCO staff will normally include senior staff involved in the management of the partnership including the Vice-Chancellor (or their nominated representative), Head of Quality & Partnerships, Partnerships Quality Manager and Link Tutors, one of who will be delegated to chair the review meeting. Additional relevant staff from either party may also be invited.
- 16.46.54 The Partner Periodic Institutional Review Meeting will normally be held at the Partner's main teaching premises where partner facilities may be viewed but may be held virtually where this is appropriate.
- 16.46.55 The agenda for the Partner Periodic Institutional Review Meeting will be agreed by the Head of Quality & Partnerships but will normally include:
- a) Private meetings of the UCO senior staff to agree lines of enquiry, partner staff responses to these and outcomes of the meeting.
 - b) Meetings with senior staff to discuss the low-medium risk issues identified in the Critical Evaluation of the Partner Periodic Institutional Review Report.
 - c) A meeting with a representative sample of students on UCO-approved courses where risks are associated with the student experience.
 - d) A tour of facilities to include any new or refurbished facilities including specialist facilities, where risks are associated with facilities.
- 16.46.56 A written record of the Partner Periodic Institutional Meeting will be made to confirm agreed outcomes, including timelines for any re-approval conditions.
- 16.46.57 Review Meeting discussions will enable UCO staff in attendance to make an informed judgement about whether to recommend re-approval of the partnership, which may be granted with or without conditions in line with the [Possible Partner Periodic Institutional Review Outcomes](#).
- 16.46.58 Formal notification regarding the outcome of the event including any conditions and timelines for their completion will be confirmed to the partner in writing.

F) THE PARTNER PERIODIC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW EVENT

- 16.46.59 Where the TQSC agrees that the risk associated with the Partner and Partnership is medium-high, a Partner Periodic Institutional Event will take place.
- 16.46.60 The Partner Periodic Institutional Review Event will normally last for one day be held at the partner's main teaching premises where partner facilities may be viewed but may be held virtually where this is appropriate.

- 16.46.61 The agenda for the Partner Periodic Institutional Review Event will be agreed by the Head of Quality & Partnerships but will normally include:
- a) Private meetings of the Review Panel to agree lines of enquiry, partner staff responses to these and outcomes of the event.
 - b) Meetings with senior staff to discuss the medium-high risk issues identified in the Critical Evaluation of the Partner Periodic Institutional Review Report.
 - c) A meeting with a representative sample of students on UCO-approved courses where risks are associated with the student experience.
 - d) A tour of facilities to include any new or refurbished facilities including specialist facilities, where risks are associated with facilities.
- 16.46.62 A Partner Periodic Institutional Review Event Panel will be appointed as described in [Section 16.46G](#).
- 16.46.63 Having reviewed the Partner Periodic Institutional Review Report and Critical Evaluation of the Partner Periodic Institutional Review Report, the event will provide the Review Panel an opportunity to pursue lines of enquiry with partner staff, and for partner staff to clarify matters and respond to their questioning as appropriate.
- 16.46.64 Review Event discussions will enable the Review Panel to make an informed judgement about whether to recommend re-approval of the partnership, which may be granted with or without conditions in line with the [Possible Partner Periodic Institutional Review Outcomes](#).
- 16.46.65 Formal notification regarding the outcome of the event including any conditions and timelines for their completion will be confirmed to the partner in writing.

G) THE PARTNER PERIODIC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW EVENT PANEL

- 16.46.66 Membership of the Review Event Panel is normally the same as that for the Collaborative Partner Approval Process as detailed in [Table 16.4](#) and allows panellists to focus on their specific areas of expertise and to pursue relevant lines of enquiry as appropriate.
- 16.46.67 Any change in the composition of the panel must be agreed in advance by the TQSC Chair in liaison with the Head of Quality & Partnerships and other relevant staff who will ensure that the membership is appropriate for the context of the review event.
- 16.46.68 Review Panel members will be provided with guidance regarding the scope of their role by the Quality Team prior to the event.
- 16.46.69 Review Event Panel members are required to attend for the entire review event. They are expected to have reviewed the documentation submitted prior to the event and should come to the event prepared with appropriate lines of enquiry.

H) POSSIBLE PARTNER PERIODIC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW OUTCOMES

- 16.46.70 Possible outcomes of Partner Periodic Institutional Reviews are:
- a) Re-Approval of the partnership is granted with no conditions.
 - b) Re-Approval of the partnership is granted with conditions.
 - c) Re-Approval of the partnership is not granted and will be terminated.
- 16.46.71 Re-approval of a partnership is normally for a maximum of a further 5 years.
- 16.46.72 Recommendations may also be made where these will enhance the partnership; recommendations do not have to be addressed by the partner, but it is expected that actions taken to progress them, or reasons for not doing so, will be included in the partner's response to the periodic institutional review outcomes.

16.46.73 Both conditions and recommendations can be directed towards the partner and / or the UCO.

16.46.74 Good practice may also be identified for wider dissemination by the partner and UCO.

I) RESPONDING TO PERIODIC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW OUTCOMES

16.46.75 Following the review meetings and events, an outcome report to formally record and communicate the review outcomes to the partner in writing will be prepared by the Panel Secretary. The report will contain a full record of the event including discussions held, the agreed approval conditions and recommendations and reasons for conclusions and outcomes.

16.46.76 The Panel Secretary will circulate the outcome report to the members of the review panel for confirmation and final approval and authorisation by the Panel Chair.

16.46.77 The Panel Secretary will then circulate the approved outcome report to the Vice-Chancellor, Head of Quality & Partnerships, Partnerships Quality Manager, relevant Link Tutors, and relevant partner staff. The Panel Secretary will also provide the partner with an event outcome response form and a deadline for the response to any conditions.

16.46.78 The partner (in consultation with the Link Tutor) will be responsible for completing and returning the Partner Review Conditions and Response Form (AQF16-26) with appropriate supporting evidence in response to the review conditions and recommendations within the requisite timeframe to the Quality Team. This will be forwarded to the review meeting UCO staff and / or Review Event Panel as appropriate to confirm that review conditions and recommendations have been responded by the partner to sufficiently. The delegated chair of the review meeting / event will authorize that the partner's responses have been met and will recommend re-approval of the partner to the TQSC, and thereafter formal approval by the Academic Council.

16.46.79 Following approval of the re-approved partnership by the Academic Council:

- a) The Partnerships Quality Manager shall confirm re-approval of the partnership with the partner institution and relevant internal colleagues (including the TQSC, CPSC, relevant Link Tutors and Registry Team).
- b) The Collaborative Activity Register will be updated by the Quality Team to reflect re-approval of the partnership.
- c) The Partnership Agreement is updated as agreed and signed between the partner and the UCO.
- d) The Partnerships Quality Manager shall update the partnership risk assessment which will continue to be monitored through the CPSC.

16.47 ASSOCIATE PARTNER PROVISION REVIEW: FRANCHISED PROVISION

16.47.35 The review of Franchised Provision will normally take place through the UCO's standard Periodic Review process detailed in Section 6 of the AQF.

16.47.36 At this event partner faculty will be required to include a number of additional documents for the review panel, in addition to the normal requirements specified in Section 6 of the AQF. These include:

- a) An updated delivery site report confirming the ongoing suitability and availability of resources (AQF16-05).
- b) An evaluation document (AQF16-27) prepared by partner faculty which describes any changes to the institution since original provision approval and provides an evaluative

commentary on the relationship covering academic quality and standards, student experience, and course management and liaison.

- c) An updated Due Diligence and Risk Assessment Form (AQF16-04) provided by the Partnerships Quality Manager in liaison with the Head of Quality & Partnerships.

16.47.37 Re-approval of the collaborative relationship for a further five-year period will be made through the standard Periodic Review process, subject to conditions and recommendations to be addressed by the partner.

16.47.38 Confirmation that the outcomes have been fulfilled will be noted at CPSC and TQSC meetings and subsequently by the Academic Council.

16.47.39 Following approval by the Academic Council:

- a) The Head of Quality & Partnerships will confirm re-approval in writing to relevant partner and UCO colleagues.
- b) The Quality Team will update the Collaborative Activity Register.
- c) The collaboration contract will be updated as appropriate.

16.48 LINK PARTNER PROVISION REVIEW

16.48.35 The review of Link Partners involves a review of the provision being delivered; an institutional level review is not normally undertaken as the provision delivered does not lead to an award of the UCO.

16.48.36 The review date of Link Partners is noted on the same schedule as for institutional reviews to ensure that a full picture of collaborative activity is maintained.

A) STUDY CENTRE ARRANGEMENTS

16.48.37 Following approval, study centre arrangements with Link Partners must be monitored to ensure that the quality and standards of the facilities of the premises remain of an appropriate quality and standard for the provision being delivered.

16.48.38 The date for review of study centre arrangements will be included on the Collaborative Activity Register considered by the CPSC annually.

16.48.39 A review of a Link Partner's premises as a study centre is required at the end of the original period of approval / re-approval (i.e. a minimum of every five years).

16.48.40 The Partnerships Quality Manager will provide confirmation that a review is due in the current academic year to the appropriate Course Leader to produce a short reflective report on the provision.

16.48.41 The report will include:

- a) A comparison of the achievement of students taught at the study centre against those taught elsewhere.
- b) A reflective summary regarding how issues raised within External Examiner reports have been addressed; copies of External Examiner reports and responses for the provision during the previous three years should be submitted as evidence for and in support of this summary.
- c) An update to the description of required learning resources considered at approval, and confirmation regarding how students are currently able to access them.

- d) An update to the statement describing the provision of academic and pastoral support considered at approval and confirmation regarding how students are currently able to access these.
- 16.48.42 In addition, the following should be reviewed and updated as appropriate:
- a) Due Diligence and Risk Assessment Report (AQF16-04)
 - b) Delivery Site Report (AQF16-05)
- 16.48.43 The Study Centre Review report will be considered by the CPSC to ensure that the student experience at the study centre remains appropriate and sound. If there is any doubt as to this, a panel will be convened to review the collaboration, in accordance with the Study Centre arrangement approval process.
- 16.48.44 The Study Centre Review report (and response if required) will be considered and endorsed through the TQSC and formally re-approved by the Academic Council.
- 16.48.45 Following re-approval by the Academic Council:
- a) The Head of Quality & Partnerships will confirm re-approval of the arrangement in writing to relevant partner and UCO colleagues.
 - b) The Quality Team will update the Collaborative Activity Register.
 - c) The collaboration contract will be updated as appropriate.

B) ARTICULATION ARRANGEMENTS

- 16.48.46 Following approval, articulation arrangements with Link Partners must be monitored to ensure that the quality and standards of teaching are maintained and that the curricula and assessment on the originating course do not depart from the destination course through the natural process of curriculum development thereby invalidating the confirmation of equivalency gained through the original mapping exercise.
- 16.48.47 The date for review of articulation arrangements will be included on the Collaborative Activity Register considered by the CPSC, TQSC and Academic Council annually.
- 16.48.48 A review of an articulation arrangement is required at the end of the original period of approval / re-approval (i.e. a minimum of every five years) if the UCO and Link Partner wish to continue with the arrangement.
- 16.48.49 A review is also required at an intermediate point if the originating or destination course undergoes a significant change or series of cumulative changes which alter it significantly from that originally approved. This is identified through the ongoing liaison between the partner and the UCO through the Link Tutor (or equivalent). In either case the Partnerships Quality Manager in liaison with the Head of Quality & Partnerships will convene an Articulation Review Panel to discuss the nature and quality of the existing agreement, and whether it should be reaffirmed. To facilitate discussion, the Link Tutor should prepare the following brief document:
- a) An Articulation Arrangement Review Report (AQF16-28) which critically reflects on the management of the articulation arrangement during the previous approval period and:
 - i. Provides details of the number of students who have progressed following this route, comparing their achievement to the cohort as a whole.
 - ii. Includes an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the arrangement, highlighting how improvements could be made.

- iii. Provides information relating to relevant issues raised in External Examiner reports and information as to how these have been addressed.
- 16.48.50 The due diligence and risk assessment form for the partner should also be reviewed and updated by the Partnerships Quality Manager in liaison with the Head of Quality & Partnerships. Where aspects of either the risk assessment or due diligence have changed significantly, the Partnerships Quality Manager will bring this to the attention of the Head of Quality & Partnerships.
- 16.48.51 The Articulation Arrangement review report and response will be considered and endorsed through the TQSC and formally re-approved by the Academic Council.
- 16.48.52 The Chair of the Academic Council will sign-off the report.
- 16.48.53 Following re-approval by the Academic Council:
- a) The Head of Quality & Partnerships will confirm re-approval of the arrangement in writing to relevant partner and UCO colleagues.
 - b) The Quality Team will update the Collaborative Activity Register.
 - c) The collaboration contract will be updated as appropriate.
- 16.48.54 Where the destination course is discontinued, every effort will be made to provide a suitable replacement for the articulation. In these circumstances the Head of Quality & Partnerships should be informed to ensure that centrally held information, including contracts, is kept up to date.

C) PROGRESSION ARRANGEMENTS

- 16.48.55 Following approval, progression arrangements with Link Partners must be monitored to ensure that the course provided by the partner institution remains a suitable and appropriate entry qualification for the specified UCO course.
- 16.48.56 Where there are sizeable student numbers involved in a progression arrangement from a particular institution, UCO faculty may wish to identify a member of staff to carry out liaison duties and to report on the achievement of students from that institution as a discrete group within the relevant monitoring report.
- 16.48.57 The date for review of progression arrangements will be included on the Collaborative Activity Register considered by the CPSC, TQSC and Academic Council annually.
- 16.48.58 A review of a progression arrangement is required at the end of the original period of approval / re-approval (i.e., a minimum of every five years) if the UCO and Link Partner wish to continue with the arrangement.
- 16.48.59 The review of progression arrangements will require the following documentation considered at initial approval / previous review to be reviewed and updated as appropriate:
- a) The Course Mapping document considered at initial approval to ensure that the originating and destination courses have not departed from that considered at initial approval and therefore remains useful in making judgements for progressing students onto specified UCO courses as appropriate.
 - b) Reviewed and update Due Diligence and Risk Assessment Form (AQF16-04).
- 16.48.60 The Course Leader in liaison with the Partnerships Quality Manager will be responsible for undertaking the review of the Course Mapping document and Risk Assessment Report, both of which will be considered by the CPSC and TQSC and recommended to the Academic Council for formal re-approval.

- 16.48.61 Following re-approval by the Academic Council:
- a) The Head of Quality & Partnerships will confirm re-approval of the arrangement in writing by disseminating the Articulation Arrangement Review Confirmation Form to relevant partner and UCO colleagues.
 - b) The Quality Team will update the Collaborative Activity Register.
 - c) The collaboration contract will be updated as appropriate.

D) MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING

- 16.48.62 Memoranda of Understanding shall be reviewed in line with the review date agreed by the UCO and the Partner and stated in the Memorandum of Understanding.
- 16.48.63 The Partner Institution shall complete an Institutional Annual Report Form (see AQF5) and review the current Memorandum of Understanding to ensure that the arrangement remains appropriate for both parties.
- 16.48.64 The Institutional Annual Report shall be considered by the Senior Management Team.
- 16.48.65 Any recommended amendments made to the Memorandum of Understanding shall be approved by the Senior Management Team, following which the Memorandum of Understanding shall be updated and signed by both parties.

PART 8: TERMINATION OF COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS & PROVISION

16.50 INTRODUCTION

- 16.50.1 Collaborative partnerships and provision may be terminated by either party. In all cases an exit strategy must be agreed with the partner to safeguard the experience of all students and staff involved and to ensure that they are provided with the opportunity to successfully complete the agreed activities; all collaborative relationships are governed by a legally binding agreement which includes a clause dealing with termination that must be followed.
- 16.50.2 Notification to terminate a collaborative relationship (either at the request of UCO or partner faculty) must be provided to the Vice-Chancellor and the Head of Quality & Partnerships in writing at the earliest opportunity.
- 16.50.3 Collaborative relationships will automatically lapse if they are not reviewed, at which point the collaborative contract will also expire.
- 16.50.4 Whatever the reason for the termination, and whoever it is instigated by, the proposal to terminate must first be approved by the TQSC using the Collaborative Activity Termination Form (AQF16-29).
- 16.50.5 If approved, the Vice-Chancellor will facilitate a meeting or correspondence with the partner to discuss the proposed termination and agree an exit strategy, both of which must be approved by the TQSC and the Academic Council.
- 16.50.6 Once the termination proposal and exit strategy have been approved, the Vice-Chancellor will prepare a formal termination letter for the partner which will set out the agreed exit strategy. If any communication to continuing students at the partner institution is planned, the Vice-Chancellor must be consulted about the wording and mode of this communication.
- 16.50.7 The exit period is a high-risk phase of any partnership. To facilitate this, the exit strategy will be monitored by the TQSC through regular updates which will be noted on the Collaborative Activity Termination Form.

16.51 EXIT STRATEGIES

- 16.51.1 The Exit Strategy will aim to ensure a smooth departure from the relationship while preserving the integrity and continuation of the students' education. The only exception to this will be in situations where there are no students registered on any of the provision delivered in the UCO's name. In these circumstances confirmation of termination will be provided to the partner in writing on receipt of a fully completed and signed Major Course and Unit Modification Form (see AQF04-18) from the partner (to formally request termination of the partnership / closure of the provision).
- 16.51.2 Consideration must be given to students currently enrolled on collaborative provision and the student experience during the run-out period; students will normally be given the opportunity to complete their course within the standard time frame.
- 16.51.3 Production of the Exit Strategy is the responsibility of the Vice-Chancellor (or through delegated authority), in conjunction with the relevant UCO and partner faculty and will include an update to the Due Diligence and Risk Assessment Form (AQF16-04).
- 16.51.4 The Exit Strategy will:
- a) State the titles of the courses associated with the partnership.
 - b) Clarify key dates, such as the end of the 'run out' period, the enrolment deadline for the final cohort and the final Board of Examiners.

- c) Provide details regarding student support, quality assurance and academic liaison that will apply during the 'run out' period.
 - d) List any action to be taken to inform students of the termination and monitor the 'run out' period.
 - e) Include information regarding the formal monitoring requirements for the implementation of the strategy, and the requirement to confirm to the Academic Council that the exit has been concluded.
 - f) Confirm when the courses can be removed from the UCO's student record system and from the UCO and partner websites.
- 16.51.5 All exit strategies devised as a result of termination of a collaborative relationship will be presented to the Academic Council for approval.
- 16.51.6 The "run-out" of the relationship will be monitored by the Partnerships Quality Manager and the CPSC in accordance with the approved Exit Strategy.

16.52 FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF THE EXIT STRATEGY

- 16.52.1 Following confirmation to the Academic Council of the conclusion of the strategy by the Vice-Chancellor, the Partnerships Quality Manager in liaison with the Head of Quality & Partnerships will:
- a) Issue a formal letter to the partner confirming termination of the relationship and the date from which this applies.
 - b) Notify the Admissions Department and Academic Registry to ensure that the relevant courses have closed as agreed.
 - c) Request through the Marketing Department that relevant publication and promotional material relating to the closed courses be removed from the UCO's website and other locations as appropriate.
 - d) Update the Collaborative Activity Register to reflect the termination of the relationship.

16.53 CLOSING A COURSE DELIVERED THROUGH A PARTNER

- 16.53.1 To close a course delivered through a partner, either on an individual basis or as a result of the termination of the relationship, the partner should submit a Course Modification Form (see AQF04-17) to the Quality Team for approval by the CPSC, TQSC and Academic Council.
- 16.53.2 The modification form will confirm that suitable arrangements have been made for students currently registered on the course that will allow them to complete their studies, as appropriate.
- 16.53.3 Where more complex arrangements are required, it may be necessary to also implement an Exit Strategy, which identifies roles and responsibilities in greater detail.

PART 9: STUDENT EXCHANGES

16.54 INTRODUCTION

- 16.54.1 Student exchanges are formal agreements the UCO has with other institutions to enable students to continue their studies whilst experiencing a different educational environment.
- 16.54.2 They provide students with the opportunity to study their subject from a different perspective, experience a new culture should the exchange be international and meet new colleagues. Student exchanges can also serve to broaden students' horizons and may demonstrate to future employers that they are adaptable to new and challenging situations, a useful transferable skill.
- 16.54.3 Students studying an eligible subject are able to spend a period of time studying at a partner institution in another country. Students on an exchange at a partner institution will continue to pay the required tuition fees to the UCO (as their home institution) but will not pay any tuition fees to host institution. Students will, however, be liable for their living costs and transportation expenses.
- 16.54.4 The academic work that students complete at a partner institution as part of an exchange programme will be credited to their UCO degree, subject to advance approval.
- 16.54.5 This section of the AQF sets out the UCO's formal quality assurance arrangements for student exchanges taking into account the need for sound planning prior to a student's departure (with particular attention to student support).
- 16.54.6 Any course may permit a student to undertake a student exchange provided the exchange meets the criteria set out below and the exchange is with an approved partner institution.

16.55 APPROVAL OF STUDENT EXCHANGES

- 16.55.1 Student Exchanges will normally be arranged with an approved partner institution or with an organisation with which the UCO has a Memorandum of Understanding.
- 16.55.2 The approval of student exchange arrangements depends on whether the exchange is offered on an occasional or standing basis for individual students and / or groups students as outlined below.

A) OCCASIONAL EXCHANGES

- 16.55.3 Occasional exchanges do not require approval beyond that of the Course Team, except where a key aspect of the curriculum is altered to facilitate the exchange. In such cases, approval of the Enhancement of Teaching, Learning & Assessment Sub-Committee (ETLASC) is required.
- 16.55.4 Students will normally receive full recognition for their exchange period. This may be in the form of a certificate or on their transcript.

B) STANDING EXCHANGES

- 16.55.5 A standing student exchange will need to be approved by the Course Team and by the ETLASC. Approval by the TQSC is not normally required unless a key aspect of the curriculum is altered to facilitate the exchange.
- 16.55.6 The ETLASC should consider variations of student exchanges proportionately, i.e. scrutinise specific exchange proposals rather than scrutinise the specifics of the course or its units.

C) ACCREDITED EXCHANGES

- 16.55.7 A student exchange may enable students to transfer any credits they gain to their UCO award (i.e. an accredited exchange).
- 16.55.8 For an accredited exchange, the Course Team must map the learning to be achieved during the exchange against the Learning Outcomes that would have been achieved on the 'home' course to ensure a reasonable match between the exchange learning and that of the 'home' course.
- 16.55.9 Students gaining credits during their student exchange should normally complete the 'home' course within the normal planned duration of that course i.e., the exchange credits should replace the credits a student would have gained had they studied at the UCO for that period of time.
- 16.55.10 If students' study is prolonged for a further year or part year, funding and resourcing implications must be considered (particularly in respect of undergraduate courses and especially in the case of a standing arrangement for groups of students).
- 16.55.11 Students on an accredited exchange should receive full recognition of the credits on their transcript and be issued with a year abroad (or similar) certificate.
- 16.55.12 It is anticipated that the credit points assigned at the partner institution will normally conform to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). In such cases, 2 UK Credits = 1 ECTS credit point. Similarly, the marks/grades achieved on an exchange should be transferred using a mutually recognised ECTS method that enables marks/grading to be readily translated into their 'home' equivalents.
- 16.55.13 The chair of the Board of Examiners and the UCO's External Examiners should be informed about any student exchange arrangements in advance of the Board of Examiners meeting to enable them to seek clarification on any aspects of the exchange for progression or award purposes. All assessment mark/grade conversions should be completed and confirmed before the Board of Examiners meeting.
- 16.55.14 For standing exchange arrangements for groups of students, the Course Team Leader, Partnerships Quality Manager, Head of Quality & Partnerships and ETLASC chair should also be informed. Proposals for these will also need to gain business approval from the Senior Management Team (SMT).

16.56 STUDENT EXCHANGE APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS

- 16.56.1 A learning agreement must be negotiated before a student departs on any exchange. This agreement must set out the details of the student's programme of study or work placement. For accredited exchanges, the learning agreement will ensure that all essential parts of the 'home' course have been considered and taken into account.
- 16.56.2 Student support arrangements must be agreed between the Course Team and each student. Normally an appropriate UCO member of staff is allocated to a student (or group of students) as a key contact for the duration of the exchange.
- 16.56.3 Students' linguistic ability should be sufficient for study at the partner institution before the student departs.
- 16.56.4 Students should be made particularly aware of cases where an accredited exchange makes a significant contribution to the classification of the 'home' award, especially if the student will be studying in a foreign language.

- 16.56.5 Any issues or good practice arising out of student exchanges should be notified to relevant UCO staff (Course Team Leader, Head of Quality & Partnerships and ETLASC chair) to ensure that student exchange policy and practice is enhanced across the UCO as appropriate.
- 16.56.6 Approved Course Information Forms should be amended to include a reference to the potential for student exchanges, particularly in respect of standing arrangements for groups of students.
- 16.56.7 Where student exchanges necessitate a change to course outcomes or the award or course title to be conferred on a student, this will require approval by the TQSC and Academic Council through the UCO's course and unit modification process (see AQF Section 4) and will require business approval from the Senior Management Team.
- 16.56.8 A fact sheet providing details of each student exchange opportunity will be provided detailing eligibility criteria, language of instruction and details about the partner institution as a minimum. This shall be provided to students by the Course Leader normally through the VLE.

16.57 REVIEW OF STUDENT EXCHANGES

- 16.57.1 Student Exchanges will be reviewed annually and periodically in line with the UCO's Annual Monitoring and Reporting and Periodic Review processes as described in AQF Section 5.
- 16.57.2 Students participating in any Student Exchange will be asked to evaluate their experience normally through an evaluation questionnaire, the results of which shall inform annual reporting and periodic review of the course to which the exchange relates.

PART 10: PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION

16.58 INTRODUCTION

- 16.58.1 The UCO is committed to developing student employability and working with employers to produce graduates who have the knowledge, professional standards, competences and proficiencies for successful employment. Practice-based learning as an integral component of a program of study contributes to students' developing professional and employability skills.
- 16.58.2 The following processes describe the UCO's requirements for the approval and management of practice-based educators that provide placements for students studying on programs of study for which practice based learning is integral.
- 16.58.3 These processes follow good practice to ensure that the UCO meets its responsibilities regarding the management and quality of the student learning experience in addition to their safety and wellbeing whilst on practice-based placements.
- 16.58.4 Practice-based learning also includes within its scope work-based learning, placements or any education provided by another institution or organisation responsible for delivering teaching and learning within a work-based setting, who within this context are described as practice-based educators.

16.59 PRINCIPLES

- 16.59.1 The principles upon which practice-based educators are chosen should include the following:
- The learning associated with a practice-based educator must be designed to take account of relevant external reference points (e.g. the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code, any Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body expectations and UCO policies).
 - Courses must have in place arrangements for the quality assurance of practice-based education placement opportunities, including management of risks relating to health and safety, quality and other risks associated with the specific proposals for a given course.
 - Students must be registered as a student of the UCO (or of an approved collaborative partner organization) for the duration of the practice-based placement.
 - Learning outcomes that contribute to the overall aims and learning outcomes of the course and/or unit(s) must be appropriate for the practice-based learning experience and should be clearly defined within the course and/or unit information forms.
 - Practice-based learning opportunities must be of an appropriate length and quality to ensure that the identified learning outcomes can be achieved.
 - Any professional considerations and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) expectations must be taken into consideration.
 - Information provided to prospective and current students (e.g. Course and Unit Information Forms, Course Handbooks, Course Prospectus or Brochures and web-based course pages must clearly state the nature and duration of any practice-based learning and that this is integral to the course.
 - Documentation must be clear to all parties, including any reasonable adjustments to accommodate needs of disabled students.
 - The arrangements for practice-based learning within courses must be approved through the normal course approval processes (Academic Quality Framework Section 4 – Course & Unit Approval & Modification). Approval must include consideration of draft guides/handbooks or

equivalent for students and for practice-based educators and, where applicable, for practice-based supervisors/mentors.

- j) The responsibilities of students, academic staff and practice-based educators must be clearly defined and communicated to all parties concerned, and there must be evidence that all parties accept their responsibilities, i.e. through a Placement Agreement, Practice Education Handbooks (or equivalent).
- k) Any assessment of practice-based learning must form part of a coherent learning strategy for the course and be subject to the normal processes of assessment and moderation and the standards of student achievement overseen by appropriately qualified external examiners.
- l) Where practice-based educators are involved in monitoring student progress and/or assessment of student work, they must be trained appropriately, and a record kept of this.

16.60 RISK-BASED APPROACH

16.60.1 In line with good practice, the UCO takes a risk-based approach to approve and manage the practice-based educators it works with to ensure academic standards and quality and the appropriateness of the placement regarding the health, safety and welfare of students and any associated liabilities.

16.60.2 The following risk management principles are used to achieve this:

- a) Having appropriate processes for the approval and review of prospective placements.
- b) Placements accepting the UCO's health and safety expectations whilst students are on placement.
- c) Clarity of understanding by each party of their roles and responsibilities.
- d) Preparation of the student/s prior to their placement to enable them to be in a position to understand any risks and make informed judgements.
- e) Having appropriate processes for enabling problems, including any health and safety issues, to be raised and resolved prior to, during, and at the conclusion of the placement.
- f) Having contingency plans in case there are exceptional circumstances regarding the placement.
- g) Providing appropriate training or briefings to UCO staff and practice-based educators regarding the placement and any policies, regulations and arrangements that they must follow.
- h) Having appropriate processes for the monitoring and evaluation of placements.
- i) Assessing the needs of disabled students in order that reasonable adjustments can be made at placements.
- j) Assessing risks associated with working with clients who may be vulnerable.

16.60.3 The planning, procedures, and information requirements associated with the practice-based education provider will vary according to the level of risk identified ('Low Risk', 'Medium Risk', and 'High Risk') with actions to address risks being dependent and proportional upon the issue, the country/region and the level of risk involved.

16.60.4 Where the provider does not initially meet the required standard, additional information from the provider will be required and reasonable control measures may need to be put in place (see guidance provided with the Practice-Based Educator Provider Risk Assessment Form (Appendix 1 - AQF16-30a).

16.60.5 Placements assessed as 'High Risk' by the Placement Coordinator upon completion of the Practice-Based Educator Provider Risk Assessment Form (Appendix 1 - AQF16-30a) must

be referred to the Vice-Chancellor (or their delegated nominee) for a decision as to whether the placement can proceed and what control measures are required.

16.61 HEALTH & SAFETY

- 16.61.1 The UCO has a statutory duty of care to protect, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its students during placement activities and must therefore take reasonable steps to ensure that all practice-based learning environments are compliant with statutory health and safety requirements.
- 16.61.2 Students undertaking practice-based placements are, in effect, acting as an employee of practice-based educator for the duration of the placement, and as such are owed an identical duty of care by the practice-based education provider.
- 16.61.3 Students are also responsible for taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions whilst on placements.
- 16.61.4 As part of the approval and review process of practice-based education providers a suitable and sufficient risk assessment must be undertaken, and appropriate control measures should be identified and adopted. The Risk Assessment Form for Practice-Based Education (Appendix 1 - AQF16-30a) must be used to undertake an evaluation of risk and as a record of risk assessment for the practice-based education partner being proposed.
- 16.61.5 Practice-based education partners must confirm that they take proper account of health and safety considerations and must ensure that students who undertake a placement with them receive appropriate briefing on health and safety matters related to their organization by completing a Practice-Based Education Provider Health and Safety Questionnaire (Appendix 2 - AQF16-30b) which must be received by the Placement Coordinator prior to the student commencing the placement.
- 16.61.6 All accidents / incidents involving students during their placement must be reported to the Placement Coordinator and the Placement Provider.
- 16.61.7 Although the UCO cannot accept responsibility for matters over which it has no control, in circumstances where matters of health and safety arise, the UCO shall undertake a prompt investigation and give due consideration to the implications for any other student(s) who may be engaged in the same or a similar placement.
- 16.61.8 The placement provider and students must be informed of who and how to contact the UCO, in case of an accident or emergency involving a student whilst on their placement.
- 16.61.9 Details of where and when students are on placements should be held centrally by the Placement Coordinator. Students' personal details are held centrally by the UCO Registry and students required to keep these up-to-date to enable contact with themselves and/or next of kin as necessary.
- 16.61.10 In the case of an emergency involving a student on placement or major incident (for example, a natural disaster in the vicinity of the student placement), the UCO's process for dealing with emergencies and major incidents must be followed. At the University, all emergency situations/issues should be directed through the Vice-Chancellor's Group via the UCO's Main Switchboard (+44 (0)020 7089 6106) in the first instance. The Incident Management Team shall be convened and make the decision to invoke the Disaster Recovery Plan as necessary.

16.62 INSURANCE

16.62.1 Appropriate insurance should be considered as part of the risk assessment for proposed Practice-Based Education Providers. The following guidance is provided regarding insurance and liability.

A) LEGAL LIABILITY

16.62.2 Normally, students shall be the legal liability of the practice-based education provider for the duration of their placement. Therefore, any injury, loss or damage caused or suffered by the student whilst they are under the supervision of the placement provider is the responsibility of the placement provider.

B) PUBLIC LIABILITY

16.62.3 The UCO's Public Liability insurance covers the UCO in the event of a claim arising out of our own negligence (where a claim could be brought by the student against the UCO) and covers the UCO and the student for any claim made as a result of a negligent act carried out by the student whilst they are on placement (where a claim could be brought by the placement provider against either the student or the UCO).

C) EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY

16.62.4 Practice-based education providers are normally asked to accept liability for the student for the duration of the placement as the student is directly under their control and supervision. Where this is agreed a copy of the Employer's Liability Certificate of Insurance is asked for, so that we are aware of the policy number, limit of liability, date of expiry and insurance company. Within the UK a reciprocal arrangement is in place within the Insurance sector and most Employer's Liability insurance policies accept the student as a 'temporary employee'.

D) TRAVEL AND PERSONAL ACCIDENT COVER IN RELATION TO OVERSEAS TRAVEL

16.62.5 Appropriate travel and personal accident cover for students should be considered if the proposed Practice-Based Education Provider is based overseas, taking into consideration advice from the British Foreign Commonwealth Office.

E) MEDICAL MALPRACTICE / CLINICAL NEGLIGENCE / PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

16.62.6 Students working within NHS hospitals in the UK should be covered for professional risks under the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts. If the placement is in a GP's surgery, independent practice (such as a physiotherapy practice), private hospital, hospice or nursing home, the Placement Coordinator needs to ask the provider if their insurance covers the liability of the student for injuries to third parties, including clinical errors, or property damage arising from their duties within the organisation. If such cover is not provided, they should liaise with the UCO's Vice-Chancellor's Group for further advice. It may be necessary for the student to be a member of a relevant professional body in order for Clinical Negligence cover to be in place.

F) MOTOR INSURANCE

16.62.7 Students wishing to use their private car whilst on placement for business purposes, other than driving to and from the placement, must check with their motor insurers to ensure that they have 'business use' on their policy, not just 'social, domestic and pleasure' use.

G) CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

16.62.8 Any criminal acts committed by the student are not covered under any insurance arrangements.

16.63 SAFEGUARDING AND DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS)

- 16.63.1 The UCO has clear policies related to safeguarding, including processes for checking where DBS is required (please see the UCO's Safeguarding Policy and DBS Policy & Procedure for further details)
- 16.63.2 Placements which involve engagement in regular and unsupervised 'regulated activity' (as defined by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) with children or in certain adult settings may require students to undergo an enhanced DBS check and gain a satisfactory DBS before they start their placement.
- 16.63.3 For some PSRB courses an enhanced DBS will be required prior to the student commencing their course.
- 16.63.4 Where a satisfactory DBS is a prerequisite for a course or a placement that is a required element of the course), this must be clearly communicated to applicants in advance of entry to the course, and/or to students prior to undertaking units that include a mandatory placement, through published materials, including the course / unit information forms, prospectus / brochure and course webpages and any other relevant information and guidance.
- 16.63.5 DBS checks are normally arranged through the University and should be initiated in sufficient time to ensure that the student's course, placement can go ahead. Occasionally they may need to take place through a placement provider.
- 16.63.6 Students must be fully briefed about the UCO's safeguarding and DBS policies and procedures prior to the commencement of their placement or work-based learning activity.

16.64 LONE WORKING

- 16.64.1 In circumstances where a situation of lone working may be required this should be identified in the Health and Safety Questionnaire (Appendix 2 - AQF16-30b) and taken into consideration in the risk assessment and approval of the placement.
- 16.64.2 The placement provider is normally responsible for risk assessment if sending a student into a situation of lone working and may have procedures that apply. For further information the UCO's Out of Hours Working Policy and the Health and Safety Executive guidance regarding Lone Workers.

16.65 APPROVING PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PROVIDERS & PLACEMENTS

- 16.65.1 Every practice-based education provider and placement must be approved before the student commences the placement.
- 16.65.2 All practice-based education provider and placement must be approved by the Vice-Chancellor or their nominee (normally the Placement Coordinator), depending on the level of risk provider poses, before the student commences the placement.
- 16.65.3 It is the responsibility of the Placement Coordinator, in liaison with relevant staff, to complete the following documents to evaluate the suitability of a placement provider (the overall content of these documents should not be changed however they can be adapted to reflect local nomenclature relevant to particular programs or formatting of the document can be changed to suit local needs):
 - a) Appendix 1: Risk Assessment Form for Practice-Based Education Providers (AQF16-30a)
 - b) Appendix 2: Placement Provider Health and Safety Questionnaire (AQF16-30b)
 - c) Appendix 3: Student Placement Conduct and Health and Safety Agreement (AQF16-30c)
 - d) Appendix 4: Practice-Based Education Audit Record (AQF16-30d)

A) UCO RISK ASSESSMENT FORM FOR PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PROVIDERS (APPENDIX 1 – AQF16-30A))

16.65.4 All practice-based education placements must be approved in line with the level of risk established through the UCO Risk Assessment Form for Practice-Based Education Providers (Appendix 1- AQF16-30a).

16.65.5 This should identify the level of risk the placement provider poses and once completed should assure the individual approving the placement that the placement will:

- a) Provide the opportunities and resources for the student to achieve the intended learning outcomes at the required standard and level as per the course / unit information form/s.
- b) Provide support for the student from a designated member of staff in the placement setting.
- c) Fulfil their responsibilities under health and safety legislation.
- d) Provide an experience that complies with the requirements of any relevant PSRBs, as appropriate.
- e) Make reasonable adjustments as identified through a needs assessment for students with disabilities.

16.65.6 If any residual risks are high, the placement provider must be approved by the Vice-Chancellor in their capacity as Academic Council Chair.

16.65.7 If the residual risk is low-medium, the placement provider is normally approved by the Placement Coordinator.

B) PLACEMENT PROVIDER HEALTH AND SAFETY QUESTIONNAIRE (APPENDIX 2 – AQF16-30B)

16.65.8 The Placement Coordinator must be assured before the commencement of the placement that placement providers are willing and able to provide the student with a safe, legal (legislation in respect of the country where the placement provider is located) and appropriate working environment and that they are aware that it is their legal responsibility to provide this.

16.65.9 The Placement Provider Health and Safety Questionnaire (Appendix 2 - AQF16-30b) must be completed by the Placement Coordinator in liaison with the proposed placement provider. Following this the Placement Coordinator must be assured that the placement provider is:

- a) Aware that they have responsibilities to ensure that the student placed with them receives adequate support and guidance pertaining to their role and/or activities within the placement provider.
- b) Aware of and willing to undertake any role they may have in the assessment of students in a fair and appropriate manner.
- c) Aware that they are expected to provide the UCO with feedback about the progress of the placement as requested.

16.66 ALLOCATING PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PROVIDERS & PLACEMENTS

16.66.1 Where the UCO is responsible for allocating students to a placement, the Placement Coordinator shall ensure that each student has an equal opportunity to undertake a placement at each available placement provider.

16.66.2 Where the student is responsible for selecting, organising and securing a placement, they must be given sufficient notice of this responsibility as per course/module requirements and must be given adequate guidance from the Placement Coordinator. This guidance may include:

- a) The expectations for the type of placement/WBL activities to fulfil module/course requirements and the appropriateness for level of study.
- b) Considerations of the specific needs of the student with respect to their achievement of the learning outcomes and those arising from any student entitlements, e.g. in relation to disabilities.
- c) Considerations of equal opportunities and inclusivity.
- d) The extent to which the student's preference for type and/or geographical location of placement can be facilitated and supported.

16.66.3 The student must not commence a placement prior to the approval of the Placement Provider. Where students organise their own placements, the student must understand that any change made to the originally approved placement provider will require a new placement approval process.

16.66.4 An auditable trail should be kept of all requests to obtain information from both the placement provider and student.

16.66.5 Students who commence placements without UCO agreement will not be insured. This must be made explicit in guidance to students and placement providers.

16.66.6 Students must complete Appendix 3 (AQF16-30c) prior to any placement.

16.67 MANAGEMENT & QUALITY ASSURANCE OF PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION

16.67.1 The UCO retains overall responsibility for the quality management and oversight of placements that form an integral part of any award delivered in its name.

A) THE PLACEMENT COORDINATOR

16.67.2 The Placement Coordinator has overall responsibility of overseeing the management of all practice-based education placements. Their responsibilities normally include:

- a) Ensuring that the risk assessment of the placement is undertaken.
- b) Arranging and/or approving placement providers.
- c) Supporting students in identifying relevant placement.
- d) Ensuring that students are appropriately prepared for their placement, including their responsibilities and induction.
- e) Ensuring that a record/database of students in placement is maintained.
- f) In the case of international students requiring a visa, monitoring and reporting to Registry any changes in students' circumstances whilst on placement, e.g. attendance.
- g) Providing advice and guidance to staff, students, placement providers in relation to placements.
- h) Supporting students for the duration of the placement.
- i) Arranging and/or making visits to students during their Placement for assessment and/or other purposes.
- j) Undertaking and completing an audit record of Practice-Based Education Providers and Placements to provide assurance that that due consideration has been given to the management of placements regarding course design, approval and periodic review and that appropriate arrangements are in place to manage the placement/ experience in liaison with Course Leaders and other relevant staff.

B) AUDITING PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PROVIDERS & PLACEMENTS (APPENDIX 3 – AQF16-30d)

16.67.3 To provide assurance that due consideration has been given to the management of placements regarding course design, approval and periodic review and that appropriate arrangements are in place to manage the placement/ experience, and audit of each Practice-Based Education Provider shall be undertaken:

- a) As part of the approval process when a new course / programme / unit for which practice-based education is integral is approved.
- b) As part of the periodic review process for an existing course / programme / unit for which practice-based education is integral.
- c) As part of the annual monitoring and reporting process for an existing course / programme / unit for which practice-based education is integral.
- d) When is it deemed necessary by the Placement Coordinator, e.g. in response to any concerns or poor feedback raised by the student or the provider.

16.67.4 The Managing Placements and Work-Based Learning Audit Record (Appendix 4 - AQF16-30d) should be used to record the outcome of the audit and should be included as an appendix to any documentation submitted as part of the UCO's course / unit approval and modification, periodic review and annual reporting and monitoring processes.

C) APPROVING & MANAGING PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PLACEMENTS CHECKLIST

16.67.5 To enable the effective approval and management processes of Practice-Based Education Placements the checklist provided in Appendix 5 (AQF16-30e) should be used to ensure that all elements are considered pre-, during and post-placement. This checklist should be used in conjunction with the approval process described above.

16.68 TERMINATION OF A PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PLACEMENT

16.68.1 As part of their briefing, students must be made aware of any consequences for failing to successfully complete any required practice-based learning activity.

16.68.2 The Placement Coordinator and Course Leader should ensure that procedures are in place to identify at an early stage any potential problems which may prevent the progress of the student or the satisfactory completion of the learning outcomes. Students should be informed of the procedures which they should follow and the UCO staff with member whom they should make contact if problems do occur.

16.68.3 Courses must have in place an appropriate process for considering and supporting students who have failed placement, including opportunities to retrieve the failure, in line with UCO Regulations.

16.68.4 If it is necessary for the UCO to withdraw a student in situations where they have consistently demonstrated an unacceptable level of engagement with their placement or, in the event of a student wishing to leave the placement and suspend their studies, the UCO's regulations and procedures for student withdrawal or suspensions of studies will apply.

16.68.5 The relevant Fitness to Practice Policy may also be applied for the suspension and exclusion of students from their course on the grounds of professional unsuitability, where a student who is registered on a course leading to a professional qualification or conferring practitioner status is deemed to have become professionally unsuitable for that qualification or status.

16.68.6 The Practice-Based Education Provider must have clear information about the action to be taken if they are no longer able to offer the learning opportunity or if they have any problem or complaint concerning the conduct of the student.

DIAGRAM 16.2A: COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY INITIAL PROPOSAL APPROVAL PROCESS (PART 2)

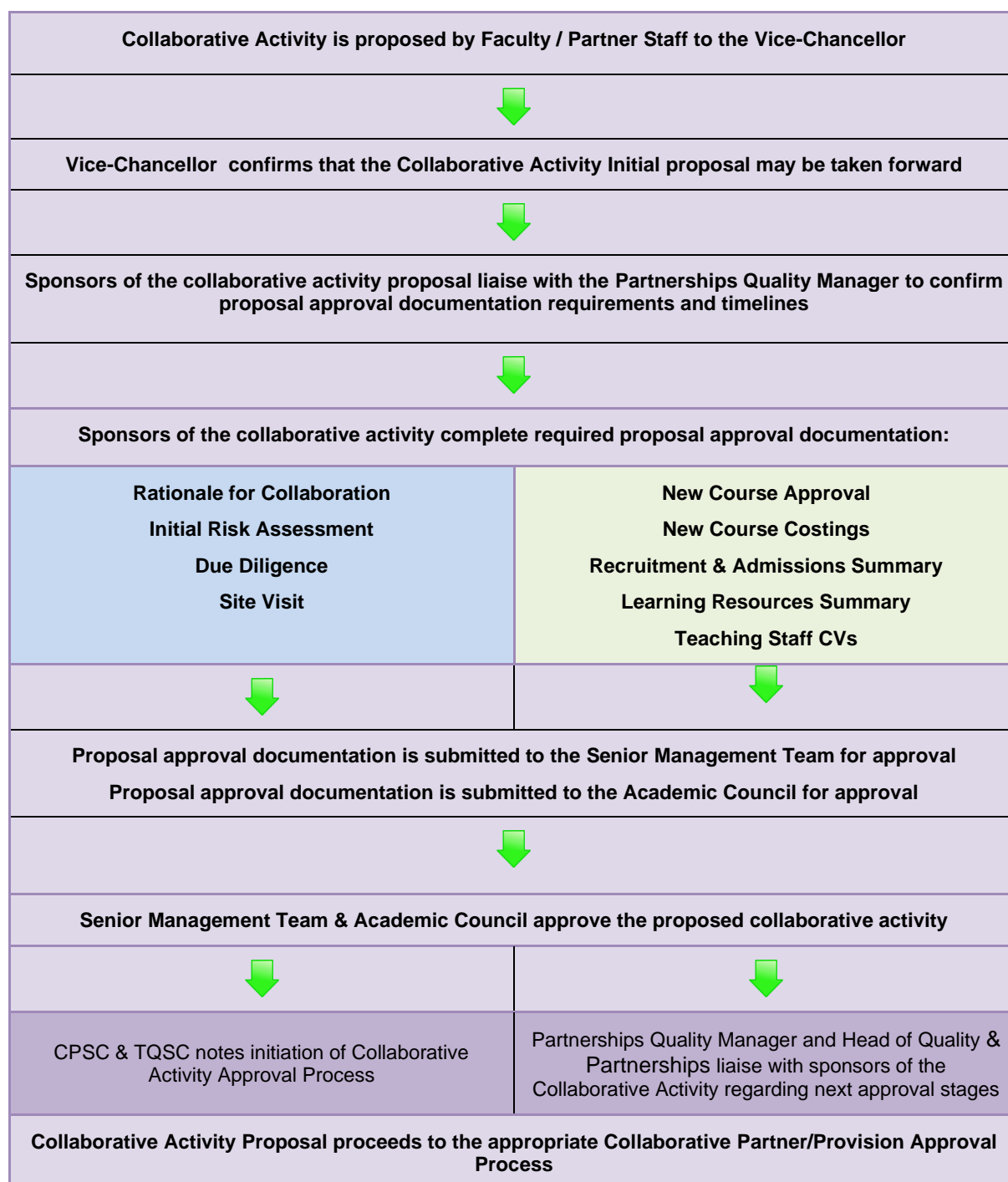
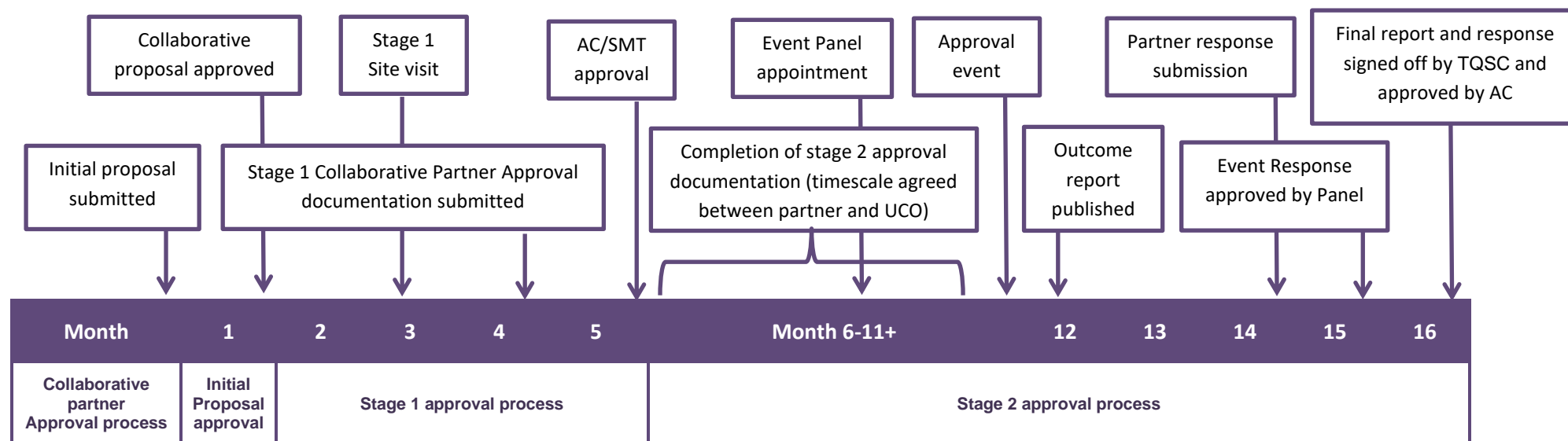


DIAGRAM 16.2B: THE RECOMMENDED TIMELINE FOR THE COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY APPROVAL PROCESS



Submission of Initial Proposals for Collaborative Partnerships

To align with the normal UCO institutional calendar, it is recommended that initial collaborative proposals should be submitted at least 4 months prior to scheduled Academic Council meetings.

Recommended Submission dates:

- Last week of July for Stage 1 approval by SMT/Academic Council in December
- Last week in October for Stage 1 approval by SMT/Academic Council in March
- Last week in January for Stage 1 approval by SMT/Academic Council in June
- Last week in April for Stage 1 approval by SMT/Academic Council in September

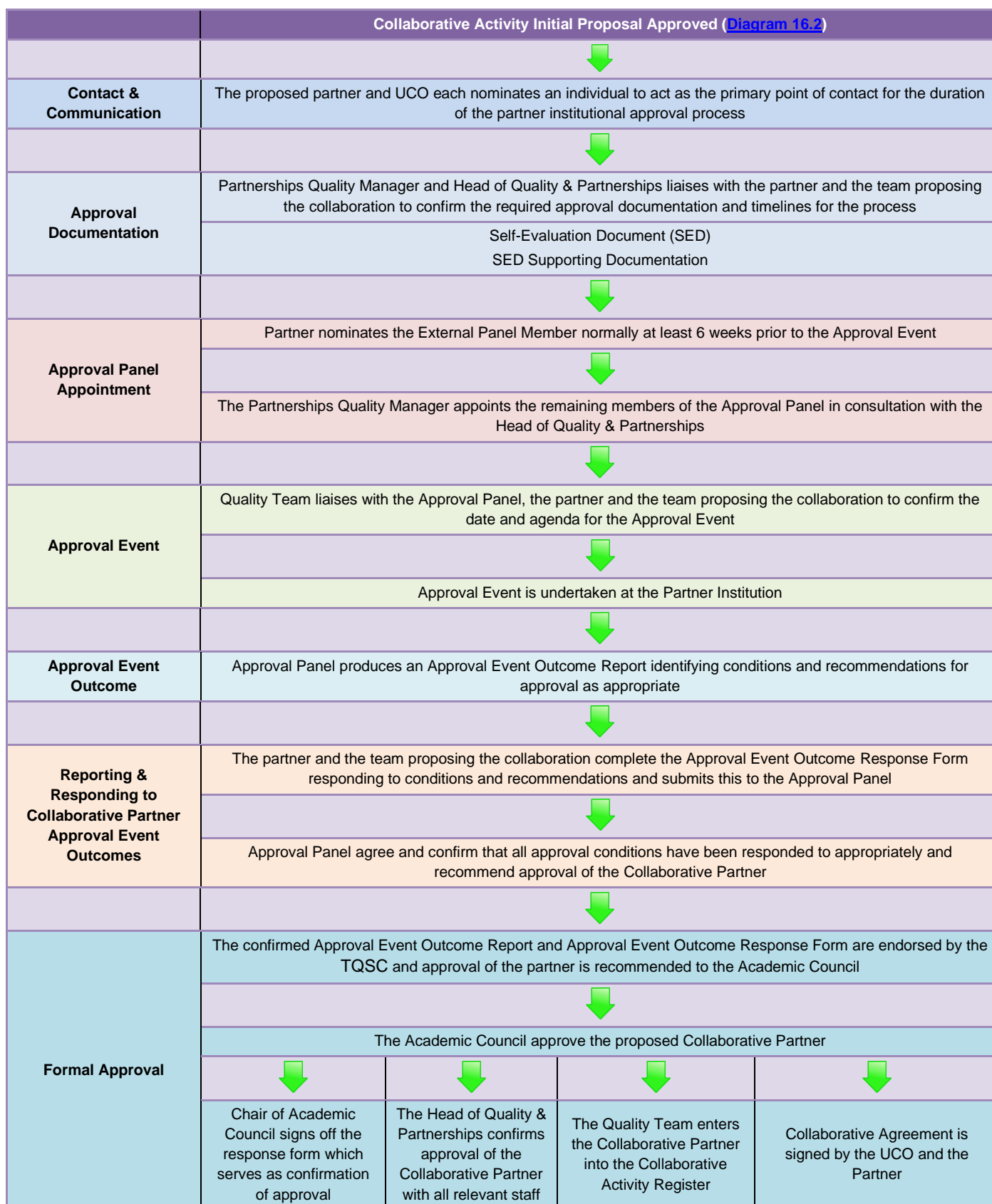
DIAGRAM 16.3: COLLABORATIVE PARTNER APPROVAL PROCESS (PART 3)


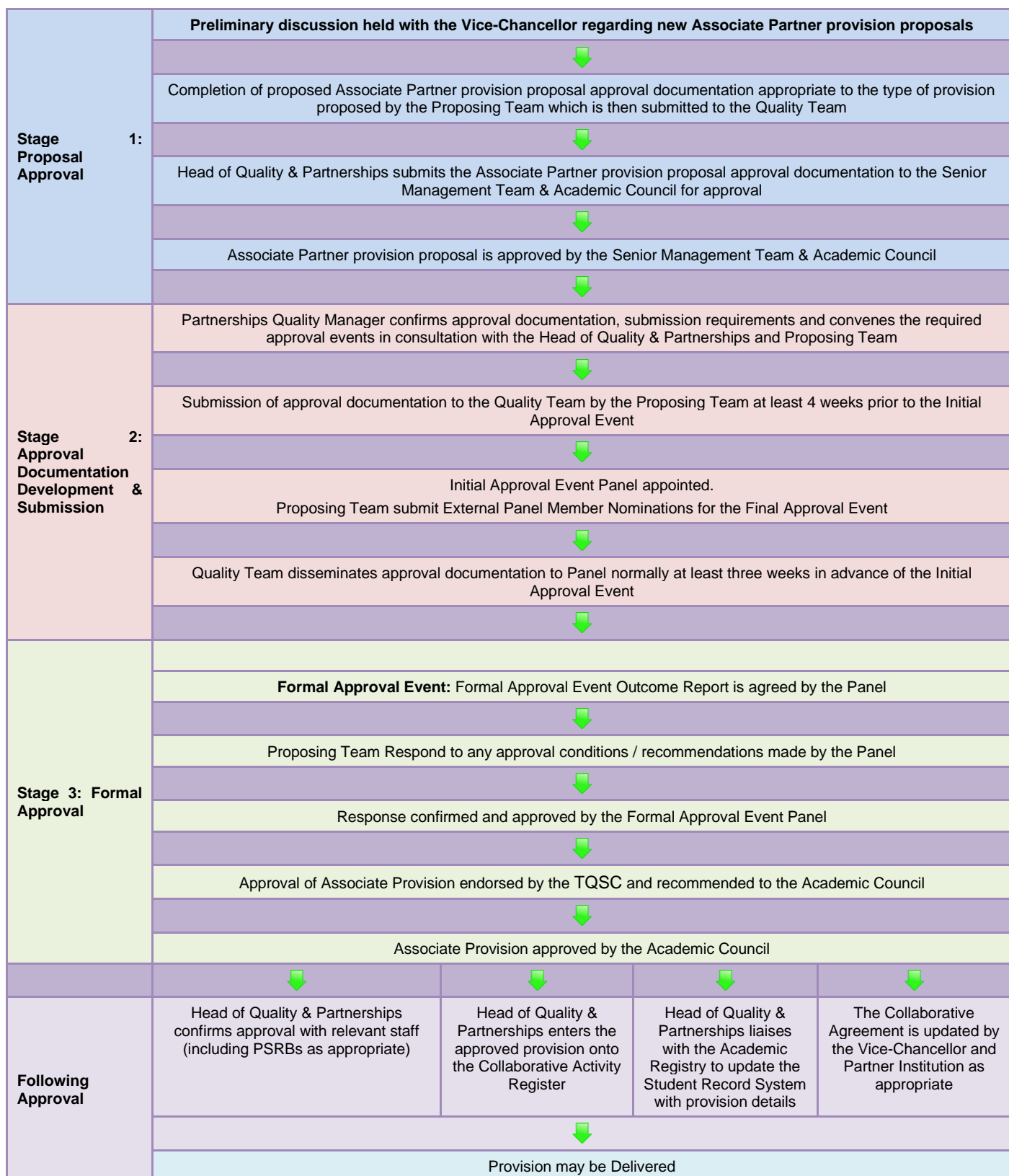
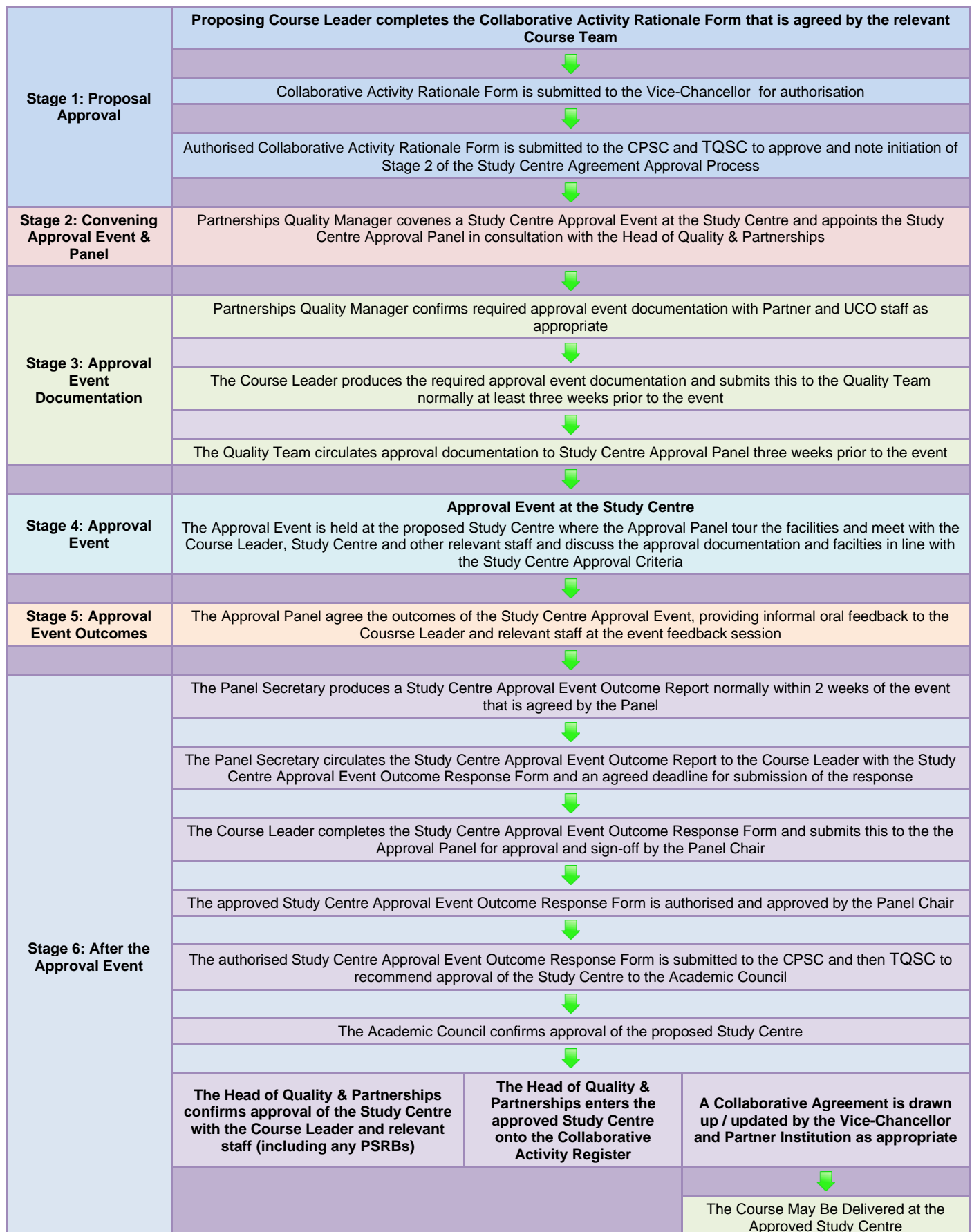
DIAGRAM 16.4: ASSOCIATE PARTNER PROVISION APPROVAL PROCESS (PART 4)


DIAGRAM 16.5: LINK PARTNER STUDY CENTRE AGREEMENT APPROVAL PROCESS


AQF16: APPENDICES

Appendix Reference Number	Appendix Title
AQF16-01	Collaborative Activity Register Template
AQF16-02	Memorandum of Understanding Template
AQF16-03	Collaborative Activity Proposal Form
AQF16-04a AQF16-04b	Collaborative Activity Due Diligence & Risk Assessment Form Collaborative Activity Due Diligence & Risk Assessment Form Appendix 1: Financial Due Diligence
AQF16-05	Collaborative Activity Delivery Site Visit Report Form
AQF16-06	Associate Partner Approval Self-Evaluation Document Template
AQF16-07	Partner Approval External Panel Member Guidance
AQF16-08	Partner Approval Panel Feedback Form
AQF16-09	Partner Approval External Panel Member Nomination Form
AQF16-10	Partner Approval Conditions & Response Form
AQF16-11	Collaborative Partner Staff CV Coversheet
AQF16-12	Dual Award Mapping Template
AQF16-13	Study Centre Statement Template
AQF16-14	Study Centre Approval Conditions & Response Form
AQF16-15	Articulation Arrangement Rationale Template
AQF16-16	Articulation Mapping Template
AQF16-17	Articulation Event Conditions & Response Form
AQF16-18	Progression Arrangement Rationale Template
AQF16-19	Progression Arrangement Event Conditions & Response Form
AQF16-20a AQF16-20b AQF16-20c AQF16-20d	Link Tutor Handbook Link Tutor Handbook Appendix 1: Continuous Monitoring Form Link Tutor Handbook Appendix 2: Mid-Year Report Form Link Tutor Handbook Appendix 3: End-Year Report Form
AQF16-21	Partner Visit Log Template
AQF16-22	Partnership Annual Report Form
AQF16-23	Collaborative Provision Operations Manual Template

AQF16-24	Partner Published Information Report Form
AQF16-25a AQF16-25b	Partner Periodic Institutional Review Report Template CPSC Critical Evaluation of the Partner Periodic Institutional Report Form
AQF16-26	Partner Review Conditions & Response Form
AQF16-27	Franchised Provision Review Evaluation Document Template
AQF16-28	Articulation Arrangement Review Report Form
AQF16-29	Collaborative Activity Termination Form
AQF16-30a AQF16-30b AQF16-30c AQF16-30d AQF16-30e	Practice-Based Education Appendix 1: Risk Assessment Form Practice-Based Education Appendix 2: Health & Safety Questionnaire Practice-Based Education Appendix 3: Student Conduct and Health & Safety Agreement Form Practice-Based Education Appendix 4: Audit Record Practice-Based Education Appendix 5: Approving & Managing Practice-Based Education Placements Checklist